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**THE EXTERNALIZATION OF EU MIGRATION
POLICY: DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITIZATION
APPROACHES AND THEIR CRITIQUES**

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE



DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this master's thesis titled as "The Externalization of EU Migration Policy: Development and Securitization Approaches and Their Critiques" has been written by myself in accordance with the academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that all materials benefited in this thesis consist of the mentioned resources in the reference list. I verify all these with my honour.

22/03/2023

Charlotte ORTMANNS

ABSTRACT

Master's Thesis

The Externalization of EU Migration Policy: Development and Securitization

Approaches and Their Critiques

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EU migration policy has seen an increasing shift towards governing migration outside of its territory since the 1990s, through control of the external border and through expanding cooperation with third countries both near and far from the EU. This thesis critically analyzes these trends of externalization in EU migration policy, with a focus on the linkage between development and migration policy in the name of ‘addressing root causes’ of irregular migration in Africa since 2015. It proposes answers to the questions: What are critical assessments of the externalization of EU migration policy? Do trends in external EU migration policy towards Africa suggest a genuine shift towards preventative modes, as an alternative to securitized modes of governing migration? To this end, a literature-based analysis of the implementation of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, related migration policy instruments, and practices of EU-African cooperation in East and West Africa is undertaken. The thesis contributes to critical discussions of the recently expanded EU focus on preventative modes of governing migration. It argues that externalization follows a securitized logic of reducing migration to the EU by shifting responsibility for asylum seekers to third countries. Even components of EU migration policy, presented as addressing root causes, improving stability, and benefitting (potential) migrants, are strongly oriented towards the securitized European migration objective of containing migration within Africa, employing

development funding for migration control objectives, and do not provide a genuinely preventative approach to migration.

Keywords: Migration, Development, Securitization, European Union, EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, Externalization.



ÖZET

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Avrupa Birliği Göç Politikasının Dışsallaştırılması:

Kalkınma ve Güvenlikleştirme Yaklaşımları ve Bu Yaklaşımların Eleştirisi

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1990’lardan bu yana AB göç politikasında, dış sınırların kontrolü ve AB’ye yakın ve uzak üçüncü ülkelerle işbirliğini genişletme yoluyla göçü kendi sınırları dışında yönetme eğilimi artış göstermektedir. Bu tez, 2015’ten bu yana Afrika’daki düzensiz göçün ‘kökenlerini ele almak’ adı altında geliştirilen kalkınma ve göç politikaları arasındaki bağlantıya odaklanarak, AB göç politikasındaki bu dışsallaştırma eğilimlerini eleştirel bir şekilde analiz etmektedir. Bu amaçla çalışma, şu sorulara cevaplar önermektedir: AB göç politikasının dışsallaştırılmasına dair eleştirel değerlendirmeler nelerdir? Afrikaya yönelik dışsal AB göç politikasındaki eğilimler, güvenlik odaklı göç yönetimi biçimlerine bir alternatif olarak, önleyici modele gerçek bir geçişe işaret ediyor mu? Bu minvalde, AB Afrika Acil Güven Fonunun uygulanması, ilgili göç politikası araçları ve Doğu ve Batı Afrikadaki AB-Afrika işbirliği pratiklerinin literatüre dayalı bir analizi yapılmıştır. Bu tez AB’nin önleyici göç yönetim modeline dair son dönemde artan eleştirel tartışmalara katkıda bulunmaktadır. Bu çalışma, dışsallaştırmanın, güvenlik odaklı bir mantık izlediğini, sığınmacılara yönelik sorumluluğu üçüncü ülkelere havale etmek suretiyle AB’ye göçü azaltma amacı güttüğünü ileri sürmektedir. Göçün temel nedenlerine çözüm bulma, istikrarı artırma ve (potansiyel) göçmenlerin yararına olma şeklinde sunulan AB göç politikasının bileşenleri bile, göçü Afrikada kontrol altına alma, göç kontrolü hedefleri için kalkınmayı fonlamayı

kullanma biçimindeki güvenlik odaklı bir Avrupa göç hedefine yöneliktir ve göçe gerçek bir önleyici yaklaşım getirmemektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Göç, Kalkınma, Güvenikleřtirme, Avrupa Birlięi, AB Afrika Acil Güven Fonu, Dıřsallařtırma.



**THE EXTERNALIZATION OF EU MIGRATION POLICY:
DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITIZATION APPROACHES AND THEIR
CRITIQUES**

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| ACP | African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States |
| AoM | Autonomy of Migration |
| CEAS | Common European Asylum System |
| CSDP | Common Security and Defence Policy |
| DG DEVCO | Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development |
| DG INTPA | Directorate General for International Partnerships |
| DG NEAR | Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of West African States |
| EDF | European Development Fund |
| EEAS | European External Action Service |
| EU | European Union |
| EUAA | European Union Agency for Asylum |
| EUCAP | European Union Capacity Building Mission |
| EUTF | European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa |
| Frontex | European Border and Coast Guard Agency |
| GAM | Global Approach to Migration |
| GAMM | Global Approach to Migration and Mobility |
| GIZ | German Agency for International Cooperation |
| HLWG | High Level Working Group on Migration and Asylum |
| IDP | Internally Displaced Person |
| IGAD | Intergovernmental Authority for Development |
| IOM | International Organization for Migration |
| MPF | Migration Partnership Framework |
| NDICI | Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| ODA | Official Development Aid |
| OHCHR | Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights |
| TFEU | Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union |

UN

United Nations

UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



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INTRODUCTION

Since the 1990s, the European Union (EU) has gradually developed common policies on migration, asylum, borders, and visas. The abolition of internal borders within the Schengen Area went along with some harmonization of internal procedures and an ever-increasing focus on external aspects of migration governance. Within the external component, both EU and member state control of external borders, and cooperation with third countries expanded. The success of over one million migrants overcoming the EU's restrictive borders in 2015 became known as a refugee 'crisis' and further moved the topic of migration towards the top of the EU agenda, resulting in the creation of a wider variety of policy instruments and intensified cooperation with third countries. These policy instruments include further securitization of the external EU border itself, e.g. through cooperation with countries located on the final leg of irregular migrants' common routes into the EU, such as the EU Turkey Statement of 2016 or the strengthening of the interception capacity of the Libyan Coast Guard (Sunderland and Salah, 2019).

Additionally, long-employed rhetoric of governing migration by 'addressing root causes' in regions of origin was outfitted with policy instruments targeting countries further away from EU borders and linking development and migration. The 2016 Migration Partnership Framework (MPF) identifies Mali, Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, and Ethiopia as priority countries, and includes the goal to "enable migrants and refugees to stay close to home avoiding taking dangerous journeys" (European Parliament, 2022). Federica Mogherini, then High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, presented the MPF as follows: "We have been working tirelessly to reduce human suffering and the loss of lives. With the Partnership Framework, we muster all EU foreign policy strands to better manage migration, to the benefit of the EU, our partners, and, most importantly, the people affected" (European External Action Service, 2016). The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) was established with the aims of "address[ing] the root causes of instability, forced displacement and irregular migration and to contribute to better migration management" (European Commission, 2022a) within North Africa, the Horn of Africa, and the Sahel and Lake Chad region (including most countries in

West Africa), largely funded with development aid. EU policy has thus seen an increase in attention towards East and West Africa, aiming to address irregular migration closer to migrants' home countries. Policy is largely framed as humanitarian and development-focused (Collyer, 2019: 173; Zanker, 2019: 5–9).

In this thesis, I aim to critically assess the externalization of EU migration policy, with a particular focus on attempts to govern migration preventatively, i.e. by 'addressing root causes' in countries of origin and transit. Overall, I thus aim to propose answers to the following two research questions: What are critical assessments of the externalization of EU migration policy? Do trends in external EU migration policy towards Africa suggest a genuine shift towards preventative modes, as an alternative to securitized modes of governing migration?

To this end, I first discuss different theoretical approaches to understanding migration policy in the Global North, then provide a critical analysis of EU migration policy trends since the 1990s, and finally critically discuss the preventative potential of EU migration policy vis-à-vis West and East Africa, through a literature-based analysis of the implementation of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, related migration policy instruments, and practices of EU-African cooperation.

I argue, firstly, that the shift to externalization, defined as "the process of territorial and administrative expansion of a given state's migration and border policy to third countries" (Casas-Cortes et al., 2014: 73), overall functions as a strategy to limit migration to the EU, allowing the EU and its member states to evade obligations towards asylum seekers under international law. Migration policy thus largely follows a securitized view of migrations as a threat that needs to be contained outside of Europe before migrants' arrival triggers European protection obligations.

Secondly, I argue that even components of EU migration policy, which are presented as addressing root causes, improving stability, and benefitting migrants, are strongly oriented towards the securitized European migration objective of containing migration within Africa and thereby reducing arrivals in Europe in practice, and do not provide a genuinely preventative approach to migration. The intensified link between development and migration has mostly functioned to employ development aid in line with migration policy objectives, thereby undermining development principles. Accordingly, development funding through the EUTF is

diverted to countries along typical migration routes to Europe, has been allocated to projects increasing security force and border control capacities within Africa, and has been used as leverage for increasing cooperation on returns and local implementation of security-focused policies and laws, while not providing for the expansion of regular, legal paths for migration. Additionally, empirical research challenges the basic assumption that development aid is linked to decreasing migration, and, more specifically, that projects under the EUTF have the potential to successfully address root causes of migration. Externalization, including the ‘root cause’ approach, can largely be explained with respect to domestic dynamics, providing a response to the perceived ‘crisis’ in a way that speaks to a variety of European actors, rather than providing a genuine preventative approach to challenges that (potential) migrants face.

To make this argument, I carry out a case study of EU migration policy towards Eastern and Western Africa. I analyze statistical data regarding migration from the region to the EU and EU development assistance disbursed to the region to identify trends and possible correlations. The focus, however, lies on an analysis of the location and types of projects funded through the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, and the political processes surrounding allocation of funding. My analysis of allocation practices is based on reports on the EUTF by development actors and NGOs and on the academic literature in the field. Analyzing literature focusing both on larger regions and on specific local contexts, such as Niger or the Horn of Africa, I attempt to bring together the individual findings to provide a larger picture of EU migration policy towards the regions of East and West Africa. My analysis of allocation practices and types of projects funded then allows for an argument regarding the preventative potential of EU policy in the regions.

My analysis of EU migration policy focuses on irregular migration, defined as migration without authorization by the relevant authorities, as irregular migration constitutes an increasingly prominent phenomenon, targeted by a growing number of EU policy tools. Irregular migration importantly includes migration by asylum seekers, as access to regular pathways for seeking asylum in the EU is extremely limited. My analysis begins in the 1990s, as common European migration policy has its origins in this period. My focus lies on developments since 2015, as this is when

more extensive practical implementation of a European strategy to ‘address root causes’ began, particularly through the development aid-funded EU Trust Fund for Africa. The regional focus lies in West and East Africa as the main receiving regions of funding through the EUTF, and because these regions have become more recently incorporated into EU migration policy.

The particular relevance of my thesis lies in moving the spotlight further away from the direct European neighborhood, and critically assessing the less controversial-seeming aspects of EU migration policy. The focus of much critical scholarship on external EU migration policy has been on policy practices at its own external borders, and on cooperation with neighboring countries, particularly Morocco, Libya, and Turkey (see e.g. Andrijasevic, 2010; Crawley and Blitz, 2019; Crépeau, 2013; Crépeau and Purkey, 2016; Frelick et al., 2016; Grigonis, 2017; Haddad, 2008; Hyndman and Mountz, 2008). My thesis draws attention to the more recent intensification of EU policy instruments targeted at countries within East and West Africa, which has begun to be studied more widely since 2015. Additionally, as my analysis shows, increasing critical attention to EU migration policy’s seemingly less controversial components aimed at ‘addressing root causes’ is important to understand how securitized logics of migration containment have become incorporated even into the migration-development nexus. Nevertheless, EU migration policy actors continue to draw on the ‘root cause’ approach, further institutionalizing the link between migration and development, e.g. in the 2021 foreign policy funding tool Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), making it all the more timely to draw attention to the gaps between policy rhetoric and practice and the limitations of such policy.

The first chapter discusses different theoretical frameworks on migration and its governance, proposing an answer to the questions: How can contemporary migration policy by countries in the Global North be explained? What contributions do different theoretical frameworks make? I argue that each of the presented theories makes important contributions to understanding migration regimes. I first discuss classical migration theories, conceptualizing migration in terms of largely economic push and pull factors. I then move to securitization theory’s constructivist explanations of processes through which migration became widely viewed as a

security threat to be contained. Next, I discuss the Autonomy of Migration (AoM) framework, decentering both the state and the labor market, and introducing migrants as important actors shaping migration outcomes, thereby theorizing the widely recognized gap between governments' attempts to limit migration and realities of continuing migration. Finally, I introduce historical materialist border regime analysis, which locates migration and its governance within capitalist structures and crises, and identifies the border regime as arising from struggles between different actors and hegemony projects.

The second chapter provides a closer look at EU migration policy, its instruments, and trends since the 1990s, aiming to answer the following questions: How has EU migration policy developed since the 1990s? How have shifts to externalization and development-based migration policies been criticized? I first trace policy trends and instruments from initial steps towards a common internal and external migration policy in the 1990s and early 2000s, to increased attempts to implement a more comprehensive external migration policy strategy until 2015, to further expansion of external migration policy instruments in the context of the 2015 'crisis' and beyond. I then situate the identified policy trends in academic discussions of externalization, including preventative approaches towards externalization, identifying criticisms and concerns regarding EU migration policy's potential to provide a genuine, preventative alternative to security-focused approaches to irregular migration.

In the third chapter, I develop my argument on the criticisms identified in the second chapter, by analyzing EU migration policy vis-à-vis East and West Africa through a closer analysis of the implementation of the EUTF, related migration policy instruments, and practices of EU-African cooperation. I propose answers to the following questions: What are critical assessments of the potential of EU migration policy practice vis-à-vis Africa to provide a genuinely preventative alternative to securitized modes of migration control? How can the shift towards the 'root cause' approach in EU migration policy be explained? After providing an overview of EU policy instruments vis-à-vis East and West Africa and migration dynamics within and from the regions, I critically assess EU migration policy's preventative potential, first from a development perspective, and then with respect to

policy assumptions regarding root causes of migration. In the discussion, I suggest some links between theoretical approaches to migration discussed in the first chapter, and EU practices vis-à-vis Africa. I argue that EU migration policy does not provide a genuine, preventative alternative, firstly, because development aid is targeted according to European migration control priorities, including diversion of aid to regions and populations relevant from a European migration control perspective, funding of security-focused projects on border control and security force capacity building, and aid conditionality employed with the goal of shaping local African policies, e.g. on returns and the criminalization of smuggling, in line with European priorities. Secondly, EU migration policy instruments do not sufficiently take into account diverse drivers and dynamics of migration, focusing e.g. on economic development in the Horn of Africa where displacement, and especially migration towards the EU, is largely politically motivated. With respect to explaining EU migration policy, in the face of important, known limitations to policy instruments, I argue that internal political dynamics play an important role. In the face of the failure of existing policy tools to obstruct migrants' autonomous border-crossing practices, combined with the largely securitized view of migration as a threat within Europe, the EU turned to other approaches to visibly address the perceived threat. However, the simultaneous widespread opposition to immigration, on the one hand, and to dangers that the EU's restrictive border controls pose to migrants, on the other hand, invited the shift to policy instruments that can be presented as a humanitarian, migrant-friendly response that nevertheless decrease migration, inviting consent from diverse actors.

CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: MIGRATION AND ITS GOVERNANCE

1.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I aim to understand how trends in irregular migration governance of migrant-receiving countries in the Global North since the 1990s can be explained. I discuss a variety of theoretical approaches originating in various academic disciplines to propose an answer to the following research questions: How can contemporary migration policy by countries in the Global North be explained? What contributions do different theoretical frameworks make? This chapter thus provides the theoretical framework through which EU migration policy is analyzed in the following chapters.

I argue that each of the theories presented in this chapter makes important contributions to the study of migration regimes. While they are partly critical of each other, I argue that ultimately much of the analyses can be combined in order to gain a more layered picture of migration and the ways it is governed. Classical migration theories illuminate how migration relates to labor market demands and enables an analysis of migration's role in capitalist reproduction. Securitization theory draws attention to the politics of fear and enables analyses of the restrictions which governments pose on migration. The autonomy of migration literature importantly includes migration as a constitutive force in the struggle over borders and access, thereby contributing to a less state-centered analysis of border regimes. Finally, the Gramscian historical materialist approach enables a view of the state as a struggle between different hegemonic projects, allowing for an analysis of the interplay between various forces including the ones that the previous three theories have emphasized.

First, I discuss classical migration theories. Classical migration theories originate in the disciplines of sociology and economics, and largely explain migration as a response to economic conditions and the labor market in countries of origin and destination. Then, I turn to securitization theory, which provides a constructivist international relations perspective on migration governance.

Securitization theory explains restrictive migration policies as a result of migration becoming socially constructed as a security threat. In the third section, I discuss the autonomy of migration framework, which provides an autonomous Marxist, post-structuralist perspective on migration. This theory views migration as not fully controllable and posits the migration and border regime as arising from struggles between different actors, which include migrants themselves. In the final section of this chapter, I discuss Gramsci and Poulantzas-inspired historical materialist theories of migration, which analyze the role migration plays in capitalist reproduction and its contradictions, in addition to viewing the border regime as shaped by potentially changing alliances of different social forces.

1.2. CLASSICAL MIGRATION THEORIES

In this section, I present classical migration theories. Classical migration theories have aimed to understand why people migrate. I discuss both liberal and critical historical materialist perspectives that focus on the labor market and wage differentials as the origin of migration, since they share this important analytical category. They largely do not distinguish between different types of migration but tend to theorize migration in terms of labor. Additionally, most classical migration theories share the evaluation that migration benefits the liberal capitalist system. These theories largely come from the academic disciplines of economics and sociology and focus on understanding determinants of migration. They do not provide detailed analyses of how migration is, can or should be governed.

According to the neoclassical economics approach, migration is determined by largely economic push and pull factors (O'Reilly, 2016: 26). Unfavorable conditions in a country *push* people to leave that country while favorable conditions in another country *pull* people to settle there. It is thus a theory based on a supply and demand model, along with an understanding of migration as a decision based on rational choice. A migrant in this model is thus an individual who makes a rational decision to improve their circumstances. This model has been criticized for a simplistic understanding of the decision-making process of potential migrants, as factors such as family ties, historical ties between different countries, or government

restrictions to mobility are not taken into account. The model holds a liberal view on migration, according to which the 'free migration market' regulates itself, with people moving where their labor is in demand, ultimately creating an equilibrium.

Adaptations of the theory have introduced a broader understanding of pull and push factors: According to the new economics of migration economic factors remain central, but political factors such as political oppression in the country of origin are also incorporated as potential determinants in the decision-making process (O'Reilly, 2016: 27). Additionally, the decision to migrate is no longer located in the individual. Instead the role of the family or household are considered as influential in the decision-making process (Jones and Mielants, 2015: 2). The dual/segmented labor market theory argues that labor market demands in the Global North determine migration (Jones and Mielants, 2015: 2). In this theory, the labor market is understood as segmented: The 'primary' labor market consists of secure, well-paid jobs for citizens. The 'secondary' labor market consists of insecure, temporary jobs that may need filling spontaneously and which citizens may be unwilling to do, thus requiring migrant labor. This logic underlies the 'guest worker' programs of the 1960s and 70s, as migrants are seen as labor that is free to exploit according to the needs of developed countries. It objectifies the humanity of migrants and neglects their potential choice to settle, as many supposed 'guests' did after the end of guest worker recruitment (O'Reilly, 2016: 27).

World Systems theory similarly views migration as determined by the Global North's demand for cheap labor. However, world systems theory provides a critique of this structure of a global division of labor, in which the periphery is exploited by the core, leading to global inequality. Based on Marx' argument that capitalism needs a flexible industrial reserve army to deal with "cyclical fluctuations in the process of accumulation" (Hollifield, 1992: 571), migration is seen to sustain the stability of the world system, and consequently the inequality between the different areas of the world system (O'Reilly, 2016: 28). In these conceptualizations, the state acts in the interest of capital. Migrants are seen as an easily exploitable, flexible work force that can be used to overcome crises and inefficiencies, as well as undermine citizen workers' power as they compete with their migrant counterparts (Hollifield, 1992: 571).

These labor-market based theories provide somewhat comparable answers to the question why people migrate: to improve their livelihood by following labor market needs. While the theories evaluate the capitalist system differently, they all share the view that economic issues, specifically the labor market, are a major factor determining migration and that migration benefits the capitalist system and the Global North, as migrants constitute a valuable workforce and migration either regulates itself (neoclassical economics) or takes place according to the labor market needs of the Global North (dual/segmented labor market theory and world systems theory). The role of governments accordingly is to facilitate migration by granting access to labor markets.

This evaluation is in stark contrast to contemporary restrictions on migration initiated by the Global North. Restrictive policy thus suggests a more complex story than the one suggested by classical migration theories: How did migration become a politically highly contested issue? Different theoretical frameworks have been proposed to understand this restrictiveness. Adapting World Systems Theory to the trend towards restriction, Wallerstein (2015: 21) argues that capitalism goes through cycles of increased openness and increased control of the circulation of goods and capital, but also labor, according to the current needs of the core's economy, thereby adapting world systems theory to the climate of migration restrictions. There are thus phases of capitalism in which migration is encouraged and other phases in which it is discouraged, according to the needs of the labor market. Restrictions to mobility are then intended to allow states to accept only the number and types of migrants needed. In later sections of this chapter, I discuss theoretical approaches that go beyond this labor market-focused approach and that provide more detailed analyses of origins of restrictions.

Irrespective of why governments move to restrict migration, classical migration theories have been employed to argue that if states wish to reduce immigration, they can aim to address the push factors, i.e. improve the economic situation and labor market, in countries of origin (Hollifield, 1992: 572). Following this logic, discussions of employing development policy to reach goals of migration control have become prominent. I further discuss this linkage in my analysis of EU migration policy in the following chapters.

Classical migration theories thus analyze migration as a result of largely economic push and pull factors. Their optimistic view of migration means that restrictions to migration cannot easily be explained. However, some migration policies oriented towards limiting migration rely on the basic assumptions of classical migration theories: By improving economic conditions in countries of origin, i.e. addressing push factors, development projects are supposed to decrease migration.

1.3. SECURITIZATION

Securitization theory provides a radically different perspective on migration policy from classical migration theories. The theory does not focus on explaining why people migrate but instead focuses on why and how migration is governed as a security issue. In contrast to the economic-sociological origins of classical migration theories, securitization has its roots in international relations. In the post-Cold War context, migration increasingly became understood in terms of security, with (irregular) migration often considered a threat to the host states' security objectives. Scholars of securitization have highlighted the socially constructed nature of such security concerns, aiming to understand through what processes migration became considered a security issue.

In the 1990s, Security Studies saw a widening of its object of research and of its theoretical approaches. Traditional, realist conceptualizations of security, focusing on national security and military threats, began to be more widely questioned and debated in the 1980s (Faist, 2006: 106; Hammerstad, 2011: 238, 2014: 1–2; Huysmans and Squire, 2018: 269). With the end of the bipolar world order, economic, environmental and identity security became topics of interest in Security Studies, in addition to the traditional concerns for state sovereignty and territorial integrity. Conceptualizing such a variety of issues in terms of security then also came along with the identification of new threats. These new threats importantly began to include non-state actors and non-military issues, such as migration, which began to be studied by scholars of security in the 1990s. Previously, the topic of migration had predominantly been analyzed as a social and economic phenomenon, as in the

classical migration theories discussed above, largely unrelated to the study of global politics or security (Hammerstad, 2014: 265; Huysmans and Squire, 2018: 296–297). Based on the assumption that migration affects security, realists began to study the ways in which international migration poses a threat to states and to propose security policy that takes this threat into account. Examples of threats identified by strategic security studies scholars were that migrants could become violent political actors or that migration has a negative effect on social cohesion. Debates over the definition of security then also led to the emergence of alternative theoretical approaches to security (Huysmans and Squire, 2018: 299). One influential way in which security was reimagined is the constructivist securitization approach (Hammerstad, 2014: 266; Huysmans and Squire, 2018: 297).

Securitization theory, first formulated by the Copenhagen School in 1998 (Buzan et al., 2013), draws attention to the processes through which any issue becomes considered a security issue (Huysmans and Squire, 2018: 297). They highlight that the perception of an issue as a security threat does not necessarily correspond to the objective threat of that issue (Balzacq et al., 2016: 496; Buzan et al., 2013: 26; Huysmans and Squire, 2018: 302). In Buzan et al. (2013)’s definition, securitization happens “when a securitizing actor uses a rhetoric of existential threat and thereby takes an issue out of what under those conditions is ‘normal politics’” (Buzan et al., 2013: 24). Securitization is defined as an intersubjective process involving a securitizing actor, i.e. the actor who presents an issue as a security threat, and an audience, which has to accept the conceptualization of the issue as a threat in order for successful securitization to take place. The successful securitization of any issue as an existential threat then justifies means of emergency politics, such as exceptional measures including violence (Buzan et al., 2013: 26; Hammerstad, 2014: 266).

Buzan et al. (2013) employ a constructivist analysis focused on speech acts and discourse as the site of securitization, influenced by social constructivism in International Relations theory, but also by similar analyses of the construction of social categories in other disciplines, e.g. sociology, philosophy and history (Balzacq et al., 2016: 496). A second strand of securitization theory, often called the Paris School, is more closely influenced by Foucauldian ideas on biopolitics, and puts

more emphasis on practice, bureaucratic politics, power relations and institutional interests, rather than discursive acts. In this analysis, securitization is then about the control of populations through bureaucratic procedures, surveillance and risk management (Balzacq et al., 2016: 505; Hammerstad, 2014: 267). In their evaluation of securitization theory almost two decades after its inception, Balzacq et al. (2016: 497) highlight the importance of combining these two approaches, by complementing the Copenhagen School's focus on discursive acts with an awareness of practices and the analytics of government. Both schools share the view that the process of securitization is generally a pernicious one, which is highly efficient in justifying extraordinary measures and resource allocation (Hammerstad, 2014: 267).

Securitization theory has been widely applied to the issue of migration, posing questions about the processes through which security became an important consideration in governing migration, and what consequences this way of governing brings with it. A wide consensus regarding the successful securitization of asylum and migration in the EU exists since the 2000s, arguing that the extent to which migration has become politicized and securitized in Europe goes far beyond any objective threat it poses (Balzacq et al., 2016: 509; Bigo, 2002: 64; Ceyhan and Tsoukala, 2002: 22; Faist, 2006: 110; Hammerstad, 2014: 267–268; Huysmans, 2000: 758; Huysmans and Squire, 2018: 301; Hyndman and Mountz, 2008: 269). Migrants have thus become viewed as a “culture threat, a socio-economic threat, and a more traditional, internal security threat” (Balzacq et al., 2016: 509).

Regarding the origins of such a securitization, there is some disagreement among scholars. Many have turned to the post-Cold War and post-9/11 context (Balzacq et al., 2016: 496–497; Faist, 2006: 106–108; Hammerstad, 2011: 238, 2014: 267; Huysmans and Squire, 2018: 296). The 1990s saw the beginning of a diffusion of threats, shifting from states as the main threat to a variety of non-state actors such as terrorist organization but also migrants being considered important threats to security. Ideas such as Huntington's Clash of Civilizations thesis gained ground, positioning the difference between cultures, viewed in essentialist terms, as a source of security threats (Ceyhan and Tsoukala, 2002: 28; Faist, 2006: 105; Huysmans, 2000: 762–767). Additionally, many scholars have argued that migration became discursively linked to terrorist threats after 9/11 and subsequent attacks in Europe

(Bigo, 2002: 64; Faist, 2006: 105; Hammerstad, 2014: 267). Faist (2006: 109) argues that the shock of 9/11 contributed to the vilification of anyone even very loosely associated to the threatening group, e.g. of people who only share a country of origin or a religion with al-Qaeda. Additionally, the fact of border-crossing which migration and the 9/11 attack shared, helped link the topics in the public imagination, although such a linkage remains superficial, and does not necessarily contribute to an efficient anti-terrorism strategy. Post-9/11, border controls thus increasingly became considered as central for security. Despite the fact that none of the hijackers were asylum seekers, but instead entered using visas, asylum as such also became considered as particularly open to abuse by terrorists (Hammerstad, 2011: 251).

Theorists of securitization have thus emphasized discursive and non-discursive acts and processes driving the securitization of migration and asylum, although some theorists have cautioned that securitization remains only one of various conflicting trends of understanding and governing migration. Scholars have also identified different ways in which migration has become imagined as a security threat, largely falling into three categories: culture/identity, socio-economics and internal security/control over borders (Balzacq et al., 2016: 509; Ceyhan and Tsoukala, 2002: 24; Huysmans, 2000: 758).

The narrative of migration as a cultural threat and as endangering the identity of a group, relies on an essentialist view of culture. In this narrative, the nation state is imagined and desired to have a homogenous population, unified culturally, spiritually and/or racially (Huysmans, 2000: 762). Immigrants, who are defined as culturally 'other', then threaten this supposed national identity. Followers of Huntington (1993)'s popular, but also widely criticized, clash of civilizations thesis go as far as identifying culture as the main source of future conflicts and as the main factor shaping global politics to come. Cultural difference has thus become perceived, firstly, in largely essentialist terms, and, secondly, as a source of insecurity, resulting in migration of those who are defined as culturally different to be seen as a security threat.

The framing of migration as a socio-economic threat narrates migration as a threat to the welfare state and asylum seekers as abusers of social security systems (Boswell, 2007: 595). Welfare chauvinism positions migrants and asylum seekers as

illegitimate recipients of social goods, holding that citizens should have prioritized access to housing, employment, health care, unemployment benefits etc., following a scarcity logic. The socio-economic narrative also invites the view that asylum seekers did not actually migrate because of persecution, but instead are motivated by access to welfare provisions, and thus abuse the asylum system (Hammerstad, 2014: 268; Huysmans, 2000: 767). Due to a perceived ‘flood’ of immigrants, the socio-economic narrative thus constructs migration as a threat to the survival of the burdened welfare state, thereby constructing immigrants as scape goats in the struggle over political legitimacy (Huysmans, 2000: 769).

The internal security narrative focuses on the loss of control over borders, i.e. over who and what enters a national space, through images of ‘hordes’ of ‘illegal’ immigrants ‘invading’ Europe uncontrollably (Boswell, 2007: 594). In this framing, the loss of control links issues of organized crime and terrorism to that of irregular migration, all of which begin to be addressed together, through methods of surveillance and policing typical of addressing crime (Huysmans, 2000: 760). Images of smuggler networks, especially regarding particularly dangerous routes and practices of forced labor, additionally create a linkage between human smuggling and organized crime, again allowing for a security lens, and practices of policing, to be applied to irregular migration (Boswell, 2007: 595).

The perception of migration as a security threat has consequences on how migration is governed. Many scholars of securitization argue that an emphasis on exclusion has developed, limiting entry to, and increasing expulsion from Europe as a solution to the perceived problems of “floods of destitute migrants, abusers of the welfare state, or sinister trafficking gangs” (Boswell, 2007: 595). Asylum has thus become restricted, beginning in the 1990s, e.g. through stricter criteria for refugee recognition or returning migrants to so-called safe third countries (Boswell, 2007: 595).

Faist (2006: 110–112) explains the relationship between migration becoming perceived as a threat and policy consequences as a self-reinforcing cycle. The visibilization of migration as a threat which takes place as part of its securitization has the effect of requiring visible responses and results, leading to increased resource allocation and policy focus on the issue. This increased resource allocation in turn

needs to be justified, so governments develop an interest in maintaining the threat perception. A circle in which the necessity for threat perceptions and for threat responses feed each other thus develops. Faist (2006: 110–112) argues that this circle incentivizes ‘meta-politics’, i.e. the connection of various problems, such as crime, housing shortages and unemployment, with the topic of migration, allowing politicians to justify increased controls. This process then results in the reinforcing of an ‘us’ versus ‘them’ mentality and the threat perception of migration reaching out-of-proportion levels, which then obscure the erosion of civil rights. Securitization then has the effect of turning a complex topic such as migration into a more familiar threat narrative that can be addressed through traditional means of control and policing. Similarly, Hyndman and Mountz (2008: 254) argue that the fear of the other that is mobilized as part of securitization acts as “a politically powerful resource for states that need legitimate grounds for extraordinary measures”.

According to securitization theory, the perceived imminent security threat is used to justify extraordinary measures. As irregular migrants are depicted e.g. as hostile invaders or as a natural disaster such as a flood, thereby having their humanity denied, they begin to be treated as such, resulting in a variety of hostile policy (Hammerstad, 2014: 268). One major policy response named by scholars of the securitization of migration is then migration control, ranging from the expansion of detention and deportation, to returning migrant boats at sea, to the failure to rescue migrants in distress, leaving migrants to potential death, the expansion of border control agencies such as the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) and national coast guards and the expansion of technologies of surveillance (Hammerstad, 2014: 268; Huysmans, 2000: 759; Huysmans and Squire, 2018: 307),.

Typical for a securitized issue, “highly visible and often symbolic security measures” (Boswell, 2007: 594) have been identified, e.g. with respect to the European Union’s Mediterranean sea borders. In 2002, for example, Italy declared a state of emergency upon the arrival of a ship carrying 928 Iraqi Kurds in Sicily in 2002 (Boswell, 2007: 595). More recent extraordinary measures include EU states’ failure to rescue asylum seekers in distress at sea (Hammerstad, 2014: 268), illegal pushbacks of asylum seekers (Cossé, 2021; Frelick and Randhawa, 2022: 24–26; Gkliati, 2022: 175–178; González Morales, 2020; Tondo, 2021), and the

criminalization of sea rescue by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Ragazzi, 2020: 27). Overall, the securitization of migration is thus shown to have an exclusionary and violent effect (Hammerstad, 2014: 268; Huysmans and Squire, 2018: 305). Analyses of the securitization of migration and its effects on migrants have thus led to propositions for desecuritization, i.e. taking migration out of the security policy arena (Hammerstad, 2011: 254–255). However, little research exists on how such a desecuritization could take place (Balzacq et al., 2016: 510; Huysmans and Squire, 2018: 305).

Securitization scholars thus importantly theorize processes of restrictions on migration, aiming to explain how migration became a major topic of political contention, increasing resource allocation and militarized responses. This process has been shown to have taken place in the EU, but also Australia and the US. The securitization approach thus provides an answer to the question classical migration theories, with their view that migration benefits countries of destination, struggled to answer.

However, securitization theory can be criticized for overemphasizing migration control. Firstly, it does not account for the types of migration that are actively encouraged by governments, e.g. through the introduction of the Blue Card in the EU in 2019 which is intended to simplify migration of highly skilled non-EU citizens. More crucially, securitization approaches with their focus on control and migration restrictions fail to explain the continuing arrival of large numbers of irregular migrants. This issue has been explored especially by autonomy of migration scholars, which I discuss in the next section.

Another important criticism pertains to securitization theory's focus on discursive origins of securitization. This approach is in stark contrast to the materialist analyses provided by classical migration theories as well as Gramscian analyses that I discuss after my discussion of the autonomy of migration perspective. Securitization theory's contribution thus lies in shedding light on issues of increasing migration control and discursive processes of securitization since the 1990s but does not provide a framework for analyzing continuing migratory movements despite restrictions or the role of economic factors in migration and its governance.

1.4. AUTONOMY OF MIGRATION

The Autonomy of Migration (AoM) approach is a theoretical approach largely developed by anthropologists and geographers. It draws on concepts from autonomous Marxism and understands itself as explicitly emancipatory. In this perspective, the importance of various actors, including migrants themselves, in the constitution of the border and of migration outcomes is emphasized (Hess, 2018: 93). AoM scholars share concerns regarding increasingly restrictive migration policy with securitization theorists, and share the view that migration is influenced by the structure of the labor market with classical migration theorists. However, they criticize these theories for overemphasizing control and the labor market respectively.

Instead, autonomy of migration scholars emphasize the aspect of agency and view migrants as important actors whose actions are neither fully determined by the labor market nor by mechanisms of migration control. While states might aim to restrict some movement, and have become more militarized, states nevertheless cannot gain complete control over people's mobility. The approach thus poses a critique to the idea of Europe as a sealed off 'fortress' (Bojadžijev and Karakayalı, 2007: 204–205; Casas-Cortes et al., 2015: 898), since this focus on securitization and control overemphasizes the power of institutions, while overlooking the impact of migrants' practices (Bojadžijev and Karakayalı, 2007: 204–205). Additionally, AoM theorists' post-structuralist view of the border draws attention to how mobility has not become uniformly restricted. Instead, while the mobility of some is restricted, procedures for border-crossing have been simplified for others. The approach's important contribution lies in decentering practices of governing and economic structures as solely determining migration. Instead, the impact of migrants' practices is taken seriously as a factor shaping realities of migration.

The autonomy of migration follows the autonomous Marxist tradition of operaismo, or workerism. Operaismo is a current of Marxism, with its roots in 1960s Italy, which emphasizes the "subjectivity of living labor as a constitutive and antagonistic element of the capital relation" (Mezzadra, 2011: 123). It is thus an approach that is opposed to an economic, objectivist reading of Marx. Instead of

developing according to economic laws, history is viewed to be shaped by working class struggles, as for example technological developments are conceived as responses to workers' resistance, e.g. in the form of strikes (Hess, 2018: 94; Scheel, 2013: 581). Autonomous Marxism thus puts the spotlight on political and social struggles of the working class, which are defined broadly: Resistance is not limited to organized movements but includes imperceptible and unorganized forms of withdrawal and subversion, e.g. slow working, or, as autonomy of migration scholars have argued, migration (Hess, 2018: 94).

While the securitization approach explains processes of restrictions to migration, the autonomy of migration framework provides an explanation for governments' and international institutions' (partial) failure to control migration. Already in 2004, leading migration scholar Stephen Castles attested that in "recent years, [immigration control] has gone right to the top of the political agenda" (2004: 205). He poses the question why states seem unable to reach their goals of inhibiting unwanted immigration despite such a focus on immigration control: "Yet the more that states and supranational bodies do to restrict and manage migration, the less successful they seem to be" (Castles, 2004: 205). One of his answers is migrants' agency: their refusal "to stay put just because the receiving state says they are not welcome" (Castles, 2004: 209). This analysis of the impact of migrants' practices has been developed further in the autonomy of migration literature.

Autonomy of Migration theorists view migration as a never fully controllable force, focusing on migrants' adaptive strategies to overcome barriers that immigration control policy puts in their way (Wagner, 2010: 230). The autonomy of migration approach thus critiques the idea of Europe as a fortress, used by pro-migration social movements and critical scholars since the 1990s (Georgi, 2019b: 563) and mirrored in securitization analyses, as overemphasizing institutions' ability to restrict mobility (Scheel, 2013: 583). This control bias is then criticized for distracting from possibilities and actual instances of subversion. Scheel (2015: 1) thus proposes a "relational understanding of autonomy as a relation of conflict between migration and the attempts to control it and migrants' practices of appropriation".

AoM scholars thus agree with securitization scholars' assessment that migration has increasingly become governed from a security perspective, resulting in increased restriction, brutality, and border militarization. For example, focusing on the increased use of biometrics in visa processing, Scheel (2013) argues that technological developments have had a real impact in reducing migration to the EU through 'visa shopping'. Visa shopping refers to the practice of applying for visas at multiple EU embassies in the hope that one of them could provide a visa, and then overstaying this visa. Nevertheless, migrants continue to cross borders despite restrictions. Autonomy of migration theorists view migrants' practices as continuously challenging these control attempts (Bojadžijev and Karakayalı, 2007: 204–205). Migrant practices and policies of control are thus among various forces reacting to each other, mutually shaping one another (Casas-Cortes et al., 2015: 895).

Theorists of the autonomy of migration do not view the migrant as a passive victim whose actions are completely structurally determined, by immigration control policy in the case of securitization theory, or by the push and pull factors arising especially from labor markets in classical migration theory (Bojadžijev and Karakayalı, 2007: 204; Casas-Cortes et al., 2015: 898; Hess, 2018: 85; Mezzadra, 2011: 126; Scheel, 2013: 579). Instead, the practices of migrants matter. The autonomy of migration approach thus importantly introduces migrants as crucial actors, whose practices have effects that need to be taken into account in the study of migration and border regimes. The border regime becomes theorized "as a space of constant tension [...] in the face of power and agency of the migration movements" (Hess, 2018: 93). The approach decenters the state, its policies, agencies and discourses, and the labor market as the main foci of study, by arguing for an analysis of the various conflicting forces that constitute the border/migration regime to include migration itself.

An autonomous Marxist approach to the topic of migration thus leads to the conceptualization of the mobility of people as prior to its regulation. The focus on the state and control is replaced with the perspective of migration movements themselves (Scheel, 2013: 581). Migration, viewed as the mobility of 'living labor', is then a force that resists conditions of (re)production by withdrawing itself, thereby refusing to be governed a certain way (Hess, 2018: 93; Moulrier-Boutang, 2007: 172).

Capitalist developments are then not only reactions to profit rate dynamics, but also reactions to the practices of labor, which include migration, that capitalism aims to control (Hess, 2018: 94). The regulation of mobility becomes conceived as a response to human migration (Genova, 2017: 5; Moulier-Boutang, 2007: 170).

In the AoM perspective, migration often constitutes a strategy of freeing oneself from an exploitative or oppressive situation. By migrating, people take their destiny into their own hands. Bojadžijev and Karakayalı (2007: 209) thus view migration as dialectical in the sense that mobility can simultaneously be a source of exploitation as well as a resistance strategy to exploitation. Migration is thus neither viewed as a heroic movement that will bring capitalism to fall, nor as a natural consequence of capitalism in which passive migrants obey whatever capital demands of them. In contrast to classical migration theories, migration is not simply viewed as a dependent variable of labor market forces (Scheel, 2013: 579). Instead, migration is viewed as a social movement, in the sense that it is a “world-making collective practice” (Hess, 2018: 95), rather than an organized movement with a defined ideology. It is a transformative and political project in which migrants reshape their living conditions (Papadopoulos et al., 2008: 202) and create realities of mobility that institutions then need to react and adapt to (Scheel, 2013: 580). Nevertheless, the social and economic context matters: Neoliberal restructuring has thus shaped the conditions “within and against which” migrants’ autonomous, stubborn practices take their forms (Mezzadra, 2011: 129). AoM theorists thus include materialist analyses of structural conditions but refrain from a purely structuralist explanation of migration and its governance.

The historic ‘long summer of migration’ in 2015 functions as an example that showcases the strength migration movements can have. What has frequently been termed a migration or refugee crisis, has instead been termed a historic and structural defeat of the European border regime by autonomy of migration scholars (Hess et al., 2017: 6). In this analysis, migrants came to Europe not as victims or cheap labor but as political subjects who were able to withdraw themselves from attempts to control their mobility (Hess et al., 2017).

This conceptualization of migration goes hand in hand with an anti-essentialist theorization of the border. In border studies, borders have commonly

become studied from a constructivist perspective, in terms of practices and processes of bordering rather than as static lines marking states' territories (Hess, 2018: 86). The border is thus viewed as an effect of practices of different actors, such as border guards and politicians but also journalists, transportation workers, and NGO staff (Genova, 2017: 5; Hess, 2018: 92). Autonomy of migration theorists additionally insist on the importance of migrants themselves as a crucial force in constituting the border (Hess, 2018: 93). At the border, the social movement of migration thus interacts with states' practices of restriction, creating a struggle between these and other actors' practices (Hess, 2018: 95).

Additionally, the autonomy of migration literature importantly draws attention to borders' function beyond exclusion. Borders are viewed as productive ordering technologies that filter, ascribe new statuses, and differentiate, a "transformational regime of rights and statuses" (Hess, 2018: 88). In contrast to understandings of border regimes as based on power as repressive and borders as only exclusionary, the autonomy of migration literature employs a Foucauldian view of borders as productive (Hess, 2018: 86; Mezzadra and Neilson, 2013: 7). Far from being impenetrable barriers, only characterized by restriction, borders are crossed by millions every day. It is thus important to understand who can cross which borders how and under what circumstances and what status is ascribed to the person upon border-crossing. The border is thus viewed to simultaneously exclude and include, produce categories of people, (re)produce hierarchies between these categories and differentially include them, e.g. as illegalized immigrants, citizens or temporary work permit holders (Casas-Cortes et al., 2015: 899; Georgi, 2019b: 563; Mezzadra and Neilson, 2013: 7; Scheel, 2013: 581–582). These categorizations thus also produce migrant illegality, paving the way for labor subordination and economic exploitation as the threat of deportation functions to discipline illegalized and precarized migrants and those with insecure residence statuses into a docile, flexible workforce (Casas-Cortes et al., 2015: 902–903; Genova, 2016: 49–50; Mezzadra, 2011: 131; Scheel, 2013: 581–582).

The autonomy of migration approach thus provides a shift in focus away from both the apparatuses of control and economically determinist approaches that explain migration in terms of labor market demands, and instead aims to view migration as

both reacting to and shaping these apparatuses (Casas-Cortes et al., 2015: 895). An important contribution of the AoM approach is its introduction of a diversity of actors and practices whose struggles with each other ultimately shape the migration regime. Migration is thus not reduced to one factor, but viewed as constituted through the practices of governments, migrants, as well as capitalist structures and others, such as activists, journalists or coast guards. However, the theory's focus lies on the practices of migrants, leaving the other actors, practices and structures somewhat undertheorized. Analyses of structural factors thus remain somewhat weak. Nevertheless, AoM theorists have importantly shown that migrants' practices constitute an important force that governments may aim, but struggle, to control.

1.5. HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

Finally, historical materialist border regime analysis, builds upon autonomy of migration perspectives but aims to provide a more materialist analysis of migration governance. It draws on the thoughts of Marxist theorists Antonio Gramsci and Nicos Poulantzas, who incorporate theorizations of the state into Marxist thought. In this view, the state is a social relationship arising from social struggles (Wagner, 2010: 229), consisting of a "fragmented ensemble of state apparatuses" (Buckel et al., 2017: 10). Contrary to mainstream international relations theory, the state is thus not conceptualized as having defined, uncontested interests. Instead, the state includes civil society and different hegemony projects struggling to establish themselves.

Historical materialist border regime analysis thus does not view the state as a black box, but instead highlights the different interests of different social factions whose struggles for hegemony compete and require alliances. Hegemony is defined as a form of moral or ideological leadership, where dominated classes to some extent consent to being ruled by the dominant class, and the use of coercion takes on a less prominent role (Cox, 1983: 164). Applied to border regime analysis, how migration is governed is thus viewed as dependent on changing alliances aiming to implement different hegemony projects (Buckel et al., 2017: 16). This perspective thus provides a framework for analyzing different tendencies' simultaneity and their interactions:

While (some) migration is viewed to be in the immediate interest of capitalist and neoliberal forces, the necessity to create some consent to neoliberal governance also means that interests of e.g. conservative anti-immigrant factions or left-liberal factions can play a role in shaping migration policy. The historical materialist perspective thereby allows for analyses of change, and aims to create a framework that is able to incorporate various tendencies within one framework. Securitization processes, moments of increased openness, migrants' struggles to overcome borders, capitalist structures and crises are thus all included in the historical materialist analysis of border regimes.

Additionally, historical materialist analysts of border regimes aim to understand migration regimes as closely linked to capitalist structures and crises. Their analysis thus aims to add a deeper understanding of materialist structures and their effects on migration policy, taking into account how also restrictions of migration can be explained with reference to capitalist structures.

The historical materialist approach follows autonomy of migration scholars' suggestion to view migration regimes as outcomes of struggles between diverse actors, including the 'stubborn' practices of migrants themselves (Georgi, 2016: 185). However, this approach aims to emphasize a political economy perspective and therefore argues that structural contradictions' effects on the development of migration regimes need to be a focus of analysis. In this regard, the difference between this perspective and the autonomy of migration approach is then rather a difference of emphasis: Both recognize the importance of autonomous aspects of migration as well as the effects of political economic structures, but stress the analysis of one over the other (Georgi, 2016: 186–187).

Materialist border regime analysis argues that it is necessary to fully analyze how border regimes are linked to structural contradictions of capitalist socialization in order to contribute to overcoming these border regimes (Georgi, 2016: 187). Autonomy should thus be understood as relational and analyzed in conjunction with the structures in which it takes place and which limit and shape it (Georgi, 2016: 187). The behavior of states is viewed as importantly shaping the realities of migration: although states cannot fully control migration, their policies strongly shape how difficult, dangerous, and expensive irregular migration becomes. The

historical materialist approach's emphasis on analyzing structural conditions thus highlights the restrictive components of migration regimes. An exaggerated focus on autonomy is viewed to distract from aspects of heteronomy, i.e. of being ruled, as Georgi (2019b: 558) argues. He thus attempts to understand the dynamics, effects, and relations of 'fortress-building' projects.

This focus on mechanisms of control and restriction resembles the analyses of securitization scholars. Both theories aim to understand how the contemporary focus on migration control can be analyzed. However, in contrast to securitization theory, historical materialist approaches analyze the expansion of restriction in materialist terms, focusing on its relation to the regulation of contradictions in capitalist reproduction as well as according to struggles between different hegemony projects. Georgi (2016: 188) thus suggests to contextualize the practices of different actors involved in the border regime using political economy approaches.

Capitalism is viewed as prone to crises of accumulation, and therefore as requiring ways of regulating its contradictions in order to reproduce itself (Georgi, 2016: 188). Regulation can for instance take the form of state intervention into economic and social processes, or of social norms and rules. Georgi (2016) identifies several structural contradictions related to migration, relating firstly to reasons for migration and secondly to understanding origins of anti-immigrant ideas.

The first contradiction analyzes the structural conditions that contribute to increases in migration. It relates to the negative effects of accumulation processes on the global working class, on the one hand, and humans' capacity to make their own history, responding to crises and exploitation, on the other hand (Georgi, 2019b: 559). In the neoliberal period, especially people in the Global South are faced with multiple crises including climate change, agriculture, and food crises; they lack sufficient opportunities to sell their labor. Privatization of land as part of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2011: 159), typical for the neoliberal period, has led to expulsions and dispossession (Georgi, 2019b: 568). Additionally, conflicts over the distribution of resources in this context can be a factor contributing to the outbreak of (civil) wars or other large-scale violence (Georgi, 2019b: 568).

Following arguments from the autonomy of migration literature, such crises are likely to be met with various forms of resistance, one of which constitutes 'exit'

or migration (Georgi, 2016: 194–195): “emigration since the 1970s within the so-called Global South and from the Global South to the North, can be interpreted, at least to a large degree, as militant strategies with which sections of the global working class have resisted the dispossession, displacement, and destruction of the capitalist multicrisis” (Georgi, 2019: 569). Migration is thus seen as an act taking place in the context of and as one possible response to these structural conditions.

The second contradiction deals with migration in terms of labor and production. It arises from one important way in which capitalism has been regulated in the face of class struggle and capitalist contradictions in the Global North since the end of the 19th century: The working class has been granted some social rights and political representation and thereby become invested in the nation state. Balibar (2014: 154–160), in a speech originally given in 1999, argues that through material concessions in the form of the welfare state, the working class became invested in what he calls the national social state. Social policy and nationalism thus became combined in order to regulate capitalist contradictions, making national working classes reliant on the state and thereby contributing to the reproduction of the nation state (Balibar, 2014: 154; Buckel et al., 2017: 8; Georgi, 2016: 199). The recipients of social rights, i.e. the citizens and legal residents of welfare states, have an interest in maintaining these rights, as they have an interest in selling their labor under the best possible conditions (Georgi, 2016: 196–197). Restrictive border regimes are then also a way for citizens of the welfare states of the Global North to protect their relatively privileged position from migrants’ attempts to gain access to them. The lack of internationalist solidarity between working classes is thus explained through Northern working classes’ investment in the national social state.

Additionally, in order for compromises to remain in the interest of capitalist factions and therefore not decrease profit rates more than necessary to establish hegemony, such concessions should not be available to anyone but need to remain limited to some people or some spaces. In this logic, welfare states are required to limit access to social rights through hierarchization and exclusion. In this respect, it is thus in the interest of capitalist factions to limit access to welfare states. One way to limit this access is through limiting the access to the territory through migration

control. However, this interest of capitalist factions competes with their interest in increasing the availability of cheap labor (Georgi, 2016: 196–197).

Finally, the third contradiction refers to racism as a relation of domination defining distribution of power, rights and material resources along bodily and cultural lines. Racism is argued to arise from national chauvinism arising from the nation state system within the capitalist economic order (Georgi, 2016: 198). Next to social rights in the welfare states, racism is viewed as an important way of establishing hegemony, through which capitalist crises can be regulated. Following Gramsci, the establishment of hegemony requires the consent of parts of the ruled population (Cox, 1983: 163–164). To attain consent for compromises that are ultimately in the interest of the ruling class, some real concessions to parts of the ruled population need to be made (Cox, 1983: 163). In the national social state, these concessions include the welfare state, but also the symbolic and material elevation of the national and European, imagined as white, over other populations (Georgi, 2019a: 108). Racism thus functions as a way to create consent for capitalist hegemony. Although racism might not always be in the immediate interest of capitalist factions, e.g. their interest in the acquisition of cheap labor from abroad at a certain point in time, racism contributes to the consent of national-conservative and chauvinist forces for capitalist hegemony. Capitalist crises have thus been regulated through the granting of privileges to limited groups of people, thereby creating consent for this way of being ruled. Georgi (2019b: 559) argues that in order to reproduce itself, capitalism thus depends on restrictive border regimes, as restrictions are necessary to regulate the contradiction between migrants' strategies to access privileges in the Global North while consent to hegemony in the Global North has largely depended on the exclusivity of access to social rights and status. However, the historical materialist approach also draws attention to the possibility of shifts in alliances between different hegemony project, which is the topic of the next section.

Focusing on the emancipatory potential of this historical materialist analysis of migration, Agustín and Jørgensen (2016a: 12–14) apply Gramsci's concept of misplaced alliances, by drawing a parallel between Gramsci's analysis of prejudices against Southern Italians and contemporary welfare chauvinism and racism. Gramsci argued that for emancipation, it is necessary to fight misplaced alliances, as a way of

increasing solidarity between different subaltern classes (Mayo, 2022: 92). For example, Gramsci argues that the Northern bourgeoisie attempted to create prejudices against Southerners among Northern workers. Thereby, instead of acting in solidarity with Southern peasants and creating alliances, this type of propaganda, as Gramsci terms it, was meant to convince Northern workers to blame Southerners instead of capitalism for their hardships (Agustín and Jørgensen, 2016a: 12–13). Applied to migration, working class support for anti-immigrant and racist forces, ideas and parties is viewed as such a misplaced alliance: instead of blaming neoliberal restructuring for their precarious living conditions and the dismantlement of the welfare state, migrants are viewed as responsible (Agustín and Jørgensen, 2016b: 153; Mayo, 2016: 135). This historic combination then functions as an explanation for working class nationalism, racism, and anti-immigrant views in the face of original Marxist arguments for an internationalist working class.

Historical materialist scholars thus see support for anti-immigrant forces as a misplaced response to hardships of neoliberalism, enabled by racism in the national social state. In contrast to securitization theorists who also identify the idea that migrants undermine the welfare state as contributing to the image of migrants as a threat, the historical materialist perspective thus argues that this resistance to accepting migrants into the community of beneficiaries of a welfare state stems from the history and functioning of capitalist regulation. In this logic of the welfare state, as a concession to working classes in exchange for consent, limiting who has access to social rights becomes crucial, and contributes to a racist, exclusionary border regime.

Additionally, the historical materialist analysis of migration and border regimes highlights the possibilities for change in policies over time. Different hegemony projects struggle to implement ways of governing migration according to their logics, relying on alliances with other actors. In this way, as the strength of social factions changes, alliances and border regimes can change. The concrete shape of border regimes thus remains a struggle between different hegemony projects (Buckel et al., 2017: 23). The historical materialist approach thus provides a way to analyze processes of change over time, complying with Cox' (1981: 135) analysis of what a critical theory should be able to do.

Buckel et al. (2017: 24–30) identify four main hegemony projects in the battle over migration policy. The neoliberal hegemony project aims for a partial liberalization of migration according to a logic of economic utility. Migration of those who are considered useful for fulfilling accumulation needs is thus encouraged. However, capital factions are argued to simultaneously benefit from racism and the disenfranchisement of migrants, as it provides a vulnerable work force that fulfils neoliberal demands of flexibility (Giorgi, 2010: 160). The conservative/right-wing hegemony project views migrants as a cultural and social threat and is therefore characterized by an anti-immigrant stance. The national-social and pro-European social hegemony projects' focus lies on the protection of social rights of European nationals and residents, opposing neoliberal interests in lowering wages and labor standards. The project also supports the protection of human rights, including those of migrants. Its view on migration is thus that migration should be organized in such a way that it does not threaten labor standards while not violating migrants' rights. The left-liberal hegemony project emphasizes human rights, civil rights, minority rights and social equity. It has a cosmopolitan view of Europe, criticizes restrictive migration policies and supports mobility.

The dominant neoliberal hegemony project is thus compatible with multiple other hegemony projects. To make its goals of migration politically feasible, policy demands from other hegemony projects are integrated into the border regime (Buckel et al., 2017: 25). The contemporary focus on restrictions of mobility can be understood as a political compromise between mostly neoliberal and right-wing/conservative actors. Neoliberal actors' interest in facilitating migration of those considered as economically useful is faced with a forceful resurgence of right-wing anti-immigrant social forces. This resurgence is explained firstly as a counter-reaction to various defeats experienced by chauvinist forces (Georgi, 2019a: 102). These defeats include the increasing organization of anti-racist forces in Europe as well as the success of over a million asylum seekers reaching Europe within one year in 2015/16 despite existing restrictive border policy, but also the alignment of neoliberal actors with somewhat pro-migration agendas. Secondly, the erosion of social rights and rising inequality under neoliberal hegemony have encouraged the mobilization of parts of the population in the Global North by right-wing forces, as

people aim to protect their access to social rights. In the historical materialist analysis, welfare chauvinism is thus situated in the neoliberal context of the erosion of the Fordist welfare state (Buckel et al., 2017: 28; Georgi, 2019a; Trimikliniotis, 2018). The resurgence of right-wing anti-immigrant social forces is then argued to have resulted in an alliance between neoliberal and right-wing actors and the political compromise of combining some neoliberal liberalization of migration for those who are considered economically useful with the restriction of mobility for the rest (Georgi, 2019b: 569).

However, this alliance is not viewed as immutable, and other hegemony projects have also had their policies realized to some extent, as especially an analysis of the long summer of migration in 2015 shows. Historical materialist scholars thus argue that the alliance between neoliberal and conservative and right-wing actors, which has dominated the border regime of the last decades was temporarily destabilized with the so-called refugee crisis in 2015. In this long summer of migration, in which the Dublin System became momentarily suspended and over a million asylum seekers successfully reached countries in Central and Northern Europe, a temporary shift towards an alliance between left-liberal and neoliberal forces, welcoming the newly arriving migrants, has been identified (Agustín and Jørgensen, 2016a: 10; Georgi, 2016: 191). Historical materialist scholars view the 'long summer of migration' of 2015 not as a crisis of migration but instead as a crisis of the European border regime. Like scholars of the autonomy of migration approach, they view migrants' practices as an important factor in explaining the temporary collapse of the border regimes at the external EU borders and within the EU.

However, materialist border regime scholars also draw attention to other forces: Focusing on Germany, Georgi (2016: 191) firstly identifies the strength of the left-wing pro-migration movement, including self-organized refugee movements, as an important factor in ensuring a relatively human rights-conforming response to migrants' success at overcoming restrictive border policy. This movement had contributed to shifting the discourse towards the left over the years. Accordingly, in 2015 not just the typical activists but less politically organized people of different ages in rural and urban areas became involved in welcoming new arrivals. In 2016,

some optimistic Gramscian commentators even saw this large-scale civil society response of welcoming newly arriving migrants in 2015 as an act of solidarity that could signify the emergence of a new historic bloc from the ‘crisis’ (Agustín and Jørgensen, 2016a: 10).

Additionally, Georgi (2016: 191–192) argues that a large share of neoliberal actors also supported the partial opening of borders in 2015, as they thought it could benefit their labor market needs and help mitigate demographic concerns (Georgi, 2016: 191). The temporary, partial openness of the migration regime until spring 2016 is thus attributed to a combination of the autonomy of migration and the temporary, partial alliance of the neoliberal and left-liberal hegemony projects (Georgi, 2016: 192).

In retrospect, the long summer of migration of 2015 constituted only a brief shift in the border regime, followed by ever-increasing restrictions and brutality (Georgi, 2019b: 560; Mitsilegas et al., 2020: 5). The neoliberal-conservative alliance has re-established its dominant position, while incorporating some aspects from other hegemony projects. The subsequent increasing restrictions on migration are then explained with reference to the increasingly organized counter-movement of chauvinist forces belonging to the national-conservative hegemony project (Georgi, 2016: 192). Georgi (2019b: 569) thus views changing government responses to migrants’ practices to somewhat reflect the struggles and changing balances and alliances between different hegemony projects, as they strive for a hegemonic position.

In this historical materialist perspective, the increasingly securitized border regime is viewed as a response to failed regulation: It is the attempt to solve, if necessary by force, the crisis of anti-immigrant interests in the Global North and the simultaneously expansion of migration as a strategy by people affected by multiple crises in the Global South. However, especially the EU migration policy’s shift towards externalization, including elements that seek to address migration preventatively through development policy, can also be understood as a concession to left-liberal forces who criticize human rights violations and border violence in the EU. In the final chapter, which focuses on EU migration policy practices vis-à-vis Africa, I discuss in more detail in what ways externalization can be viewed as

integrating the left-liberal project's rights-based approach with the conservative goal of reducing immigration.

1.6. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have discussed different theoretical approaches to understand how contemporary migration policy in the Global North can be explained. I argue that all four theories discussed make important contributions that enable my analysis of EU migration policy in the following chapters.

Classical migration theories aim to understand why people migrate. They largely analyze migrations in terms of labor, identifying unfavorable labor market conditions in countries of origin and favorable conditions in countries of destination as main determinants of migration. Classical migration theories thus illuminate how migration is embedded in the labor market and capitalist reproduction. However, they lack an understanding of political decision-making and struggle to explain why governments restrict migration. Nevertheless, states focused on limiting migration have employed policy based on classical migration theories' assumptions, aiming to address push factors in order to reduce migration, as I discuss in more detail in the next chapters.

Securitization theory on the other hand focuses on how migration is governed, and specifically how migration has become increasingly restricted. As a constructivist theory, it focuses on the processes through which migration became widely perceived and treated as a security threat that requires the allocation of extraordinary resources and increasingly militarized responses typical for security issues. Securitization approaches thus make an important contribution to understanding how migration became such a central topic in contemporary politics and explains the ubiquity of restrictions on migration since the 1990s. It is widely recognized that a process in which migration has become viewed as a security issue by policy makers and large parts of populations has taken place in Europe. However, securitization theory can be criticized for an overemphasis on control, thereby becoming unable to explain the continuing arrivals of migrants in the EU. Additionally, as a constructivist theory, it lacks a materialist dimension.

Criticizing this overemphasis on control in securitization approaches, the autonomy of migration approach emphasizes migrants' autonomous practices and argues that states can never gain complete control over people's mobility. The approach thus poses a critique to the idea of Europe as a sealed off 'fortress' (Bojadžijev and Karakayalı, 2007: 204–205; Casas-Cortes et al., 2015: 898), since this focus on securitization and control overemphasizes the power of institutions, while overlooking the impact of migrants' practices (Bojadžijev and Karakayalı, 2007: 204–205). Viewing the border regime as a result of struggles between various actors including both migrants and securitizing government actors, allows the autonomy of migration approach to take into account the practices of migrants in their interaction with government practices. The approach can thus explain the shifting strategies of migrants and government institutions as they react to each other. This autonomous Marxist approach in combination with the post-structural view of the border, can explain why restrictions have not led to an end of migrant arrivals in the EU. However, it has been criticized that the focus on autonomy distracts from an analysis of the structural factors determining mobility and its governance.

Historical materialist border regime analysis brings together important contributions of these other theories in a critical way. In contrast to the purely economic analyses of classical migration theories and the lacking materialism of securitization approaches, historical materialist border regime analysis provides a critical analysis of structural contradictions in the reproduction of capitalism, arguing that migration restrictions function as a way to regulate these contradictions. However, migration and border regimes are not simplistically reduced to these structural factors. Instead, following Gramscian and Poulantzas-based understandings of the state, diverse forces, their alliances and projects striving for hegemony are identified. This approach allows for a nuanced analysis of shifts in migration and border regimes as based on shifts in the configuration of these forces, which include the autonomy of migration. Both restrictions and their absence can thus be analyzed with reference to the struggle for hegemony between different forces, as their balance shifts. The historical materialist approach thus provides a more nuanced understanding of political economic dynamics, situates the source of

control-based policies within capitalist structures, and situates migrants' autonomous practices within materialist structures.

Overall, the theories presented above analyze migration and its governance in terms of economics and the labor market, security and control, the autonomy of mobility, and capitalist reproduction and struggles between different social forces respectively. As I will show in the following chapters, aspects of all these theoretical frameworks can be found in the EU's migration policy: The assumptions of classical migration theories can be found to form the basis of preventative EU migration policy targeted at 'addressing root causes' of migration. Securitization theory is useful to analyze how an overall agenda of migration control became dominant in the EU and how extraordinary, militarized responses to migration have become legitimized. The Autonomy of Migration approach allows for an understanding of the failures of securitized European migration policies, as e.g. migrants', civil society's and third states' practices importantly impact the realities of migration. Finally, historical materialist border regime analysis can illuminate how struggles between different social forces within Europe have contributed to a shift towards allegedly preventative, migrant-friendly migration policy instruments.

CHAPTER 2

EU MIGRATION POLICY

2.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I aim to understand the external component of EU migration policy. I discuss the development of important components of EU migration policy since the 1990s, focusing on international cooperation, to propose an answer to the following research questions: How has EU migration policy developed since the 1990s? How have shifts to externalization and development-based migration policies been criticized?

I argue, firstly, that inner-EU disagreements on internal components of migration policy and the logic of internal freedom of movement have led to a rapidly expanding external component of EU migration policy, focused first on external border control and cooperation in the direct European neighborhood, but now increasingly directed towards ‘addressing root causes’, through development projects, far away from the EU. Secondly, critical assessments of externalization and development-based migration policies suggest that the external component does not have the potential to provide a genuinely preventative approach, relying on widely challenged assumptions regarding the effect of development aid on migration, and oriented towards containing migration away from the EU, thereby enabling the EU to evade protection responsibilities towards asylum seekers, while subverting development and human rights principles.

In this chapter, I trace the development of EU migration policy, focusing on its external components. Until the 1990s, there was no common European migration policy, which is the reason my analysis of European policy begins in the 1990s. Before that, I give a short overview of the Cold War period, in which international elements of migration governance were largely limited to the international refugee regime. In the 1990s and early 2000s, first steps were made towards internal harmonization and the development of external policy tools. In the period up to 2015, external migration governance gradually expanded, with increasing attempts at cooperation on migration with countries outside of Europe. In 2015 and 2016,

migration policy moved to the top of the agenda, leading to significant expansion of its external component, expanding border security-based cooperation as well as new ways of linking development and migration policy. Since then, trends of governing migration away from EU territory and the use of development funding have been further consolidated. In the final section, I situate trends in EU external policy within academic discussions on externalization, including the linkage between migration and development as a form of externalization that is often presented as especially migrant- and development-friendly, improving conditions in countries of origin and transit so as to enable migrants to stay in their country or region of origin. I present criticisms from development, human rights, and empirical migration studies perspectives, which cast doubts on the preventative potential of the linkage between migration and development. I further evaluate these criticisms in the analysis of the implementation of EU migration policy vis-à-vis Africa, in the final chapter.

2.2. EU MIGRATION POLICY

2.2.1. Migration Management during the Cold War: National Policies and the International Refugee Regime

While migration is a highly international phenomenon, until the 1990s its governance was largely concentrated in interior ministries. An important exception is the international refugee regime, which has its origins in the interwar period and was formally established in its current form with the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 (Betts and Loescher, 2011; Kunz et al., 2011). The Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, which lifted geographic and temporal limitations of the original convention, define who qualifies as a refugee, what rights they have, and what responsibilities states have to asylum seekers and recognized refugees. An important principle of the Refugee Convention is the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the expulsion or return of refugees to “territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion” (Secretary-General of the United Nations, 1951: Article 33). The Convention is a United Nations (UN)

multilateral treaty, whose norms are codified in binding international law and are promoted by an international organization, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The EU has incorporated the Convention in its Charter of Fundamental Rights (Lucarelli, 2021: 21).

States, especially host countries in the Global North, have been reluctant to commit themselves to further multilateral binding norms, largely insisting that control over who enters a territory remains in the realm of national sovereignty (Kunz et al., 2011: 1). Further obstacles to greater international codification include the variety of interests within migrant-receiving state of the Global North, on the one hand, and the conflicting interests between countries of immigration in the Global North and countries of emigration in the Global South, on the other. Within migrant-receiving countries, economic interests in both high-skilled migrants and labor market flexibility provided by easily exploitable irregular migrants, who have less access to social rights, are in tension with security interests of reducing migration and humanitarian commitments (Kunz et al., 2011: 1–2). The creation of further binding norms has thus been argued not to be in the interest of countries in the Global North (Bisong, 2019: 1294). Despite the lack of a comprehensive multilateral framework, international governance of migration is taking place, through a variety of elements including Regional Consultative Processes and partnership agreements (Bisong, 2019: 1294; Kunz et al., 2011: 9–12).

2.2.2. First Steps towards a Common EU Migration Policy: Internal Harmonization and Beginnings of a Common External Approach

The 1990s and early 2000s saw the beginning of the development of common EU policies in the areas of migration and asylum. A policy focus was on harmonization among member states, especially regarding internal elements, driven by the abolition of internal borders within the Schengen area (Chetail, 2015: 4). As internal borders were abolished, focus on controlling external borders also increased (Huysmans, 2000: 755). First steps towards external migration governance were thus taken. This period is characterized by increased interest in external migration policy and international cooperation on the side of the EU, but also by a lack of common

objectives with partner countries outside of the direct European neighborhood and resulting hurdles to cooperation on EU policy objectives such as readmission agreements.

In 1990, the Dublin Convention was agreed upon, coming into effect in 1997, to regulate which member state is responsible for asylum applications. According to the Dublin Convention, responsibility for asylum seekers lies with the EU member state which the asylum seeker first enters. Consequently, member states at the EU's external borders, especially Spain, Italy and Greece are theoretically responsible for the vast majority of asylum procedures (Bilgic and Pace, 2017: 90; Kasperek, 2019: 212). In practice, many asylum seekers move on before they are registered and thus place their application in countries further North (Thym, 2022a: 17).

With the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997, the issue of asylum shifted from the inter-governmental third pillar to the first pillar, i.e. community competence, and a common visa policy was created (Chetail, 2015: 9). At the 1999 Tampere European Council, the EU began negotiations on a Common European Asylum System (CEAS) as part of the *area of freedom, security and justice* framework (Chetail, 2015: 3). As true harmonization was hindered by a lack of agreement among member states, the CEAS at first established only minimum standards, instead of common standards. It has been widely criticized for beginning a 'race to the bottom' harmonization (Chetail, 2015: 12).

In the 1990s, first steps towards the externalization of EU migration policy have also been identified. These steps centered on the issues of readmission, and visa policy. They do not constitute a comprehensive program and were largely focused on the direct European neighborhood. Initial instruments to manage migration outside of EU territory were the coordination of visa policies among Schengen members, carrier liability for transportation companies that allowed migrants without required documentation to travel, and the sending of officers to oversee documentation checks at foreign airports (Lavenex, 2006: 334). Cooperation with non-EU countries also slowly began in the early 1990s through designating countries as 'safe third countries', where asylum seekers could be returned, and their asylum claims could be examined. Additionally, in 1991, the Schengen states and Poland signed the first readmission agreement, in which Poland agreed to readmit both Polish and third

country nationals who had transited through Poland. In the Declaration of the Edinburgh European Council in 1992, it was recommended that member states reach such readmission agreements on a bilateral or multilateral basis (Lavenex, 2006: 334). Initially, these intergovernmental cooperations were limited to the direct neighborhood of the EU (Lavenex, 2006: 334). EU enlargement processes made cooperation with aspiring member countries comparatively easy, as strict migration control standards became a condition for membership (Lavenex, 2006: 334–335).

First proposals for a comprehensive external migration policy were made by the European Commission in its Communications on Immigration in 1991 and 1994. The Commission proposed a comprehensive external migration policy, suggesting that immigration should be addressed as part of the EU's external policy, and that root causes of immigration should be tackled through linking migration policy to external policy fields including development, trade, foreign, and security policy (Lavenex, 2006: 333). However, the Commission lacked competence in this field. EU migration policy thus remained limited to control-based instruments, especially in the form of restrictive visa regimes and return of irregular migrants (Lavenex, 2006: 335).

In the late 1990s, the EU agreed on a more comprehensive external approach to migration but faced obstacles regarding implementation. In 1998, a High Level Working Group on Migration and Asylum (HLWG) was set up to establish a “common, integrated, cross-pillar approach targeted at the situation in the most important countries of origin of asylum seekers and migrants” (Lavenex, 2006: 335). At the 1999 Tampere European Council, both the creation of a Common European Asylum System was decided upon and the external dimension of EU asylum and migration policy was officially embraced (Haddad, 2008: 191; Lavenex, 2006: 333–336). The Tampere decisions provided a political mandate for the combination of migration and asylum policy with external policy, in the light of increased numbers of refugees fleeing the Kosovo war (Haddad, 2008: 191). Explicit reference was made to partnerships with countries of origin, and to addressing the economic and political situation in countries of origin and transit, e.g. through combating poverty, improving job opportunities, preventing conflicts and ensuring respect for human rights (Haddad, 2008: 191; Hayes et al., 2003: 72; Lavenex, 2006: 335).

Initial attempts at international cooperation, however, showed few results. At the Tampere summit, six action plans prepared by the HLWG were accepted (Hayes et al., 2003: 72). Their implementation was not successful, as interests of partners were lacking in the plans (Hayes et al., 2003: 72). For example, the Action Plan for Morocco was rejected by Morocco, on the grounds that Morocco had not been consulted in its preparation (Reslow, 2012b: 394).

First attempts at linking migration policy to other external policy issues took place in 2000 but faced resistance from partner countries. Migration became a topic in negotiations on the Cotonou Agreement between the EU and the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP). Despite its objective of poverty reduction, the EU pushed to include a clause on readmission into the 2000 Cotonou Agreement at the last minute: ACP countries would have to admit not only their own nationals, but also transiting migrants from other countries (Knoll, 2017: 241). Upon resistance from ACP countries, the clause was watered down to an agreement about future negotiations on bilateral readmission agreements. ACP countries' interests on the topic of migration were thus vastly different from EU objectives: ACP states voiced their interest in harnessing the benefits migration has on development, e.g. by making the transfer of remittances less costly, and on the rights of their citizens abroad (Knoll, 2017: 242–244). Initial links between development cooperation and migration policy were thus made, by including a clause on migration in the 2000 Cotonou Agreement. However, diverging interests between ACP countries and the EU meant that little progress on EU objectives was made in practice, as the clause on readmissions remained non-binding.

To overcome third countries' rejection of readmission agreements, which remained a EU priority, the EU looked for new ways of reaching agreements. At the Seville European Council of 2002, it was decided to make any future association and cooperation agreements conditional on the third country's acceptance of readmission responsibilities (Lavenex, 2006: 342). The Seville conclusions also allow for using foreign policy measures in case a third state refuses to cooperate on the topic of migration, with the caveat that development cooperation objectives should not be jeopardized (Lavenex, 2006: 342). Conditionality was thus expanded but stopped short of the British-Spanish proposal to make development aid conditional on

migration control cooperation (Lavenex, 2006: 342; Lavenex and Stucky, 2011: 118–121).

The 1990s thus saw first steps towards a shared approach to migration. As part of the Schengen process, some internal harmonization took place. For aspiring EU member states, membership was made conditional on compliance with strict migration control standards. First attempts to reach agreements on readmission with countries outside of Europe were also made, but third countries showed little interest in such agreements. A search for new ways of incentivizing cooperation on migration issues thus began.

In the public policy analysis literature, the shift towards external migration policy is explained as a reaction to liberal constraints that some national and EU institutions, especially the Court of Justice of the European Union, pose (Bonjour et al., 2018: 412). Scholars identified a shift ‘up’ from member states as the location of decision-making towards intergovernmental cooperation within EU structures, followed by a shift ‘out’, i.e. towards governing migration more and more through foreign policy (Lavenex, 2006: 329).

The concept of venue-shopping has been employed to explain these shifts. In order to increase their autonomy, actors seek venues that are suitable for advancing their agendas and allow them to circumvent policy constraints (Guiraudon, 2000: 252; Lavenex, 2006: 332; Samers, 2004: 29). In the case of migration policy in the EU, interior ministries following a security-based migration control agenda have thus worked towards shifting decision-making towards transnational and intergovernmental policy venues, as they are suitable venues for advancing restrictive migration policy. They thereby circumvent more restrictive venues, such as national high courts or other ministries (Boswell, 2003: 623; Guiraudon, 2000: 259; Lavenex, 2006: 332). This analysis of developments in EU migration policy is based on the idea that intergovernmental cooperation does not necessarily lead to a loss of state autonomy, but can actually lead to government officials gaining autonomy as they are shielded from domestic constraints. In the field of migration policy, constitutions, courts, public debates and other ministries can function as such constraints (Boswell, 2003: 623; Guiraudon, 2000: 252; Lavenex, 2006: 332).

With increasing communitarization, migration policy decision-making has increasingly shifted towards foreign policy, thereby preserving the intergovernmental character of decision-making (Lavenex, 2006: 329). Boswell (2003: 623) identifies the logic of the Schengen Process as a driver of the externalization of migration and asylum policy, as the elimination of internal borders was perceived to require a unified approach focused on external borders, in order to make up for the sense of loss of national control over borders and irregular entry. In the Treaty of Amsterdam, the communitarization of asylum and migration policy was decided. However, this internal aspect of migration policy has remained a controversial issue with blockades to the development of a harmonized internal approach, as member states remain reluctant to transfer this aspect of their sovereignty. External policy, on the other hand, has developed rapidly (Boswell, 2003: 622; Lavenex, 2006: 330). This can be seen as continuation of the same logic of venue-shopping: As communitarization brought more constraints to the making of control-focused migration policy, a shift towards external policy allowed interior ministries to preserve the autonomy they gain from transgovernmental cooperation (Bonjour et al., 2018: 412; Lavenex, 2006: 346).

The EU's institutional configuration and interior ministers' autonomy-seeking behavior is then an additional explanation for the increased focus on externalization seen in EU migration policy: "the search for policy solutions beyond the territory of the EU is motivated less by the search for innovative solutions than by the interest of justice and home affairs officials to increase their autonomy vis-à-vis other actors in the domestic and European policy arenas" (Lavenex, 2006: 330). This re-scaling of decision-making that favors transgovernmental policy venues and therefore foreign policy then also functions as one of the drivers of externalization in the EU.

From the 1990s, a securitized understanding of migration thus seems to drive EU migration policy. As mobility within the Schengen area became liberalized, externally the EU committed itself to a policy aimed at restricting immigration, focusing on negotiating readmission agreements, and making EU membership conditional on strict border control policies. Initial links between development and migration policy remained largely rhetorical: Attempts to make development

cooperation conditional on readmission agreements were rejected by some member states and ACP countries, while ideas of addressing root causes were voiced but not acted upon.

2.2.3. A Comprehensive External migration policy? Mediterranean Border Control, Partnerships, and their Limitations

The period 2004 – 2014 is characterized by further expansion of EU external migration policy. External border control was intensified through the creation of Frontex, and new cooperation mechanisms with third countries were established. Rhetoric of mutually beneficial partnerships, combined with offers for expanded legal migration opportunities and visa liberalization, became prominent incentives for cooperation for countries without any EU accession perspectives (Maisenbacher, 2015: 871). However, African countries remained reluctant to agree to readmission agreements due to limitations of the incentives offered.

Internally, the EU committed itself to developing the Common European Asylum System into a truly common asylum system, including uniform status and common procedures (European Union, 2012: Article 78(2)). However, developments of the CEAS and its implementation have not resulted in major steps in that direction, as agreement among member states has proven difficult (Chetail, 2015: 35–38; Kipp, 2018: 8; Lavenex, 2018: 1203; Maiani, 2022: 58–59).

Attempts to reform the Dublin regulation, concentrating responsibility for asylum seekers in countries of first entry, were also made, but disagreements between member states foreclosed significant changes. While peripheral member states object to the comparatively large number of asylum cases, member states with comparatively few asylum seekers, especially in Eastern Europe, have been unwilling to agree to reforms which would increase their share of asylum seekers (Thym, 2022a: 13–14). Additionally, conflicts between Northern and Mediterranean member states about secondary movements of migrants, i.e. migrants' practices of moving on from the country responsible for their asylum case, pose a further hurdle to agreement between member states (Thym, 2022a: 17). The 2013 Dublin III Regulation thus does not introduce significant changes to responsibility-sharing in the EU.

Some progress on a common approach towards labor migration of highly qualified third country nationals was made with the introduction of the EU Blue Card directive in 2009. However, even with regard to highly skilled migrants, who according to the 2009 directive must have a job offer with a salary at least 1.5 times the member state's average, member states retained the power to decide how many employees are to be admitted (Cerna, 2013: 186; European Union, 2021).

Despite widespread agreement on a need for reform of the CEAS and the Dublin Regulation, the harmonization of internal aspects of migration policy has thus faced a variety of obstacles and progressed rather slowly. The external aspect, on the other hand, has been comparatively uncontroversial, and has progressed much more dynamically (Bartels, 2018: 3; Carrera and i Sagrera, 2011: 98; García Andrade, 2022: 237; Kipp, 2018: 8; Lavenex, 2006: 337, 2018: 1196–1197; Thym, 2022a: 12). The external component includes both external border control, especially in the Mediterranean, and cooperation with third countries.

In 2004, the *European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Border* (Frontex) was established. Its initial main task was to support member states and coordinate cooperation between member states on external border control (Zaiotti, 2016: 5). In 2007, armed European border forces in the shape of Rapid Border Intervention Teams were created to directly assist member states border control efforts (Léonard, 2010: 244). The 2000s thus brought a European element to the policing of borders, working in joint projects with member states.

In the EU's direct Mediterranean neighborhood, cooperation with important transit countries was stepped up bilaterally by Spain and Italy, while cooperation with Turkey largely took place in the context of EU accession negotiations. With regard to Libya and Morocco, cooperation was intensified bilaterally, supported by EU funding (Bialasiewicz, 2012: 853; Yıldız, 2016: 174). Spain and Morocco signed a readmission agreement in 2003, and increasing Italian-Libyan and Spanish-Moroccan cooperation on border control in the Mediterranean expanded interception of migrants on their way to Europe, e.g. through joint patrols, the permission for Italian coast guard vessels to operate in Libyan waters, and surveillance equipment for monitoring Libyan and Moroccan borders (Bialasiewicz, 2012: 852–853; Casas-

Cortes et al., 2015: 905; Zaiotti, 2016: 20). In the case of Turkey, considerable steps towards adopting the EU *acquis* on asylum and migration were made as part of EU accession negotiations. Turkey thus passed a comprehensive law providing protection statuses and establishing a specialized migration management agency in 2013, however stopped short of lifting the geographical limitation to the Geneva Convention (Aydın and Kirişçi, 2013: 375–376; Yıldız, 2016: 109). A readmission agreement was also signed in 2013, after the EU agreed to make steps towards visa liberalization (Yıldız, 2016: 111–112).

In 2005, a political framework for the EU's external migration policy, building upon the agenda set at Tampere, was established (Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2262). The Global Approach to Migration (GAM), defines the EU's priorities and positions aspects of migration policy within the scope of external policy, to be governed through international cooperation with African states and neighboring countries across the Mediterranean on the bilateral and regional level (Cassarino, 2009; Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2262; Oette and Babiker, 2017: 5). In 2011, it was renamed as Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM) to emphasize the role of Mobility Partnerships, which had become the central instrument of external migration policy since 2008. The GAMM aims to address four aspects of migration: Legal migration and mobility, prevention of irregular migration and human trafficking, international protection and asylum policy, and maximizing the development impact of migration and mobility (Oette and Babiker, 2017: 5). By addressing different dimensions of migration together, the GAM(M) thus promotes a more comprehensive approach which is to be implemented through dialogue and cooperation with countries of origin and transit (Kunz and Maisenbacher, 2013: 198–199).

As part of the GAM(M) two migration-focused regional consultative processes were established as channels for continuous regional discussions. These soft instruments focus on important migration routes along the African continent (Kipp and Koch, 2018: 12). The Euro–African Dialogue on Migration and Development (Rabat Process) was launched in 2006 and aims to address issues of migration and development in North, Central and West Africa. The EU – Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative (Khartoum Process), launched in 2014, has a

narrower focus on migration, especially human trafficking, smuggling, and addressing root causes of irregular migration in the Horn of Africa (EU–Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative, 2014). Both processes have initially been criticized for a lack of concrete outcomes (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 6–7; Kipp and Koch, 2018: 12), although the Khartoum Process was expanded and provided with additional roles and funding from 2015 onwards, as I discuss in the next section.

The concept of Mobility Partnerships was first given shape in the 2005 Global Approach to Migration and a first partnership with Cape Verde was launched in 2008. Partnerships are legally non-binding cooperation agreements between the EU, interested EU member states and third states, and were presented as a way of shaping migration management according to the specific context of partner countries, through identifying shared objectives of EU, member states and partner countries (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 3; Kipp, 2018: 9). Partner countries commit themselves to cooperating with the EU on migration management, specifically by agreeing to readmission agreements, while the EU commits itself to programs on visa liberalization and improved legal migration opportunities for citizens of partner countries (Reslow, 2012b: 394). Partnerships were established with Cape Verde (2008), Armenia (2011), Azerbaijan (2014), Georgia (2008), Jordan (2014), Moldova (2013), Morocco (2013) and Tunisia (2014) (Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2261). The main novelty of Mobility Partnerships lies in the inclusion of legal migration in dialogues on migration cooperation (Reslow, 2012a: 231). For example, in the Mobility Partnership with Cape Verde, participants agreed on Cape Verdean cooperation with Frontex, EU support for the establishment of an asylum system according to international norms, readmission cooperation, as well as activating the Cape Verdean diaspora for development and promises of bilateral agreements on legal migration with individual EU member states (Schwiertz, 2014: 52–53).

Mobility Partnerships are an attempt to overcome the difficulties with implementing readmission agreements through incorporating legal migration incentives into cooperation with countries outside of the direct EU neighborhood (Reslow, 2012a: 231; Schwiertz, 2014: 51–52). However, their success has remained limited, as most potential partner countries on the African continent have shown limited interest in the offered bargain (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 5; Collyer, 2019:

177). In the case of Senegal, the negotiations on a Mobility Partnership failed in 2009 (Chou and Gibert, 2012: 409; Reslow, 2012b: 394). In the case of Morocco, a Mobility Partnership was signed in 2013. Nevertheless little progress was made on readmissions and visa facilitation (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 5). Cape Verde, as pilot country in the Mobility Partnership program, remains the only African country that has signed a readmission agreement (European Union, 2019).

Mobility Partnerships have thus continued to face similar problems as previous EU attempts at readmission cooperation: diverging objectives and priorities between potential partner countries and the EU (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 3). While the EU prioritized border control, readmission and liberalization of short-term visas, partner countries' main interest lies in increased long-term migration opportunities (Collyer, 2019: 177; Kunz and Maisenbacher, 2013: 200). Additionally, readmission agreements are politically difficult for most African governments, as they are highly unpopular among citizens (Abebe and Mbiyozo, 2021: 221; Kunz and Maisenbacher, 2013: 200). In practice, partnerships have mainly consisted of partner countries implementing readmission agreements in exchange for visa liberalization and promises of legal migration channels for their citizens (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 5; Kipp, 2018: 9). While the partnership approach is presented as a move away from conditionality towards cooperation, the practice of making legal migration pathways conditional on readmission agreements has been argued to continue modes of conditionality (Lavenex and Stucky, 2011: 121–122; Maisenbacher, 2015: 871).

Additionally, promises of legal migration opportunities have often remained unfulfilled, as the European Commission does not have competency to offer new channels for legal migration (Kipp and Koch, 2018: 10). Offering pathways for legal migration depends on the initiative and willingness of member states, which have not proposed any significant opportunities for legal migration (Kipp and Koch, 2018: 10; Reslow, 2012a: 232). Instead of offering new channels for migration, projects under the legal migration title have largely focused on information campaigns on existing pathways, and on the integration of migrants who are already in the EU (Reslow, 2012a: 232). Similarly, visa liberalization only consisted of simplifications in application procedures (Kipp and Koch, 2018: 10). The limited success of Mobility Partnership can thus be explained with the insufficient scope of incentives: Potential

partner countries have been unwilling to commit to domestically controversial readmission agreements for these limited offers by the EU (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 5; Kipp and Koch, 2018: 10; Kunz and Maisenbacher, 2013: 200)

The period up to 2015 thus saw an expansion of external migration policy. As the EU lacked agreement on reform of internal aspects of common migration and asylum policy, the only common denominator among member states seems to be a willingness to reduce irregular immigration, further pushing EU migration policy towards externalizing migration governance. A main strategy consisted in engaging third countries in migration governance, particularly on the topic of readmission, with the offer of legal migration pathways and visa liberalization. However, the incentives offered were not considered sufficient by many potential partner countries, particularly in Africa. While rhetoric of partnerships, dialogues, shared objectives and opportunities for legal migration as an alternative to irregular migration was thus widespread, in practice, these partnerships offered little liberalizations and instead focused on readmission and cooperation on border control. Additionally, the establishment of Frontex incorporated a policing aspect into the European approach to migration. The securitization of migration thus continued to set the EU's migration policy agenda.

2.2.4. New Urgency after the 'Crisis': Militarization of Border Control and Addressing 'Root Causes'

In 2015, as a response to the increased arrivals of migrants in Europe, the so-called 'refugee crisis', migration moved to the top of the EU's agenda (Kipp and Koch, 2018: 9). A variety of new initiatives were announced, while existing initiatives like the Khartoum Process and Frontex's mandate were expanded (Castillejo, 2017a: 6; Guerry et al., 2018: 6; Kipp and Koch, 2018: 9). Cooperation with the EU's Mediterranean neighbors Libya and Turkey was intensified, focusing on strengthened border controls (Frelick et al., 2016: 207–208; Reyhani et al., 2019: 8–9; Scarpello, 2019: 7). In May 2015, the EU adopted the European Agenda on Migration, aiming to “to build up a coherent and comprehensive approach” (European Commission, 2015). In November 2015, European and African heads of

state and government met for a high-level summit in Valletta on Malta, for the first summit focusing solely on migration (Zanker, 2019: 1). At the summit, the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) was launched, and the Joint Valletta Action Plan was adopted. Additionally, in 2016, a new Migration Partnership Framework was established. Continued attempts to reform internal aspects, specifically the CEAS and Dublin System, which were widely perceived to be failing, continued to face disagreements between member states and were not successful (Lavenex, 2018: 1208).

Most of these instruments resemble the instruments already established in the 2000s: the European Agenda of Migration further develops the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility, while the Joint Valletta Action Plan relies on the previously established Rabat and Khartoum Processes for its implementation. The Migration Partnership Framework is a continuation of the Mobility Partnerships (Reslow, 2017: 3). The announcement of these ‘new’ instruments has widely been explained as a response to political pressure for visible action taken in response to the highly visible arrival of migrants (Castillejo, 2017a: 6; Guerry et al., 2018: 6; Kipp and Koch, 2018: 9).

Nevertheless, the instruments significantly intensify the externalization of migration policy (Kipp and Koch, 2018: 9). Especially, the linkage between migration and development policy has deepened. On the level of rhetoric, the root cause narrative gained dominance (Kipp and Koch, 2018: 17). The establishment of the EUTF, which is mainly funded through official development aid (ODA), additionally provided a flexible financing instrument which instrumentalizes development aid for migration objectives (Kipp and Koch, 2018: 9; Lauwers et al., 2021: 73). Additionally, the regional focus has shifted further away from the EU’s external borders, particularly towards the African continent and countries neighboring Syria (Kipp and Koch, 2018: 9).

External border control became reinforced and further militarized. In 2015, Frontex was reformed into the *European Border and Coast Guard Agency*, expanding its mandate. Frontex’ mandate now includes the organization of returns, cooperation with third countries as well as the identification and interception of migrants before they reach European territory (Akkerman, 2018: 340; Benedicto,

2019: 6). Its budget has increased from 6 million EUR in 2004 to 754 million EUR in 2022 (Frontex, 2022). While previous member state operations included significant search and rescue components, such as Italy's Operation Mare Nostrum which has been credited with saving thousands of lives, Frontex' joint operations resemble military maritime operations and do not include sea rescue (Benedicto, 2019: 6). Additionally, external border control was reinforced through intensified cooperation with Turkey and Libya, as many migrants' last stops before travelling on to the EU. The EU Turkey Statement was agreed upon in March 2016, with the ambitious goal of *ending* irregular migration from Turkey to Greece, through a combination of readmissions and intensified border policing by Turkey, in return for acceleration of the visa liberalization roadmap and EU funding for local integration of migrants in Turkey (European Council, 2016). Bilateral cooperation on border control between Italy and Libya, which had broken down with the Libyan descent into civil war, was re-established with EU support through the Italy-Libya Memorandum of Understanding in early 2017, focused on developing the Libyan Coast Guard's interception capacities, despite widespread knowledge of human rights abuses against migrants in Libya (OHCHR, 2021: 15–16; Reyhani et al., 2019: 8–9; Scarpello, 2019: 7).

The European Agenda on Migration and the Joint Valletta Action Plan resemble priorities of the GAMM. The Agenda again promises a “coherent and comprehensive approach” (European Commission, 2015), emphasizing the strengthening of cooperation with non-EU countries as a key political priority (Carrera et al., 2019: 8). The Valletta Action Plan identifies five priority domains: development benefits of migration and addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement; legal migration and mobility; protection and asylum; prevention of and fight against irregular migration, smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings; return readmission and reintegration (Castillejo, 2017a: 6). The Joint Action Plan adopted at the Valletta Summit thus resembles the pillars of the GAMM, with the addition of addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement, and a separate priority on cooperation on return, readmission and reintegration (Oette and Babiker, 2017: 8).

The *EU Emergency Trust Fund for Stability and Addressing Root Causes of Irregular Migration and Displaced Persons in Africa* (EUTF) was launched in Valletta in November 2015. It is the main financing instrument for cooperation on migration between the EU and African partners and is intended to enable a flexible response to migration challenges. It is thus the main financing instrument for the implementation of the Valletta Action Plan (Guerry et al., 2018: 8). Geographically, the EUTF focuses on 26 countries across three African regions: the Sahel and Lake Chad (including most of West Africa), the Horn of Africa, and North Africa. The four main goals of the EUTF are 1) greater economic and employment opportunities, 2) strengthening resilience, 3) improved migration management, and 4) improved governance, conflict prevention, and reduction of forced displacement and irregular migration (Zanker, 2019: 13).

In 2015, the Khartoum Process was tasked with monitoring the implementation of the Valletta Action Plan, and has expanded in scope due to funding through the EUTF (Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2262; Oette and Babiker, 2017: 8). 714 million EUR of EUTF funds were specifically set aside for addressing root causes, improving conditions for migrants and host communities and migration management in the Horn of Africa (Oette and Babiker, 2017: 8). Responsibility for migrants, including refugees, is thus to remain with countries in the Horn of Africa, whom the EU compensates and incentivizes to take up this responsibility (Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2262). Accordingly, the EU funds projects to enhance border security, national legislation and disrupting smuggling networks, as well as development projects that aim to create livelihood opportunities and thereby address root causes of migration (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 6–7; Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2262). The focus of the Khartoum Process is thus on preventing irregular migration from the Horn of Africa to the EU through both security-based and development-based projects (Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2263).

To date, 5 billion EUR have been made available through the EUTF (European Commission, 2022a). At the EU level, the EUTF does not mobilize additional funding, instead pooling funds from different existing mechanisms, most importantly the European Development Fund (EDF) (Lauwers et al., 2021: 73; Zardo, 2020: 591). Additional funding comes from individual EU member states

(Zardo, 2020: 591). Although the EUTF was proclaimed as an addition to existing development assistance, the majority of its funds thus cannot be counted as additional (Guerry et al., 2018: 6).

Overall, 90% of EUTF funding is pooled from Official Development Assistance (Guerry et al., 2018: 6). The creation of such a funding mechanism then contributes to the increasing linkage between development and migration policies, and can be viewed as the most ambitious and comprehensive EU initiative on the migration-development nexus (Lauwers et al., 2021: 73). In contrast to development aid, which usually has to be allocated in accordance with the main objective of poverty alleviation, the EUTF instead uses the funds oriented towards its migration-related objectives (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 9).

The major change in the funding landscape thus consists of the increased flexibility in the allocation of funds sourced from various policy fields, providing policy tools such as the Migration Partnership Framework with resources that preceding Mobility Partnerships did not have access to (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 9; Kipp, 2018: 5–6). Previously, financing of external migration policies was heavily fragmented. The Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) shaped the strategic orientation of migration policy, while funding was largely provided by the Directorate General European Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) and the Directorate General International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO), which became the Directorate General International Partnerships (DG INTPA) in 2021. With the EUTF, resources were pooled into one instrument, to support the creation of a more coherent external migration policy (Kipp, 2018: 10). Additionally, the EUTF is governed by a board made up of representatives from the Commission and those member states, which have contributed to the fund, making it a semi-intergovernmental instrument, over which the parliament has no oversight (Zardo, 2020: 592).

The Migration Partnership Framework was established in June 2016. It seeks to “sustainably manage migration flows, by governing migration through cooperation with countries of origin and transit” (Castillejo, 2017a: 5; Martens et al., 2020: 202) and follows the general idea of the Mobility Partnerships established in the 2000s (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 2; Reslow, 2017). Interested EU member states, the

European Commission and a non-EU partner state agree on compacts tailored to the situation of each partner state. Agreements are made in the form of legally non-binding political declarations, thereby keeping the European parliament excluded from decision-making (Reslow, 2017: 2–3). The MPF takes a comprehensive approach, combining a variety of short and long-term objectives from strengthening border control, to improving protection and asylum policies as well as economic opportunities in partner countries and fighting migrant smuggling and human trafficking (Martens et al., 2020: 203–204). The MPF thus has the clear aim to decrease migration to Europe, both through border control and anti-smuggling measures as well as by addressing root causes and thereby enabling migrants to stay (close to) home (Castillejo, 2017a: 5).

The Migration Policy Framework identifies five priority countries for the establishment of new compacts: Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Mali, and Ethiopia. Additionally, existing discussions on compacts with Jordan and Lebanon should be concluded, and engagement with Tunisia and Libya should be increased (European Commission, 2016b). Collett and Ahad (2017: 6) argue that the choice of priority countries was largely influenced by political feasibility, and the possibility to achieve fast, visible results. While Libya is the main transit country for migrants crossing the Central Mediterranean, the lack of a stable government makes cooperation difficult. Niger, as the major country of transit on the way to Libya, was thus included instead of Libya (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 6). Later, additional countries became part of the MPF, including Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan in Asia, Egypt, Algeria, and Morocco in Northern Africa, and Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia and Ghana in West Africa (Martens et al., 2020: 202). The MPF has thus significantly expanded engagement with African countries south of the Sahara (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 6).

What distinguishes the MPF from previous Mobility Partnerships is that with the panic surrounding the increased arrival of migrants in 2015, increased political priority and resources were made available to such partnerships (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 4). Coupling partnerships with a flexible financing instrument, the EUTF, expanded options for incentives (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 2; Kipp and Koch, 2018: 10). Additionally, high-level visits and summits, with the participation of member state officials, have shown partner countries the EU's increased interest in facilitating

partnerships (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 4). The incorporation of bilateral diplomacy also adds possibilities for offers from individual member states to the discussions of Migration Partnerships (Collett and Ahad, 2017: 6).

Additionally, some shifts in content can be identified: The MPF does not mention visa facilitation agreements and puts less focus on formal readmission agreements, emphasizing practices of return and increasing numbers of return (Reslow, 2017: 1). The MPF envisions the incorporation of a variety of policy fields, including development aid, trade and security, into partnership negotiations to increase the EU's leverage (European Commission, 2016b; Kipp and Koch, 2018: 10; Reslow, 2017: 1–2; Zanker, 2019: 4). Accordingly, the European External Action Service (EEAS) has become more involved in external migration policy. It coordinates dialogues and monitors implementation, e.g. as part of the MPF. Simultaneously, security aspects of the external migration policy are part of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), including e.g. an EU mission in Niger that aims to increase capacity in anti-smuggling operations (Kipp and Koch, 2018: 14). Migration policy thus becomes a central concern, firmly embedded within the broader field of the EU's external policy, mobilizing tools and resources by both EU and member states (Castillejo, 2017a: 5).

Finally, the MPF includes the possibility for negative conditionality, especially through the linkage of development and migration: In the Mobility Partnerships, the EU employed positive conditionality, by promising improved channels for legal migration in return for the partner state's cooperation on irregular migration or returns. The facilitation of legal migration channels is largely missing from the MPF. Instead, the MPF suggests that “positive and negative incentives should be integrated in the EU's development policy” (European Commission, 2016b). The EU thus introduced the option to withhold or increase development cooperation depending on states' cooperation on EU migration objectives (Castillejo, 2017a: 6; Collett and Ahad, 2017: 4; Guerry et al., 2018: 9; Reslow, 2017: 2). The MPF thus shows a much stronger focus on enforcing EU interests than the previous Mobility Partnerships (Castillejo, 2017a: 5). It also expands the subjugation of development to migration policy.

The years 2015 and 2016 thus saw a multiplication of focus and the expansion of migration policy tools. EU migration policy continues to emphasize the goal of reducing migration, focusing on externalization as agreement on internal reforms remains lacking. Securitized forms of externalization continue to play an important role and have been expanded: the EU has reached new agreements with Mediterranean neighbors to intercept migrants attempting to reach the EU, Frontex' mandate and capacities have been expanded, but does not include search and rescue, and readmission continues to be a priority. However, with the creation of the EUTF, the EU for the first time goes beyond rhetoric on 'addressing root causes', establishing a flexible funding instrument for preventatively containing migration outside of the EU and linking migration and development policy more substantially.

2.2.5. The New Pact on Migration and Asylum – a New Name for an Old Paradigm

The following years saw less new instruments but have consolidated previous policy trends. Significant policy developments since 2016 include the reform of the Visa Code in 2019, making conditions of Schengen visa provision conditional on cooperation on readmission. Additionally, the European Commission in 2020 published a New Pact on Migration and Asylum, which continues previous external migration policy trends.

The EU response to Ukrainian refugees constitutes a remarkable exception to almost all of these trends, as e.g. entry to the EU was facilitated and the special status of temporary protection was made available through the Temporary Protection Directive, activated for the first time since its establishment in 2001 (Carrera et al., 2022: 1). This approach to Ukrainian citizens and residents, however, remains an exception and has not changed policy trends towards migrants and refugees from other countries.

In addition to conditionality through development aid, in 2019, the EU reformed its Visa Code, so as to include positive and negative conditionality: The conditions for Schengen visa provision are improved for citizens of countries that cooperate on readmissions, e.g. through lower application fees, longer visa validity

and faster provision. Conditions for citizens of non-cooperative countries, on the other hand, become more restrictive (Council of the European Union, 2019; García Andrade, 2022: 226; Guild, 2022: 220).

The New Pact on Migration and Asylum is a proposal for legislative reform by the Commission. The pact's main focus is on reforming the Common European Asylum System, i.e. on the reform of internal migration policy, which has long been characterized by disagreements between member states on the distribution of asylum seekers and recognized refugees, leading to the failure of the previous Commission reform proposal in 2016 (Thym, 2022a: 11). The New Pact on Migration and Asylum, aims to overcome the deadlock between member states by proposing new ways of burden-sharing, especially in the area of returns, but has made little progress on internal reform in practice (Angenendt et al., 2020: 1; Thym, 2022b: 5). Additionally, the Pact continues trends in external migration policy, aiming to reduce numbers of arrivals through international cooperation (García Andrade, 2022: 223; Thym, 2022a: 11–12).

While the pact has been discursively framed as a 'fresh start' and even 'a change of paradigm in cooperation with non-EU countries' (European Commission, 2020b), scholars largely agree that the Pact does not propose substantial changes (Bendel, 2021: 252; García Andrade, 2022: 224; Geddes and Maru, 2021: 282; Thym, 2022a: 13). Intentions of creating a 'comprehensive' framework and establishing mutually beneficial partnerships have been voiced again and again in the 1999 Tampere European Council, the 2005 GAM(M) and the 2015 European Agenda on Migration (García Andrade, 2022: 224–225).

The Pact continues the previous focus on enhancing returns, fighting migrant smuggling, and addressing root causes (Abebe and Mbiyozo, 2021: 219; García Andrade, 2022: 225). Similar to the Mobility Partnerships, the Pact proposes *Talent Partnerships* for expanding legal migration channels as an incentive for cooperation on readmission (García Andrade, 2022: 225). However, the experience of the Mobility Partnerships, in which promises for legal migration channels remained largely unfulfilled, cast doubts on the implementation of programs promoting legal migration opportunities (Guild, 2022: 220). It is thus unclear whether the incentive of Talent Partnerships would be convincing for partner states (Guild, 2022: 220).

The Pact continues the subjugation of development aid allocation to migration objectives: Assistance should be targeted at “countries with a significant migration dimension” (European Commission, 2020: 6.3). It also includes new instruments for funding. In addition to the EUTF, external migration policy can in future be funded through the new *Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument*, which superseded and merged the European Neighbourhood Instrument, the European Development Fund and the Instrument for Stability in 2021 (García Andrade, 2022: 228; Goldner Lang, 2022: 241). Funds for capacity building programs in partner countries are proposed to be taken from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Border Management and Visa Instrument of the Internal Security Fund (García Andrade, 2022: 227). Funding for external migration policy, including through development funding, has thus been consolidated in the Pact.

2.3. TRENDS IN EU MIGRATION POLICY: SECURITIZED AND PREVENTATIVE EXTERNALIZATION

EU migration policy has thus seen a continuing shift to the international arena since the 1990s. Two main strategies can be identified: Firstly, a clearly securitized approach to the EU’s external borders, including increased border policing and cooperation with neighboring countries to intercept migrants before they reach the EU. Secondly, migration has become mainstreamed into EU external policy more broadly, especially becoming linked to development policy. Rhetorically, ‘addressing root causes’ of migration, and thereby preventatively decreasing migrant arrivals, has become a mantra of EU policymakers. On the level of funding, development funding has become increasingly employed to ‘address root causes’, i.e. for migration policy objectives, which to some extent overlap with development objectives.

In this section, I situate these EU migration policy trends in academic debates on externalization and the linkage between development and migration policy. I present criticisms of externalization, in general, and preventative approaches to externalization, more specifically, laying the groundwork for the analysis of EU migration policy practices vis-à-vis Africa in the following chapter.

2.3.1. Externalization as Evasion of Protection Responsibilities

In the academic literature, the concept of externalization has been used to describe processes of increasingly governing migration away from a state's own territory, which have been observed in EU, US and Australian migration policy since the 1990s. The externalization of migration policy has been defined as “the process of territorial and administrative expansion of a given state's migration and border policy to third countries” (Casas-Cortes et al., 2014: 73).

In an early analysis of externalization practices in the 1990s and early 2000s, Samers (2004) speaks of ‘remote control’, defined as a “re-scaling of control to third countries, a spatial extension of control far from the EU's existing external borders” (Samers, 2004: 43). Samers (2004: 43) argues that remote control is slowly becoming a whole system of migration management that is interconnected with development assistance.

Later analyses incorporate the growing employment of externalizing policy. Frelick et al. (2016: 193) define the externalization of migration control as follows:

Externalization of migration controls describes extraterritorial state actions to prevent migrants, including asylum seekers, from entering the legal jurisdictions or territories of destination countries or regions or making them legally inadmissible without individually considering the merits of their protection claims. These actions include unilateral, bilateral, and multilateral state engagement [...], as well as the enlistment of private actors. These can include direct interdiction and preventive policies, as well as more indirect actions, such as the provision of support for or assistance to security or migration management practices in and by third countries.

Some scholars employ a more restricted definition of externalization, excluding ‘preventative’ practices that aim to address causes of migration or improve protection of migrants in third countries (Boswell, 2003: 624). I follow the broader definition of externalization, referring to the increased use of international cooperation between migrant-receiving countries and countries of origin and transit in migration governance (Casas-Cortes et al., 2014: 73; Frelick et al., 2016: 193; Hyndman and Mountz, 2008). These analyses of the externalization of migration thus focus on processes through which migration policy becomes an issue of foreign policy and international cooperation.

Externalization has been widely criticized as a strategy employed to evade responsibilities towards migrants, shifting responsibility for migrants to other states, and limiting migrants' access to asylum. Externalization is importantly viewed as a response to and erosion of legal norms, especially the right to asylum. Under the Geneva Refugee Convention of 1951 and its 1967 Protocol, which the EU has incorporated in its Charter of Fundamental Rights, states have the responsibility to provide protection to refugees on their territory. Since migrants' access to their territory triggers a state's protection obligations, to avoid this responsibility, restrictions must take effect before migrants reach EU territory. Externalization as a way of limiting access to EU states' territories, then functions as a strategy that allows states to technically uphold their commitments to the legal norms of protection as specified by the Geneva Convention, while simultaneously avoiding responsibility for asylum seekers (Frelick et al., 2016: 192; Hyndman and Mountz, 2008: 250; Oette and Babiker, 2017: 3).

The strategy of externalization is thus argued to be motivated by its potential to circumvent typical constraints limiting policy choice, as e.g. international law and constitutions can pose a barrier to restrictive migration policy. Externalization is then a strategy of states which have somewhat intact, rights-sensitive asylum procedures once migrants reach the territory of the state (Frelick et al., 2016: 192). These states mostly adhere to international law, granting asylum seekers certain rights once they have set foot on their territory, although recently more direct violations of the non-refoulement principle have also become more systematic in some member states¹. In order to avoid protection responsibilities arising from this legal regime, externalization as a policy that curtails access to territory thus functions to decrease and control migration, by limiting access to territory which would trigger international obligations (Frelick et al., 2016: 192; Hyndman and Mountz, 2008: 250).

¹ Recent practices of pushbacks at the Greek and Polish border suggest a willingness on the part of some EU member states to violate the Geneva Convention's non-refoulement principle more directly, while Frontex has been found to have covered up pushbacks under former executive director Fabrice Leggeri, who has however since stepped down after an investigation into the accusations by the European Anti-Fraud Office (Carrera, 2021: 11–15; Christides and Lüdke, 2022; Frelick and Randhawa, 2022, 24–26; Gkliati, 2022, 175–178).

Through externalization, the responsibility for migrants, including refugees, and their protection is also shifted to countries in the region of origin and transit countries (Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2262). The burden of hosting migrants thus becomes further unequally distributed, specifically on countries close to migrants' countries of origin, which already typically host the largest share of migrants and refugees (Frelick et al., 2016: 197; Scarpello, 2019: 4).

The externalization of migration policy is thus argued to take place in a context in which migration has been securitized. It aims to reduce irregular migration, therefore addressing the 'security threat' which the literature on securitization problematizes. Simultaneously, securitization discourses function to legitimize externalization policies. Through the externalization of borders and migration policy, border-crossing has been curtailed (Hyndman and Mountz, 2008: 268). Externalization can thus be viewed as a strategy to reach the aims of reducing immigration that have been identified by securitization scholars, by evading constraints to restrictive policy posed by international legal norms, and some national and EU institutions.

Scholars have analyzed various strategies of externalization policy that aim to shift responsibility for migrants outside of the territory of migrants' intended destination. On the one hand, these strategies include practices that aim to make it harder for migrants to cross borders, such as militarized border control and surveillance at external borders (Mitsilegas et al., 2020: 3). Various military missions by EU member states and the EU border guard agency Frontex as well as increasingly sophisticated surveillance technology have thus been employed at the EU's Mediterranean external borders, preventing migrants from reaching EU territory (Akkerman, 2018: 339). This strategy follows a logic of spatially mobile borders, controlling borders away from the territory (Scarpello, 2019: 3). In the same logic, a law enforcement approach to human smuggling and the criminalization of humanitarian sea rescue organizations aims to increase barriers for migrants trying to reach the EU (Mitsilegas et al., 2020: 2–3).

The other main strategy is a strategy of regionalization or cooperation with third countries, specifically countries of transit and origin, which are given the task of curbing migration before migrants reach EU, US or Australian territory (Frelick et

al., 2016: 195; Mitsilegas et al., 2020: 1; Scarpello, 2019: 3–4). Additionally, a legal strategy of defining specific transit countries as safe third countries assigns these third countries responsibility for processing asylum claims and providing protection (Frelick et al., 2016: 195–196). Mitsilegas et al. (2020: 2) give the examples of the 2016 EU Turkey statement, EU and Italian cooperation with Libyan Coast Guards and Spanish cooperation with the Moroccan government. This is identified as a technology of distance, keeping the human cost of the policy away from public scrutiny, following the logic of ‘out of sight, out of mind’ (Scarpello, 2019: 7). Regionalization also includes other strategies with respect to transit countries, such as actively shaping institutions and domestic governance arrangements abroad, e.g. by encouraging securitization and the criminalization of mobility. In this way, transit countries can be encouraged to e.g. prevent migrants from boarding boats (Scarpello, 2019: 4).

2.3.2. Addressing Root Causes: An Alternative to Securitized Modes of Externalization?

While externalization has been widely criticized as a strategy undermining the right to asylum, focus of much critical scholarship has been on securitized practices at the EU’s external borders. However, the definition of externalization and EU policy practices go beyond its external borders and neighboring countries. Accordingly, the EU has increasingly employed a discourse of ‘addressing root causes’ of irregular migration and forced displacement. This approach relies on the logic of classical migration theories, discussed in the first chapter, according to which largely economic push factors, such as poverty and limited employment opportunities, but also political oppression, are important causes of migration. Accordingly, by improving economic and political conditions in countries of origin, development projects are viewed to function as a way to decrease migration, at the same time as benefitting (potential) migrants and countries of origin. Migration-development policies are thus framed as benefitting all actors: migrant-sending states, migrant-receiving states and the (potential) migrants themselves, who are enabled to improve their livelihoods without leaving their region of origin (Collyer,

2019: 172). The incorporation of development rhetoric into migration policy then presents a harmonious image of shared global interests in the migration field where partnerships are established to reach shared goals.

Until 2015, the linkage between migration and development by the EU remained largely rhetorical, with some projects implemented bilaterally by member states such as Spain, France and Italy (Adepoju et al., 2010: 44; Bisong, 2019: 1301; Collyer, 2019: 177; Lauwers et al., 2021: 73). The EUTF, launched in 2015, can be considered the first policy instrument that implements the ‘root cause’ narrative on a larger scale. It particularly relies on development as a tool for reducing migration and is largely financed with official development aid.

Academic proponents of aspects of externalization argue that it can improve the conditions for (potential) migrants in their countries or regions of origin (Boswell, 2003: 620; Frelick et al., 2016: 195; Haddad, 2008: 199–202). For example, the idea of capacity-building in third countries is viewed favorably by Frelick et al. (2016: 209), as cooperation can strengthen protection capacities and respect for the rights of migrants, when it is implemented consistent with international human rights standards. Boswell (2003: 619–620) distinguishes between the externalization of traditional tools of border control, on the one hand, and ‘preventative’ approaches that aim to address root causes of migration or provide protection closer to migrants’ home countries, on the other hand. Tools of such a preventative approach include development assistance, trade, foreign direct investments, and other foreign policy tools. Similarly, Haddad (2008: 201) distinguishes between the externalization of control and the externalization of protection. The preventative approach or the externalization of protection is then argued to have the potential to be an effective long-term strategy of migration management, which can provide protection to refugees and lead to constructive partnerships with third countries (Haddad, 2008: 204; Szymańska and Kugiel, 2020: 75). Its proponents thus present development-based externalization as a liberal, human rights-oriented practice that allows migrants to avoid dangerous journeys and stay close to home, by improving conditions in countries of origin and strengthening protection capacities in transit countries (Boswell, 2003: 625; Frelick et al., 2016: 209).

The preventative components of external migration policy, which are presented as promoting protection abroad and addressing root causes, especially through development policy, have however also been criticized for ultimately pushing securitized, migration control interests of containing migration outside of the EU over the effective protection of migrants and development. The use of development aid for the goal of decreasing migration has been criticized from three main perspectives: Development actors and scholars have criticized the way development is incorporated into migration policy by the EU as potentially undermining development principles and effectiveness. From a human rights perspective, the adverse effects on the human rights of (potential) migrants have been highlighted. Finally, migration scholars have emphasized the lack of empirical evidence for the basic assumption that increased development reduces migration, arguing that it is unlikely that goals of reducing migration can even be reached through development projects.

Development actors have argued that, firstly, mobility from poorer countries should be expanded rather than limited, as it benefits development. Secondly, the allocation of development aid according to migration policy objectives diverts aid from its focus on poverty alleviation. Thirdly, the conditionalization of development aid on third countries' cooperation with EU priorities of returns and border management, is found to undermine development principles.

Firstly, development actors have largely focused on migration as a positive phenomenon contributing to development, and thus oppose the increasing limitations on migration and the lack of new legal migration pathways. Since the 1990s, an increasing linkage between migration and development had begun to be promoted enthusiastically by mainstream development actors. From their perspective, migration could function as a driver for development, through the transfer of remittances, experience, and knowledge (Collyer, 2020: 67). A variety of international organizations, Regional Development Banks, national development agencies in the Global North, NGOs, and government institutions in migrant-sending countries have since embraced an optimistic view on migration, and promote the use of migration policy as a tool for development objectives (Geiger and Pécoud, 2013: 369–370; Lavenex and Kunz, 2008: 440; Nyberg-Sørensen et al., 2002: 15). A focus

lies on temporary and circulatory labor migration, in which migrants ‘supply’ labor when there is demand for it in another country and return when their labor is not in demand (Geiger and Pécoud, 2013: 369). Some critical voices have since pointed out how migration can also harm the Global South through brain drain, care drain and producers being turned into consumers through remittances, and increasing dependence on the Global North (Nyberg-Sørensen, 2012: 64). However, international organizations’ and development actors’ promotion of the linkage of migration and development takes place in a context in which governments in the Global North largely aim to restrict migration. Migration policymakers in the EU have thus largely taken a different perspective on linking development to migration, focusing on the impact of development on migration and not the other way around. In this perspective, underdevelopment is viewed as a push factor, leading people to emigrate from their home countries. Development promotion is subsequently viewed as a tool for reducing migration (Faist et al., 2011: 17; Ganso and Yuldashev, 2018b: 810). Development is thus incorporated into migration policy as a tool for migration containment, to fulfil securitized EU objectives that focus above all on reducing migration. Development actors’ calls for increased pathways for migration, on the other hand, are largely neglected.

Secondly, the use of development aid for migration policy objectives has been criticized for undermining and weakening development principles. It has thus been argued that development goals have been subordinated to migration policy objectives, specifically the objective to reduce migration fast (Delkádér-Palacios, 2019: 175; Lauwers et al., 2021: 73; Lavenex and Kunz, 2008: 439; Nyberg-Sørensen, 2012: 66). Development aid must be used towards the goal of poverty reduction, and ultimately poverty eradication, according to the Lisbon Treaty (European Union, 2012: Article 208). However, instead of poverty alleviation, migration policy objectives become central in decision-making on aid allocation through the EUTF. In this way, development aid may be diverted from its main goal of poverty reduction and eradication (Bartels, 2018: 5; García Andrade, 2022: 227; Guerry et al., 2018: 10; Kipp and Koch, 2018: 17). In the *New Pact on Migration and Asylum*, aid is supposed to be targeted to countries “with a significant migration dimension” (European Commission, 2020a). The use of development aid as part of

EU migration policy can thus divert aid to countries and regions along typical migration routes or to populations more likely to migrate towards Europe, rather than to the poorest countries and populations (Adepoju et al., 2010: 62; Bartels, 2018: 5; Fanjul, 2018: 8; García Andrade, 2022: 227; Guerry et al., 2018: 10; Oliveira and Zacharenko, 2018: 22). Such diversions of development aid constitute a breach of development principles and traditional needs assessment, and have been widely criticized for diverting development aid according to migration objectives rather than development principles (Castillejo, 2017b: 1; Fanjul, 2018: 7–8; Oliveira and Zacharenko, 2018: 22). Additionally, development actors and scholars have warned that in the scope of migration policy, development funding may be used for non-development projects, such as border control measures (Abebe and Mbiyozo, 2021: 223; Collyer, 2019: 178; Delkáder-Palacios, 2019: 197–198; Guerry et al., 2018: 10; Martens et al., 2020: 201).

Finally, the conditionalization of aid on third countries' cooperation with returns and border control has been criticized as an instrumentalization of development aid, further undermining development principles. The EU has explicitly encouraged the use of positive and negative incentives through the MPF (Castillejo, 2017b: 3; Fanjul, 2018: 8; Kipp and Koch, 2018: 17; Oliveira and Zacharenko, 2018: 22). Accordingly, the EU can reward or punish countries by allocating aid or withholding it, depending on the extent of the country's cooperation (Kipp and Koch, 2018: 17). Development aid is thus used to increase cooperation on issues that countries were previously reluctant to cooperate on, particularly returns. Development actors such as Oxfam and Concord have thus suggested that development aid should not be conditional on cooperation on European priorities and should be allocated in line with development objectives and principles, based on detailed assessments of needs, feasibility, and risks, particularly potential negative impact on human rights (Fanjul, 2018, 10; Raty and Shilhav, 2020: 5–6).

Development actors thus warn that the use of aid in migration policy does not follow development goals but is instrumentalized and allocated according to European migration and security objectives. This analysis supports arguments for the importance of donors' self-interest in aid allocation more generally (Berthélemy, 2006: 192-193; Lacomba and Boni, 2008: 125). Geiger and Pécoud (2013: 372)

similarly identify the use of development in migration policy as paralleling general characteristics of development policy identified by critical development theorists. In this view, development policy more generally serves the function of allowing powerful states to impose their world views and interests on less powerful states, while parading as liberal actors committed to human rights norms.

From a human rights perspective, even preventative aspects of externalization pose the risk of creating a variety of human rights issues. As third countries are engaged to limit migration movements out of their country in the direction of the EU, (potential) migrants lose access to their human right to leave a country, and access to fair asylum procedures (Guild, 2022: 211). Critics of externalization policy point out that shifting responsibility for migrants, including asylum seekers, to third countries is problematic, as some of these third countries, are themselves responsible for human rights violations (Adepoju et al., 2010: 46; Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2262). Additionally, partner countries may practice *refoulement*, sending asylum seekers back to countries where they may face persecution (Adepoju et al., 2010: 46; Guild, 2022: 211). From a legal perspective, externalization can thus allow the circumvention of institutional checks and balances, thereby creating areas outside the law (Mitsilegas et al., 2020: 3–4). For example, the definition of a third country as safe, and therefore as responsible for the protection of asylum seekers, poses questions regarding responsibility in the case that protection is not provided, or when asylum seekers suffer abuse or detention in the third country (Frelick et al., 2016: 197). More broadly, the externalization of migration policy can weaken democratic accountability of both transit countries and externalizing actors in the Global North, as the security rationale and subsequent prioritization of migration control overshadows concerns for democracy or human rights protection. Dependence on transit countries for migration control can lead to destination countries providing legitimacy to transit countries' governments, even when they are involved in corruption, human rights abuses or authoritarianism (Scarpello, 2019: 5). Overall, externalization thus has been argued to potentially undermine the rule of law, human rights protection, and democracy.

Finally, from a migration studies perspective, the basic assumption behind the 'root causes' approach has been questioned. Migration scholars have produced a

body of empirical research that suggests that development usually does not decrease migration. Accordingly, researchers have argued that aid actually provides people with the financial resources and information to emigrate until a certain point of development (Berthélemy et al., 2009: 1597; Clemens, 2015: 39; Haas, 2007: 831–836; Nyberg-Sørensen et al., 2002: 10). This is also referred to as the ‘migration hump’ which must be overcome before development begins to reduce emigration. Migration thus usually increases with development until countries reach upper-middle-income levels. Only after such development has been reached, migration begins to decrease (Clemens, 2015: 39; Collyer, 2019: 172–173). Some studies have attempted to analyze the conditions under which development aid has specific effects on migration, finding support for the theses that rural development aid, but not aid targeted at urban areas (Gamso and Yuldashev, 2018a: 273), governance aid, targeting the improvement of the rule of law and human rights standards, and the reduction of corruption, repression and discrimination, but not economic and social aid (Gamso and Yuldashev, 2018b: 814) can decrease emigration. One additional concern of some researchers is that aid may not be an effective tool for reducing poverty and underdevelopment, but can even exacerbate such push factors (Haas, 2007: 828). Geiger and Pécoud (2013: 371) similarly argue that policy debates on the migration-development nexus often ignore arguments and debates of critical development studies on the question whether actors such as international organizations or developed states can even successfully trigger development. Overall, research on the relationship between development and migration thus remains inconclusive. However, the clear, general link that the EU’s policy of reducing migration through development projects is based on, has been widely rejected by migration scholars, who argue that reducing migration through economic development will simply not work (Collyer, 2019: 173).

Scholars have thus posed significant criticisms of both securitized and preventative components of externalized migration policy. Externalization, in general, has been criticized as a strategy to avoid protection responsibilities enshrined in international law. Responsibility for migrants, including refugee protection, is thus shifted to countries outside of Europe. The use of a preventative form of externalization through addressing ‘root causes’ is presented as a migrant-

and development-friendly alternative by the EU and some analysts. However, this approach has also been criticized for undermining development policy, lacking protections for migrants' human rights, and having no strong basis in the academic evidence. These criticisms cast doubt on the 'root cause' approach's potential as a genuine preventative alternative to securitized modes of migration control, and suggest that the linkage between development and migration rather functions as another strategy with the securitized goal of reducing arrivals and thereby circumventing protection responsibilities towards asylum seekers (Collyer, 2019: 170; Hyndman and Mountz, 2008: 267; Lavenex, 2006: 338; Lavenex and Kunz, 2008: 452–453).

2.4. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I first outlined the development of the EU's migration policy since the 1990s. Along with the process of abolishing internal borders in the Schengen Area, the EU began to harmonize its migration and asylum policies regarding both the internal and the external dimension. Internal harmonization largely took place in the 1990s and has since been characterized by lack of agreement among member states, resulting in very limited reforms despite widespread agreement on the need for reform. In contrast, the external dimension has proven more conducive to agreement among member states, which can all agree on the goals of border control and reducing migration. Accordingly, the external dimension has expanded rapidly. On the one hand, the EU has expanded border control, establishing a European Border and Coast Guard Agency and cooperating with its Mediterranean neighbors, to negotiate readmission agreements and encourage interceptions of migrants before they reach the EU. On the other hand, much more comprehensive external approaches to migration have been established, aiming to address diverse aspects of migration through partnerships with countries of origin. The year 2015 saw an acceleration of policy instruments in the external dimension. For the first time, the EU established a policy instrument, the EU Trust Fund for Africa, specifically for the previously largely rhetorical strategy of 'addressing root causes'.

I have also discussed the trend of externalization of migration policy, including development-based strategies of externalization, which are presented as mutually beneficial for (potential) migrants, and countries of origin, transit, and destination by the EU. However, criticisms from development, human rights and migration studies perspectives draw a less positive picture, casting doubt on the EU's preventative aspirations and practices. Nevertheless, the use of development funding and projects remains highly relevant in EU migration policy. In the following chapter, I analyze the implementation of EU migration policy vis-à-vis Africa, further discussing critical assessments of the EU's attempt to 'address root causes', and whether the approach provides a genuinely preventative alternative to securitized modes of migration control.

CHAPTER 3

IMPLEMENTATION OF EU MIGRATION POLICY VIS-À-VIS AFRICA

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I discuss EU migration policy instruments vis-à-vis West and East Africa since 2015, when EU migration policy interest in the regions intensified. I critically analyze the implementation of the EU Trust Fund for Africa, related migration policy instruments, and practices of EU-African cooperation to answer the following questions: What are critical assessments of the potential of EU migration policy practice vis-à-vis Africa to provide a genuinely preventative alternative to securitized modes of migration control? How can the shift towards the ‘root cause’ approach in EU migration policy be explained?

In this chapter, I build upon the previous chapter’s more general discussion of externalization and linkages between development and migration policy, by analyzing specific dynamics of implementation of EU migration policy in West and East Africa. I focus on these regions, as they have gained importance in EU migration policy since 2015 but have still been given less public and academic attention than the EU’s direct Mediterranean neighborhood. EU cooperation with its Mediterranean neighbors in North Africa, and the EU’s and member states’ own practices at the external borders of the EU have a longer history and have widely been discussed and identified as security-focused practices, including the criminalization of humanitarian sea rescue (Berti, 2021: 532; Cusumano and Villa, 2021: 23; Mainwaring and DeBono, 2021: 1031), tasking non-EU states with interception at sea (Casas-Cortes et al., 2016: 242–243; Lavenex, 2006: 340; Zaiotti, 2016: 22), including return to conflict-torn and human rights abuse-rife Libya (Müller P. and Slominski, 2021: 802; Scarpello, 2019: 7), the use of systematic refoulement by Greece (Frelick and Randhawa, 2022: 6–10), and the building of walls, fences, and surveillance systems (Bialasiewicz, 2012: 859; Bilgic and Pace, 2017: 91; Casas-Cortes et al., 2016: 234). Southern Africa, on the other hand, has not been a focus of EU migration policy, as it is not defined as part of any major migration route to the EU and is also not included in EU migration policy tools. West

and East Africa on the other hand have become central components of the EU's migration policy since 2015, with West Africa hosting almost half of all EUTF projects, while another 40% of projects are located in East Africa (Bartels, 2018: 30; European Commission, 2022a). I thus analyze the EUTF's implementation in the larger Horn of Africa and in the Sahel and Lake Chad, to shed light on the less frequently discussed EU engagement further away from its external borders.

EU engagement with these regions has also been presented in development-friendly, humanitarian terms, aiming to benefit migrants, cooperating countries and the EU. This framing invites an analysis of implementation practices, to evaluate whether a significant shift away from the border security focus towards a preventative approach to migration is really taking place in the EU. In this chapter, I thus focus my analysis on the implementation of the *European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa* (EUTF), as the policy instrument that, at least initially, seems most concerned with finding preventive, sustainable, migrant-friendly alternatives to security-based migration control. Aspects of other policy instruments, particularly as they overlap with EUTF implementation, are also part of my analysis. The recent EU interest in the two regions, and the purported move away from border control policies towards addressing causes of migration and forced displacement makes EU migration cooperation in East and West Africa an interesting subject of analysis.

I argue that, overall, EU migration policy vis-à-vis Africa does not provide a genuine, preventative alternative to securitized modes of migration control for the following five reasons. Firstly, through the EUTF, development funding is diverted according to migration policy objectives. Secondly, the EU prioritizes securitized European migration objectives of containing migration within Africa, rather than 'managing' migration in accordance with African and development actors' priorities. Thirdly, significant funding is allocated to border and migration control projects. Fourthly, the EU utilizes development aid as leverage to achieve African governments' cooperation on returns and the local implementation of migration control policies. Finally, EU migration policy relies on over-simplified assumptions on dynamics and root causes of migration.

Rather than providing a genuine preventative alternative, I argue that the ‘root cause’ approach can be explained as part of the European ‘crisis’ response of 2015, visibly addressing the perceived ‘threat’ of migrants’ arrival in Europe for domestic audiences. The securitized view of migration as a threat explains the continued focus on containing migration outside of Europe. Challenges to the border security focus in the context of highly visible deaths at the EU’s external borders explains the shift towards a more humanitarian, development-friendly, migrant-friendly policy narrative, evading responsibility for migrants and their protection by shifting responsibility further away from Europe.

In this chapter, I first briefly outline migration dynamics within and from East and West Africa. Second, I provide a short overview of European policy instruments vis-à-vis Africa. Next, I analyze statistical data to identify trends and possible correlations between EU development aid disbursed to East and West Africa and migration from the regions to the EU. Then, I turn to a critical analysis of projects funded under the EUTF, assessing in how far they are oriented towards development and migration control objectives. Next, I discuss the gap between EUTF assumptions on root causes and migration dynamics observed by migration scholars. Finally, I attempt to explain the EU’s shift towards the ‘root cause’ approach, by drawing on the theoretical frameworks discussed in the first chapter.

3.2. MIGRATION DYNAMICS IN EAST AND WEST AFRICA

The majority of migration takes place within Africa and its regions, rather than from Africa to Europe. Out of a total of 40.2 million African migrants, 53% were found to be residing in another African country, while 26% lived in Europe (Hovy et al., 2020: 17). Within Africa, the regions hosting most migrants are Eastern Africa (30%) and Western Africa (28%) (Hovy et al., 2020: 17). Additionally, African countries host 25% of the global refugee population, over half of which are hosted in Eastern Africa (Hovy et al., 2020: 18). Long histories of mobility predate the establishment of borders and separate political units (Achieng and El Fadil, 2020: 3; Bisong, 2019: 1295; IOM Global Migration Data Analysis Centre, 2021). Politically, as part of the Pan African agenda and regional integration, both the

African Union and the different Regional Economic Communities aim towards implementing freedom of movement for their citizens (Bisong, 2019: 1295; Geddes and Maru, 2020: 9).

West Africa is characterized by widespread, often temporary, intra-regional mobility (IOM Global Migration Data Analysis Centre, 2021; Sanchez, 2020: 232). The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) adopted a regulation on free movement in 1979, although in practice implementation varies across the region (Bisong, 2019: 1295). Two thirds of West African migrants stay in the region (IOM Global Migration Data Analysis Centre, 2021). Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria are the two most prominent host countries of West African migrants (IOM Global Migration Data Analysis Centre, 2021). Migration in the region is largely economically motivated, with migrants searching for better economic opportunities and employment (IOM Global Migration Data Analysis Centre, 2021). However, forced displacement as a result of violent conflict also plays a role in the Lake Chad Basin and the Central Sahel, leading to internal displacement in and refugee movements from Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger (IOM Global Migration Data Analysis Centre, 2021). Overall, West Africa hosts half a million refugees and 5.7 internally displaced persons (IDPs) (UNHCR, 2022c). Additionally, Libya continues to be a prominent destination for West African labor migrants, despite the ongoing conflict (Sanchez, 2020: 234).

In the Horn of Africa, much mobility is conflict-related: The larger region² faces multiple protracted displacement situations, with a total of 4.9 million refugees and 11.7 million IDPs hosted in the region (Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2259; UNHCR, 2022b). The overwhelming majority of displaced people remain in the region, either in their own country or in neighboring countries (Weber, 2018: 47). Reasons for displacement are complex and inter-related, ranging from political repression, armed conflict and poor governance to environmental degradation, food insecurity and natural disasters (Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2). Displacement has especially taken place within and from South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia. At the same time, South Sudan, Sudan, Ethiopia, as well as Kenya and Uganda, host large refugee

² UNHCR provides data for the larger East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes Region, consisting of Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda

populations (UNHCR, 2022b). Eritrea, a highly repressive dictatorship, showing no signs of political opening, is another important country of origin of refugees (Weber, 2018). While forced migration dominates in the region, labor migration also takes place within the region and to extra-regional destinations, particularly the Middle East and South Africa (IOM, 2022b: 20).

Regarding migration from Africa to Europe, numbers of asylum application from African migrants lie far behind the number of Syrian, Afghan or Iraqi applications (Eurostat, 2022d). In total, sub-Saharan African applications made up less than 20% of the 631,570 asylum applications submitted in the EU in 2019 (Eurostat, 2022a). In 2021, Somalia, Nigeria and Eritrea were the three main sub-Saharan African countries of origin of asylum seekers in Europe (Eurostat, 2022d).

Main countries of origin of West African asylum seekers in Europe include Nigeria, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, and Senegal (European Union Agency for Asylum, 2022). Recognition rates of West African protection claims differs significantly: While recognition rates were relatively low for Senegalese (9%) and Nigerian (12%) applicants, around a quarter of applicants from Guinea (27%) and Côte d'Ivoire (24%), and almost half of Malian (46%) applicants received a protection status at first instance (European Union Agency for Asylum, 2022). West African migrants travel along multiple main routes to reach Europe: The Central Mediterranean route largely takes migrants through Niger and Libya across the Mediterranean to Italy. On the Western Mediterranean route, migrants travel through Morocco to Spain. Additionally, migrants cross parts of the Atlantic Ocean, leaving from the West African coast towards the Spanish Canary Islands.

Main countries of origin of Eastern African asylum seekers are Somalia and Eritrea (Eurostat, 2022a). At the height of refugee arrivals in 2015, 29,355 Eritreans and 19,170 Somalis applied for asylum in the EU. In 2019, it was 12,850 Somalis and 9,890 Eritreans. In comparison to the total number of applications in the EU, numbering 1.2 million in 2015 and 0.6 million in 2019, as well as compared to the number of displaced people within the region, the number of Eastern African asylum seekers in Europe is thus relatively small (Eurostat, 2022a; Weber, 2018: 47). Additionally, a majority of Somali and Eritrean asylum claims are recognized in the EU: In 2021, 84% of Eritrean and 57% of Somali applicants received a protection

status in the EU (European Union Agency for Asylum, 2022). The main route to Europe leads through Sudan and Libya across the Mediterranean (Oette and Babiker, 2017: 4; Weber, 2018: 49). In surveys conducted with people recently arrived in the EU, most migrants, however, reported that they did not leave their home country with the intention to travel to Europe (Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2269; McMahon and Sigona, 2018: 508). Instead, they first moved to another country in the region and later decided to continue their travels to Europe, often as a response to the conditions in the host country.

Human trafficking, a modern form of slavery in which humans are involuntarily moved for exploitation, also plays a role in African – EU migration. Nigeria and the Horn of Africa are among the main African regions of origin for people, particularly women and children, trafficked for sexual exploitation and forced labor (Adepoju et al., 2010: 49; Oette and Babiker, 2017: 2; UNHCR, 2014: 2). While irregular migration can make migrants vulnerable to human trafficking, it is important to uphold the distinction between smuggling and trafficking in human beings. In contrast to trafficking, smuggling is a paid, albeit illegal, service actively sought out by migrants to cross borders irregularly, but voluntarily (Oette and Babiker, 2017: 11; UNHCR, 2022a). After crossing the border in question, the relationship between smuggler and migrant usually ends. For many migrants, including refugees, smuggling is the only option to cross borders. All of the routes to Europe, however, are extremely dangerous for migrants who have to rely on smugglers: The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has recorded 20,000 deaths and disappearances on the Central Mediterranean Route since 2014, and 2,900 on the Western Mediterranean Route (IOM, 2022a).

Overall, a majority of migration takes place within Africa and its regions. In comparison to asylum applications from countries such as Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan, and compared to migrants displaced within Africa, the number of irregular migrants from sub-Saharan Africa in Europe is low. Many African migrants are recognized as refugees or granted subsidiary protection in Europe, with recognition rates of Eastern African applicants especially high. Nevertheless, in order to reach Europe, migrants have to rely on smugglers, and take dangerous routes within Africa and across the Mediterranean.

3.3. EU MIGRATION POLICY INSTRUMENTS VIS-À-VIS AFRICA

While rhetoric on cooperation with African governments and addressing root causes as part of the EU's external migration goes back to the 1990s (Lavenex, 2006: 333), implementation of policy instruments at EU level remained limited until 2015. Initial EU interest in migration cooperation with West Africa originated when increasing control and surveillance of the Spanish-Moroccan border led growing numbers of migrants to attempt to reach the Spanish Canary Islands from Senegal and Mauritania (Adepoju et al., 2010: 45; Ould Moctar, 2022, 2). With the establishment of the GAM in 2005, the EU then began to slowly include West Africa in its external migration policy through the Rabat Process and first negotiations on mobility partnerships. However, agreement could only be reached with Cape Verde, while negotiations broke down with Senegal (Chou and Gibert, 2012: 409; Mouthaan, 2019: 2).

In this period, bilateral agreements between EU member states and African states were more successful and extensive. Bilateral agreements were thus established between e.g. Spain and Senegal, France and Senegal, Mali and France, Nigeria and Italy, and Nigeria and Spain (Adepoju et al., 2010: 44; Bisong, 2019: 1301). The preference for bilateral agreements over agreements with the EU has been explained by the EU's lack of competence in offering partner countries pathways for legal migration in return for readmission agreements (Kipp and Koch, 2018: 10; Reslow, 2012a: 232). In contrast, the bilateral agreement between Spain and Senegal, for example, included the provision of work visas, although numbers of visas have remained low (Adepoju et al., 2010: 55).

EU migration policy initiatives in general and vis-à-vis sub-Saharan Africa picked up speed in 2015, when more than one million migrants managed to overcome existing barriers to the EU. At the Valletta Summit in November 2015, European and African leaders adopted the Valletta Action Plan, agreeing to cooperate on five priority domains: development benefits of migration and addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement; legal migration and mobility; protection and asylum; prevention of and fight against

irregular migration, smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings; return, readmission and reintegration (Castillejo, 2017a: 6).

At the summit, the EU also launched the *European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa*, as a flexible financing instrument to “address the root causes of instability, forced displacement and irregular migration and to contribute to better migration management” in Africa (European Commission, 2022a). The EUTF is implemented in 26 countries across three windows: North Africa, the Horn of Africa and Sahel and Lake Chad, including most of West Africa.

Additionally, the Migration Partnership Framework, as a successor to the Mobility Partnerships was launched in 2016, focusing on five priority countries, all of which lie in sub-Saharan Africa: Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Mali, and Ethiopia. The MPF aims to “sustainably manage migration flows, by governing migration through cooperation with countries of origin and transit” (Castillejo, 2017a: 5). These policy instruments thus do not seem overly focused on securitized forms of migration control, but instead emphasize ‘managing’ migration, include legal migration, asylum and protection, aim to address root causes of displacement, and harness development benefits of migration.

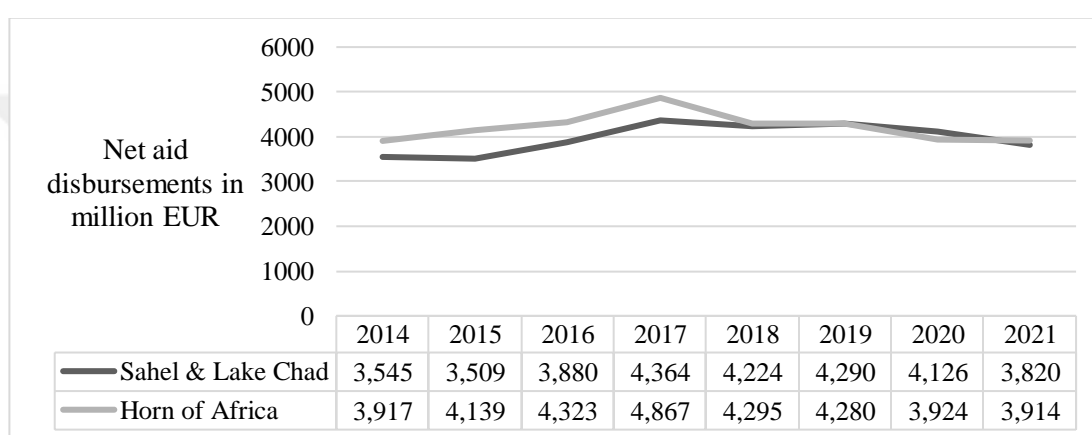
3.4. DEVELOPMENT AID DISBURSEMENT AND MIGRATION TRENDS

From 2016 onwards, asylum applications by East and West African citizens in the EU began to decrease while aid disbursement both through traditional channels of development cooperation and through the newly created EUTF increased (European Commission, 2023; Eurostat, 2022a). In this section, I provide a brief analysis of trends and correlations of asylum applications from East and West Africa, on the one hand, and aid disbursements to the regions, on the other hand. I argue that although, overall, a partial correlation between the two parameters can be identified, this correlation does not allow for far-reaching conclusions on the preventative potential of EU migration policy instruments.

My analysis of these trends is based on data on asylum applications in the EU, published by Eurostat (2022a) and on official development aid disbursements,

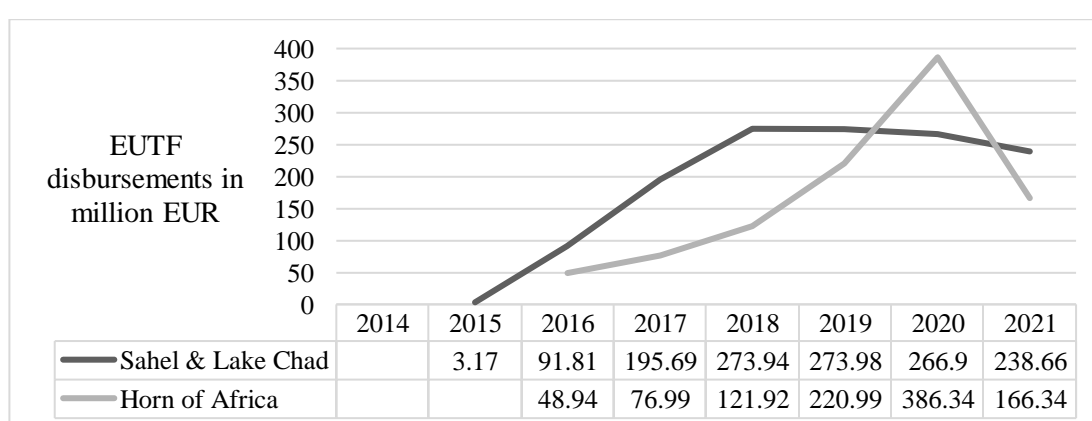
published by the European Commission (2023) on the EU Aid Explorer. General aid disbursements and disbursements through the EUTF are provided separately. I first look at data for the two relevant EUTF windows as a whole³, and then at the three main sub-Saharan countries of origin Eritrea, Somalia, and Nigeria, analyzing data in the period from 2014, the year before a variety of new migration policy instruments were established, until 2021.

Table 1: EU development aid disbursements to East and West Africa



Source: European Commission, 2023

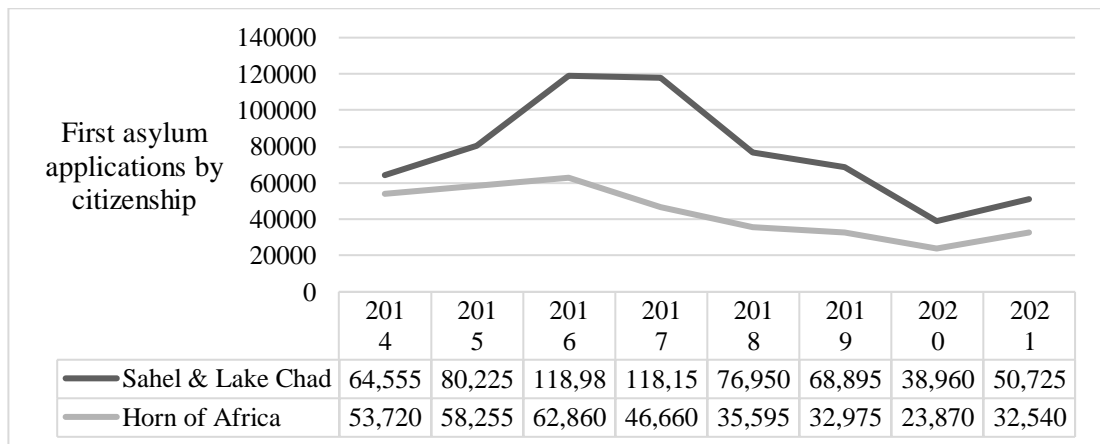
Table 2: EUTF disbursements to East and West Africa



Source: European Commission, 2023

³ Sahel and Lake Chad Window: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal; Horn of Africa: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda

Table 3: East and West African citizens' asylum applications in the EU



Source: Eurostat, 2022a

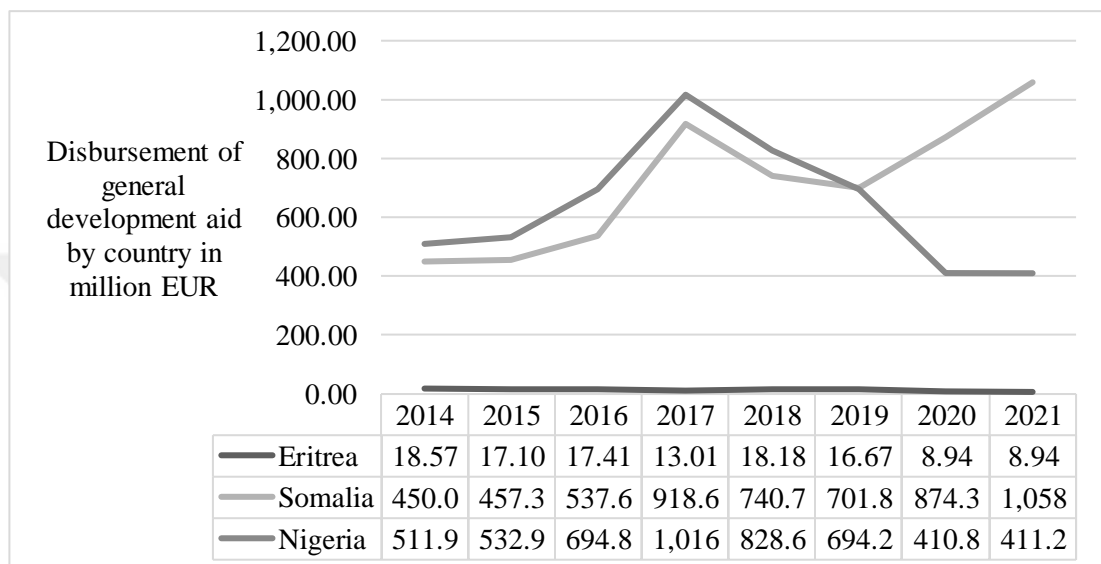
Aid disbursement to the West African Sahel & Lake Chad window along traditional channels increased from 3.5 billion EUR in 2014 to 4.3 billion EUR in 2017, somewhat decreasing again to 3.8 billion EUR in 2021 (European Commission, 2023). Additionally, through the EUTF, aid specifically aimed at targeting root causes began to be disbursed on a wider scale in 2016. In 2018 – 2019, disbursement through the EUTF peaked at 274 million EUR per year (European Commission, 2023). Asylum applications from the same countries, similarly to overall trends in asylum application, decreased rapidly from 2017, reaching a low point in 2020, and rising again in 2021 (Eurostat, 2022a).

In the Horn of Africa, the overall trends were similar. While aid increased from 3.9 billion EUR in 2014 to 4.8 billion EUR in 2017, funding through the EUTF peaked only in 2020 with 386 million EUR disbursed (European Commission, 2023). Asylum applications, on the other hand, began to decrease from 2017 (Eurostat, 2022a).

A decrease in migration from these countries thus began at the same time as overall aid began to increase, but before EUTF funding began to be disbursed. The simultaneity of increasing aid and decreasing migration suggests that aid could potentially have had an effect of addressing root causes and thereby decreasing migration.

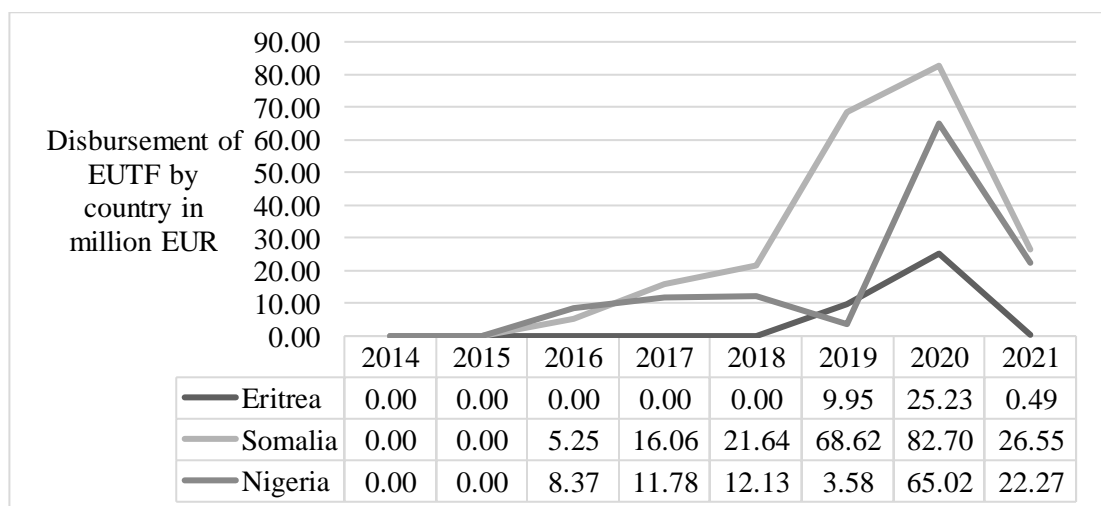
However, an analysis of data of specific countries complicates the correlation. In the following, I take a closer look at data from Eritrea, Somalia, and Nigeria, as the three main countries of origin in East and West Africa.

Table 4: EU development aid disbursements to selected countries



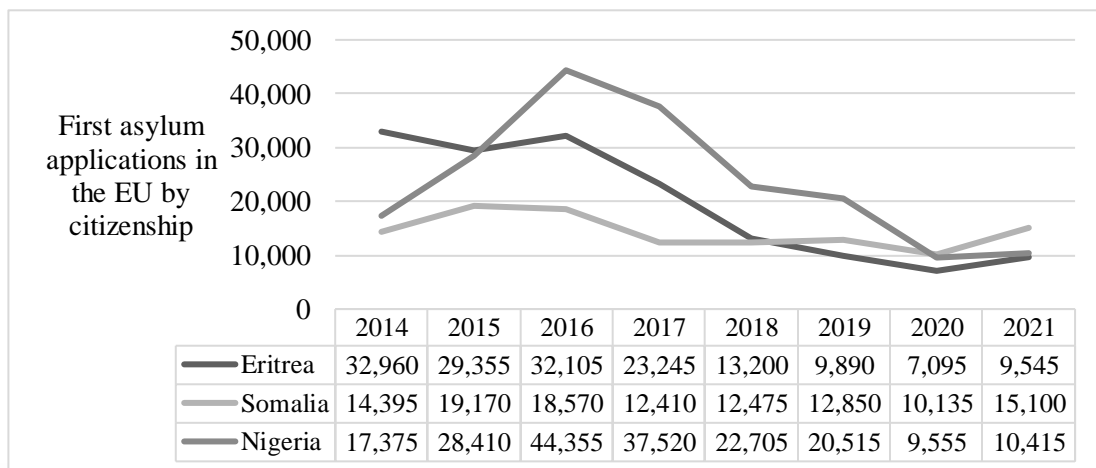
Source: European Commission, 2023

Table 5: EUTF disbursements to selected countries



Source: European Commission, 2023

Table 6: Asylum applications from selected countries



Source: Eurostat, 2022a

Arrivals of Eritrean asylum seekers decreased significantly, from 32,105 in 2016 to 9,545 in 2021 (Eurostat, 2022a). However, Eritrea has received very little development aid from the EU, with general development aid ranging below 19 million EUR per year, and a singular higher, but still comparatively low, disbursement of 25.3 million EUR in 2020 through the EUTF (European Commission, 2023). Decreases in migration from Eritrea to the EU thus took place despite very limited development aid, and preceded funding through the EUTF. It thus seems unlikely that development aid targeting root causes of displacement could be an important cause of decreasing migration from Eritrea to the EU.

For Somalia, the number of asylum applications in the EU was highest in 2015 with 19,170, while in the period 2017–2019 around 12,500 Somali citizens per year placed a first asylum application (Eurostat, 2022a). In 2021, the number of Somali asylum seekers then began to increase again, reaching 15,100. In contrast to Eritrea, European development aid disbursed to projects in Somalia is high, overall (European Commission, 2023). Allocation both through the EUTF and traditional development aid has been high, especially since 2017, when more than 1 billion EUR were disbursed to Somalia within one year (European Commission, 2023). The increase in aid and decrease in migration from Somalia to the EU thus seems to coincide. However, it is questionable whether aid could have had such an immediate effect as to decrease migration in the same year it was disbursed. Additionally, aid

remains high, but migration has also begun to increase again, reaching levels higher than in 2014.

Asylum applications of Nigerian citizens in the EU decreased by almost 50% from 44,355 in 2016 to 22,705 in 2018, and further decreased to 10,415 in 2021 (Eurostat, 2022a). Development aid disbursement to Nigeria reached its peak in 2017, exceeding 1 billion EUR, and has since fallen to 411 million EUR in general aid disbursement plus only 22 million EUR through the EUTF in 2021 (European Commission, 2023). In Nigeria, a link between increasing aid and decreasing migration around the year 2017 is thus a possibility, whereas the simultaneous decreases in migration and in aid disbursement from 2018 suggest no direct link between the two factors.

A closer analysis of migration and aid disbursement trends in these three countries thus complicates the overall correlation between rising aid and decreasing migration. Additionally, even where correlations can be identified, development aid-based migration policy was implemented at the same time as other more clearly security-based practices at the EU's external borders. It is thus difficult to differentiate effects of specific aspects of EU policy. Furthermore, local, regional, and global events are likely to also affect migration trends: Changes in the larger political and economic situation in countries of origin, but also the specific situation for migrants along migration routes within and between Africa and Europe, as well as further travel restrictions in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic are likely to have had an impact on migrant arrivals.

It is thus especially difficult to propose hypotheses on causal links between decreases in migration and specific aspects of EU policy. An overall correlation between increasing aid disbursements and decreasing migration thus suggests that aid to some extent may contribute to decreasing migration but does not allow for clear conclusions on the effectiveness of preventative components of EU migration policy. Rather than providing a more detailed statistical analysis, this thesis in the following focuses on the content and funding practices of EU migration policy that aims to target root causes of migration through development cooperation, showing that not all funding through the EUTF even follows traditional development principles.

3.5. ANALYSIS OF THE EUTF AND RELATED POLICY INSTRUMENTS

In this section, I analyze the implementation of the EUTF and related EU-African cooperation. First, I analyze the projects funded under the EUTF and the way funding is allocated, with respect to dynamics of development and securitization. Next, I discuss criticisms regarding the EUTF's underlying assumptions about root causes of migration.

My analysis of the EUTF is largely based on reports by the international NGO Oxfam (Raty and Shilhav, 2020), the European confederation of development and relief NGOs Concord (Guerry et al., 2018) and the Greens-associated Heinrich Böll Foundation (Bartels, 2018). These reports provide information on the distribution of funding of the EUTF. Due to different time periods studied and different methodologies of categorization employed, numbers somewhat differ between the reports, but show similar general tendencies.

3.5.1. A Critical Assessment of the EUTF from a Development Perspective

The way funding is allocated under the EUTF has been widely criticized from a development perspective. Development actors argue that since the EUTF is largely funded by official development aid, primarily through the European Development Fund, its implementation should be guided by principles of development effectiveness (Oliveira and Zacharenko, 2018: 25). However, instead of allocation according to traditional development needs assessments, focused on lower income and least developed countries and the goal of poverty reduction, in the EUTF, funding is allocated according to migration objectives (Castillejo, 2017a: 14; Guerry et al., 2018: 10). I argue, that while many EUTF-funded projects are still in line with development objectives, others are mainly informed by migration priorities, thereby skewing the use of development aid away from development principles (Bisong, 2020: 227; Guerry et al., 2018: 10; Thovoethin, 2021: 629). I identify four main points of criticism. Firstly, EUTF projects are regionally focused on migration routes and populations that are significant from a European perspective. Secondly,

implementation of the EUTF focuses not on ‘managing’ migration, which would include significant improvement of regular pathways for migration, but on containment within Africa. Thirdly, EUTF funding is used for security-focused projects on border control and security force capacity building. Finally, through the EUTF, development funding has been used as leverage for achieving cooperation on returns and local policy in line with European priorities.

A majority of EUTF funding is allocated to countries along the main migration routes to Europe, instead of the countries most affected by poverty (Bartels, 2018: 6; Bisong, 2020: 227; Guerry et al., 2018: 10). The top recipient countries of EUTF funding are thus Somalia, as an important country of origin, Libya, Niger and Mali as main transit countries, and Ethiopia, as country of origin and host country for refugees from neighboring countries (Raty and Shilhav, 2020: 12). Within Ethiopia, donors have been found to prioritize projects targeted at Eritrean refugees over South Sudanese refugees, as Eritreans tend to migrate to Europe at much higher rates than South Sudanese (Castillejo, 2017a: 30). This is problematic, as aid is not allocated to the most vulnerable populations, but instead to those whose migration is of interest from a European perspective. This also goes against the EU’s own development principles enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty, according to which the main objective of development cooperation has to be the reduction, and in the long term eradication, of poverty (Guerry et al., 2018: 10). International non-governmental organizations and development actors thus criticize that the EUTF undermines development principles.

The reports show that, in total, development cooperation makes up more than half of EUTF spending (Bartels, 2018: 6; Raty and Shilhav, 2020: 4). However, the Oxfam report also shows that in the period 2018-2019 the share allocated to development projects has decreased to 48% in comparison to over 60% between 2015-2017, indicating a trend away from development towards migration governance (Raty and Shilhav, 2020: 4). Many of these projects are classical development projects focused on poverty reduction, e.g. promoting greater economic and employment opportunities, food security, education or health services (Zaun and Nantermoz, 2022: 519).

However, the EUTF provides little additional benefits to existing development programs. It is mostly financed by already existing development funding, meaning that little new funding has been made available for dealing with migration challenges through the EUTF. Guerry et al. (2018: 33) thus argue that even in countries where EUTF projects have mostly contributed to development and protection of migrants, such as in Ethiopia, no significant positive difference exists between funding through the EUTF in comparison to direct EDF funding. From a development perspective, less rather than more funding is now available for development projects, as just over 50% of EUTF funding has gone to classical development projects, leaving close to half of funds for other types of projects (Thovoethin, 2021: 629).

Legal migration is one pillar of the European Agenda on Migration and generally a prominent aspect of EU rhetoric and policy documents (Zanker, 2019: 8). In line with development actors and African governments, who stress the importance of migration for development, the EU thus widely argues that migration as such is not the problem, as long as it happens in regular ways and is properly managed (Zanker, 2019: 7). In practice, however, the topic of legal migration is largely neglected in the EUTF (Zanker, 2019: 12): Only two projects, out of a total of 186 funded projects, deal with improving legal pathways for migration, receiving just 1% of EUTF funding (Bartels, 2018: 19). One of these projects aims to improve migration within the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the regional economic community in East Africa, while only one projects aims to provide legal possibilities for (temporary) migration to Europe through expanding the Erasmus+ program in West Africa (Bartels, 2018: 19). EU rhetoric of simply aiming to 'manage' migration, and not only restrict it, is thus not confirmed in its practice, providing no alternative, regular ways for migrants to access asylum procedures or work opportunities in Europe.

In addition to development projects, migration governance and peace and security are important aspects of the EUTF. According to Oxfam, 26% of EUTF funding goes to projects dealing with migration governance, while 10% are allocated to peace and security (Raty and Shilhav, 2020: 4). While both of these fall outside of classical development cooperation, they can partially still be subsumed under the

EUTF goal of ‘addressing root causes’ of migration. For example, some migration governance projects, such as the Better Migration Management project across countries in the Horn of Africa, include aspects that aim to improve capacities for hosting refugees in the region and supporting the development of migration policies supporting refugee integration. The 2019 revised refugee proclamation in Ethiopia is a good example for a policy instrument that goes beyond a securitized approach. The proclamation abandons the emphasis on refugee encampment, and instead provides paths to local integration through access to various public services, education, and employment (Geddes and Maru, 2020: 2; Gezahegne and Bakewell, 2022: 16; Mengiste, 2022: 1361). It can accordingly be understood as contributing to improving conditions for refugees, so that they do not feel the need to move on from Ethiopia. In the case of peace-building projects, projects such as extremism prevention projects in the Horn of Africa, can contribute to security of (potential) migrants in their home country (Bartels, 2018: 18).

However, other migration management and peace and security projects financed by the EUTF cannot be considered to address root causes of migration. Instead, they take a coercive, securitized approach to migration, hindering people willing to migrate, e.g. through strengthened border controls within Africa. Migration control is thus also an important part of the EUTF (Zaun and Nantermoz, 2022: 519). Projects for improved border management include support for state institutions through capacity building and training (Bartels, 2018: 19). Collyer (2020) identifies the funding of border control measures in third countries using development aid as ‘disingenuous development’, that instead constitutes a coercive form of dissuasion by increasing interception of migrants long before they reach their country of destination (Collyer, 2019, 170, 2020: 64). He argues that development in this case only functions as a legitimating strategy, which has no real basis: border control does not contribute to development, and should be distinguished from e.g. employment generation projects.

In the Sahel and Lake Chad region, overall 60% of EUTF funding is allocated to addressing ‘root causes’ of migration, largely through traditional development projects on poverty reduction, social integration, economic empowerment and food security (Bartels, 2018: 31). However, securitized modes of coercively limiting

migration also play an important role in this region. 24% of EUTF funding to the region is allocated to fighting irregular migration, smuggling and human trafficking (Bartels, 2018: 31). Accordingly, the EU funds projects that aim to improve cooperation between security and police forces as well as security technology (Bartels, 2018: 19). In Senegal, the EUTF has funded a project for the introduction of biometric passports (Bartels, 2018: 19). In Burkina Faso, the EU supports the state to increase its presence in border regions (Thovoethin, 2021: 626). In Mali, the EU funds security forces to enforce their control over their territory (Thovoethin, 2021: 626). In Chad, EUTF funds are allocated to security forces for the purpose of strengthening controls at the borders to Cameroon and Niger (Thovoethin, 2021: 626). In Mauritania, EUTF funds have been used to strengthen authorities' control over land and sea borders (Thovoethin, 2021: 626). This security-focused approach thus takes place across the region. It is however especially prominent in Niger, as the main transit country on the route to Libya, discussed in more detail below.

In the Horn of Africa, 71% of funding is allocated to development cooperation. Out of 11% allocated to migration governance, the majority of funding goes to projects on migration containment and control and on return of migrants (Raty and Shilhav, 2020: 13). Ethiopia is one of the top receivers of EUTF funding. Ethiopia is an important host country of refugees from neighboring countries, as well as a source of displacement, especially during the recent war in Ethiopia's Tigray region. To a lesser extent, Ethiopia can be considered a transit country, as some of the refugees hosted in Ethiopia decide to move on. EU engagement in Ethiopia has been viewed more positively than in other countries, as the vast majority of funding goes to development projects (47%) and the protection of refugees from neighboring countries (46%) (Castillejo, 2017a: 30). In the report by Concord, Guerry et al. (2018: 30) thus conclude that EUTF projects in Ethiopia are generally in line with principles of development aid.

The regional Better Migration Management project, implemented across the Horn of Africa by the implementing organization German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), has been described as a project that combines migration control with refugee protection (Oette and Babiker, 2017: 8). It includes improved access to justice and protection, but also capacity-building, carried out through training for

border guards, police and immigration officials (Gerloff, 2019: 177). This aspect is particularly contentious in the Horn of Africa, as training is provided to members of the security apparatuses of states that are known for human rights violations, in the case of Sudan e.g. posing the risk that training and equipment could pass into the hands of government-aligned militia members (Raty and Shilhav, 2020: 15).

The projects implemented through the EUTF are thus partly in line with development objectives, but also constitute a diversion of development aid according to migration containment objectives. Aid is focused on populations and countries relevant to European migration objectives, rather than informed by the goal of poverty reduction. As little additional funding was made available for the EUTF, the development benefits of some projects do not significantly differ from the effects that development aid without a migration dimension could have had. Projects creating pathways for legal migration are largely absent from the EUTF, confirming the focus on containing migration within Africa. Through migration management programs that partially consist of funding and training third countries' security forces and limiting border crossings, a significant security dimension is additionally introduced in development funding through the EUTF. The financing of security-oriented projects, which function to reduce migration in coercive ways by making it more difficult to move, with development aid constitutes a significant departure from traditional development assistance, thereby undermining the purposes of development (Collyer, 2019: 178–179; Guerry et al., 2018: 24).

Collyer (2020) identifies the funding of border control measures in third countries using development aid as 'disingenuous development', that instead constitutes a coercive form of dissuasion by increasing interception of migrants long before they reach their country of destination (Collyer, 2019, 170, 2020: 64). He argues that development in this case only functions as a legitimating strategy, which has no real basis: border control does not contribute to development, and should be distinguished from e.g. employment generation projects.

The EUTF has also been argued to fulfil a further securitizing function, as funding has been used as leverage for the local implementation of security-focused policies and laws. This use of conditionality in aid allocation has led African development actors to call it "a cynical attempt to bribe African countries with aid"

(cited in Castillejo, 2017a: 15). EUTF funds, especially through the introduction of the Migration Partnership Framework which explicitly includes the use of negative and positive incentives to ensure cooperation, have thus also been used as a way to reward or punish countries depending on their cooperation with the EU agenda on migration containment and returns (Bisong, 2020: 226; Castillejo, 2017a: 15). A ‘more for more’ and ‘less for less’ approach has been identified. In practice, this has been observed as commitments under the EUTF and EDF have increased in countries which are seen to cooperate well with the EU, especially in Niger and Mali (Bisong, 2020: 226). While not explicitly stated, in Guinea, the Gambia, and Côte D’Ivoire, the conditionality of aid on governments’ cooperation on readmissions has become clear: All three countries received funding for development projects on employment generation and social cohesion shortly after their governments signed readmission agreements (Thovoethin, 2021: 627). In Ethiopia, funding through the EUTF, which had been stopped in October 2016 as discussions on returns were stalling, resumed in December 2017, coinciding with agreement upon an arrangement on returns and included 50 million Euros of budget support for the Ethiopian government (Raty and Shilhav, 2020: 15). Development aid is thus increasingly used as leverage to engage African countries in migration control and increase cooperation on returns. This constitutes a serious problem for development coherence as aid is diverted, and African partners are pressured to comply with European priorities (Thovoethin, 2021: 628).

In general, it can be observed that African governments have significantly expanded border controls, the use of border management systems, criminalization of people-smuggling and cooperation on these issues with the EU. African cooperation with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex has increased (Bisong, 2021: 267). Frontex is now directly involved with conducting returns of rejected asylum seekers, and organizing identification missions in preparation of returns, but also stations Liaison Officers in various African countries along migration routes (Zanker, 2019: 13). Additionally, many African cooperating countries have made changes to or newly developed their legislation, policy and action plans on migration, focused on containment of migration and the criminalization of smuggling. Accordingly, Nigeria, Niger, Mali, Senegal, Guinea, Côte d’Ivoire, and

the Gambia in West Africa, and Ethiopia, Sudan, Djibouti, Eritrea, Kenya, and Uganda in East Africa have intensified prosecution and sentencing of smugglers and traffickers, expanding state focus on previously less controlled border areas (Geddes and Maru, 2020: 10).

Although, in some instances, EU and partner countries' interests in border securitization may overlap, these developments can be considered to, at least partially, happen as a result of European migration initiatives. For example, Weber (2018: 52) argues that especially Sudan and Eritrea are themselves interested in border securitization: Sudan's borders are characterized by armed conflict, and Sudan aims to prevent armed fighters from returning to Sudan e.g. from Libya, and is thus interested in controlling its borders (Weber, 2018: 52). Eritrea, on the other hand, strongly opposes emigration of its citizens, banning people from leaving the country, and thus also aims to control its borders more efficiently (Weber, 2018: 47).

Overall, however, EU insistence on increased restrictive control of borders within Africa has the potential to undermine priorities of the African Union and Regional Economic Communities, most prominently ECOWAS, as they aim towards improving freedom of movement within Africa to promote economic development (Bisong, 2020: 233, 2021: 269; Geddes and Maru, 2020: 10; Koch et al., 2018: 72; Müller M., 2018: 34). From the African and development perspective, migration has mostly been viewed positively, contributing to development. However, EU pressure to secure borders within Africa, to limit irregular migration to Europe, while not expanding legal paths for migration have largely been viewed as having a negative economic effect on countries of origin. Especially remittances play an important role, as they provide long-term household income, often more dependable than development projects (Koch et al., 2018: 72–73).

Many African countries, particularly the more democratic West African countries with strong civil societies, internally oppose the European migration containment policies, and especially the return of their citizens (Adam et al., 2020: 3109–3110; Bisong, 2020: 220; Castillejo, 2017a: 14; Mouthaan, 2019: 8; Zanker, 2019: 3). Their partial willingness to establish securitized border policies in line with European objectives can thus largely be explained with European diplomatic and development initiatives (Bisong, 2021: 263). The EU approach of 'more for more'

and ‘less for less’, rewarding countries cooperating in migration containment and limiting support in countries that do not take steps in that direction, is likely to play a role in this development toward increased border securitization and criminalization of smuggling (Bisong, 2020: 233, 2021: 263; Geddes and Maru, 2020: 10). Additionally, the EU and international organizations such as IOM play a role as advisers in developing African migration policies and laws (Bisong, 2021: 263). Consequently, African governments’ cooperation with the EU on migration policy has clearly increased since the EU has increased its diplomatic engagement and established the EUTF in 2015. The EUTF has thus also fulfilled the role of overcoming the deadlock of previous return negotiation and pressuring African governments’ into containing migrants within East and West Africa.

The way in which EU engagement has functioned to securitize migration becomes especially clear in Niger, which I now discuss in more detail. Niger is considered as one of the most reliable partners by the EU, and has become an important ally in the EU’s external migration policy (Castillejo, 2017a: 22; Müller M., 2018: 34).

Niger is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 189th in the human development index. Irregular migration of Nigerien citizens to Europe is low, with only 445 asylum application registered in 2019 (Eurostat, 2022a). Nevertheless, Niger is considered a priority country by the EU due to its role as a transit country on the Central Mediterranean route from West Africa. Especially the city of Agadez in Niger’s North has functioned as an important point of transit, where migrants stay before crossing the Sahara Desert on their way to Libya and, to a lesser extent, to Algeria. In Libya, the absence of a stable government as well as the widely reported systemic human rights abuses of migrants, including enslavement, torture, murder, rape and imprisonment in detention centers (OHCHR, 2021, 61; Raineri, 2018: 75) limiting possibilities for EU-Libyan cooperation, are considered an important reason why migration containment has moved south to Niger (Abebe, 2019: 7). Additionally, Niger’s governments under former president Mahamadou Issoufou and under current president Mohamed Bazoum have been very willing to cooperate with the EU. Niger’s interest in regulating migration has been described as reactive to EU interests (Müller M., 2018: 37). Aid, training of security forces, as well as

international recognition have been identified as the main factors motivating the Nigerien government to cooperate (Castillejo, 2017a: 22; Hahonou and Olsen, 2021: 875; Müller M., 2018, 34).

Niger is among the top recipients of EUTF funding. Roughly half of funds in Niger are allocated to development and migrant protection, while the other half is allocated to local authorities with the purpose of reducing transit migration (Guerry et al., 2018: 6). Development projects especially focus on providing alternative economic and employment opportunities to replace smuggling and housing of migrants which have been major sources of income in the countries' North (Müller M., 2018: 40–41). Additionally, the EU importantly funds voluntary return schemes from Niger to migrants' home countries (Müller M., 2018: 41). The EU has supported the reinforcement of border controls through EUTF funds, including the establishment of checkpoints along the way (Müller M., 2018: 40). One EUTF project thus provides direct budget support to Nigerien authorities for the purpose of fighting organized crime, smuggling and human trafficking, on the condition that Niger fulfils certain requirements such as drafting a National Strategy against Irregular Migration, purchasing security equipment for border posts and constructing border posts in strategic areas (Guerry et al., 2018: 23). Moreover, EU capacity building mission (EUCAP) Sahel Niger, a civilian capacity-building mission run by the European External Action Service as part of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy, originally established to train and advise Nigerien security forces with the aim of combatting terrorism and organized crime, was later expanded to include the fight against irregular migration and since 2022 includes cooperation with Frontex (Bisong, 2020: 233; Statewatch, 2022).

Additionally, in 2015, Niger passed law 2015-36 differentiating between legal and illegal immigration, after pressure to do so by the EU and after consultations on coherent migration policy by the German development implementing organization GIZ (Castillejo, 2017a: 22; Hahonou and Olsen, 2021: 876; Müller M., 2018: 37). This law also importantly criminalizes smuggling: until 2015, smugglers were simply considered drivers, providing transportation to Libya. With the introduction of this law, drivers caught transporting ECOWAS citizens in their car in the region north of Agadez can be prosecuted as traffickers, punishable

with up to 25 years imprisonment, even though citizens from ECOWAS countries continue to be able to stay in Niger without a valid passport (Müller M., 2018: 39). As a consequence of this law, by autumn 2017, 282 drivers had been arrested and 169 cars had been confiscated (Müller M., 2018: 39). Raineri (2018: 66) cites an anonymous EU official working in Niger on the rationale behind EU cooperation with Niger: “In Agadez smugglers are preparing themselves for the transfer of the whole African middle class to Europe on a massive scale. To hinder this process, we need to increase the costs of migration, by adding obstacles, shrinking legal corridors, and empowering local police forces, hoping that we can pay them better salaries than smuggling cartels can do”.

In Niger, EU-induced securitization of migration has thus clearly taken place: Migration to Europe is to be reduced through the criminalization of transport-providers and the reinforcement of policing capabilities. EUTF-funded development projects do not address root causes of migration, but rather function to ensure Nigerien government cooperation and to mitigate some of the negative effects of the criminalization of smuggling on the North Nigerien economy and stability. Scholars thus widely agree that the EU’s main goal in Niger is restricting migration through coercive measures, ensuring Nigerien cooperation through funding for security forces and development projects (Bisong, 2020: 221; Castillejo, 2017a: 22; Guerry et al., 2018: 24; Müller M., 2018: 39).

Overall, EU migration cooperation strongly emphasizes containment of migration within Africa, with next to no projects on facilitating regular migration. Containment is pursued in various ways, including through improving conditions in home and transit countries through development projects or economic support for local integration and protection of refugees from neighboring countries. On the other hand, securitized, coercive forms of containment play an important role, especially in transit countries, where the EU supports restrictive local policies and legislation aimed at preventing irregular border crossing along migration routes to Europe. The practice of EU cooperation with East and West African countries is thus characterized by a firm commitment to restrict movement, both through prevention and control. As critics of externalization have pointed out, refugees’ access to

protection in Europe is thus becoming more and more curtailed, as migration control is externalized further and further away from EU borders.

3.5.2. A Critical Assessment of EU Policy Assumptions on Root Causes

The EU approach to address root causes of irregular migration in and from Africa has also been criticized for relying on over-simplified assumptions about the root causes of migration and over-estimating the impact of limited development projects on addressing root causes. While the EU, and development actors to some extent, assume that any development project in a country affected by emigration or onward migration contributes to reducing migration as it ‘addresses the root causes’, this assumption is widely questioned by migration scholars.

Following the migration hump thesis, enormous progress in development would be necessary before development has the effect of reducing migration. Initially, as migration scholars have widely shown, development and a growing economy is likely to increase migration, as people gain access to the financial resources necessary for migration (Bisong, 2021: 266–267; Castillejo, 2017a: 19; Clemens, 2015: 39; Collyer, 2019: 172–173; Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2260; Haas, 2007: 831–836).

Some scholars thus suggest that much bigger structural changes in international political and economic relations, e.g. relating to trading agreements and agricultural policies, addressing structural global inequalities, would be necessary for development to lead to decreasing migration (Bartels, 2018: 31; Bisong, 2021: 267; Thovoethin, 2021: 628). Similarly, Thovoethin (2021: 629) argues that the EUTF budget, with a total of 5 billion Euros pledged, is comparatively small, when compared to the size of existing development assistance and the enormity of the challenges it aims to address over a large number of countries. To illustrate, in comparison to 5 billion Euros of EUTF funding spread over 26 countries in Africa, 6 billion Euros have been pledged for projects improving refugees’ conditions in Turkey since 2016 (General Secretariat of the Council, 2022). Additionally, aiming to address the complex, long-term root causes underlying irregular migration

movements through a short-term emergency fund seems contradictory and unlikely to succeed (Bisong, 2020: 226; Castillejo, 2017b: 1; Thovoethin, 2021: 629–630).

In the case of some projects that are considered beneficial for development, their connection to migration and the EUTF's goal of addressing root causes of migration has been questioned. Collyer (2019: 178) gives the example of a EUTF project aiming at improving conditions in refugee camps in South Sudan, which have not been linked to onward migration, as a case in which a traditional humanitarian refugee response project is wrongly presented as a way of reducing migration to the EU. Similarly, he argues that EUTF-funded agricultural development projects in Mali and Senegal are conventional development projects simply rebranded to now contribute to migration policy goals, despite a lack of evidence for such a connection (Collyer, 2019: 178). Castillejo (2017: 30) also found that, in Ethiopia, development NGOs were often simply repackaging their existing development projects, by adding a migration narrative, rather than developing projects specifically geared to migration challenges.

Another criticism has been voiced regarding EU assumptions on root causes of migration, especially by scholars working on the Horn of Africa, who argue that economic (under)development does not constitute a decisive factor in people's decision to migrate from the region. Crawley and Blitz (2019: 2269) argue that a large majority of migrants from the Horn of Africa, who reach Europe, leave their home country due to political persecution, human rights abuses, conflict and insecurity, rather than for reasons related to poverty or employment opportunities. While the EU assumes poverty as the main factor, and therefore economic development as the solution, they found that conflict, insecurity and human rights abuses were the driving factors in the decision to leave the region for Europe. The assumptions underlying the EU's Agenda on Migration thus do not reflect the reality of migration from the Horn of Africa. EU projects on economic and employment opportunities in Eritrea, for example, might have positive effects for the local population, but are unlikely to affect migration decisions which are largely motivated by political persecution and forced, indefinite military conscription (Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2263).

The EU's engagement through the Khartoum Process and partially in the EUTF is based on cooperation with governments in the Horn of Africa. This is ironic, as governments, such as the former Sudanese and the contemporary Eritrean government, are known for their human rights abuses and have been largely identified as an important reason why people seek protection outside of the region (Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2270; Oette and Babiker, 2017: 24; Weber, 2018: 47). Migration cooperation with authoritarian governments threatens to undermine EU human rights policy and may exacerbate, rather than address root causes of migration and forced displacement. Especially in the Horn of Africa, scholars have highlighted the tension between cooperation through the Khartoum Process and EU human rights policy. EU policy has been criticized for weakening human rights norms, as authoritarian states such as Sudan aim to use the EU's interest in migration containment to gain concessions in other areas (Castillejo, 2017a: 16; Oette and Babiker, 2017: 21). Sudan has used migration cooperation as an occasion to call for the lifting of sanctions, debt relief and removal from the state sponsors of terrorism list (Oette and Babiker, 2017: 22). Additionally, any support to security forces in authoritarian countries carries the risk of equipment being misappropriated for other repressive purposes (Koch et al., 2018: 72; Weber, 2018: 54).

Oette and Babiker (2017: 26) thus argue that addressing root causes of migration in the region would require fundamental political reforms, including the establishment of peaceful and stable states. Due to the difficulty of such political change, EU focus remains on economic and security aspects of migration prevention, rather than addressing political causes of forced displacement (Zanker, 2019: 13). However, development projects and cooperation with authoritarian governments are unlikely to have a positive impact on the mostly political causes of migration in the region. On the contrary, the lack of systematic, functioning human rights controls within EU external migration policy and EU cooperation with repressive governments thus threatens to exacerbate rather than address root causes of migration in the region (Castillejo, 2017a: 16; Crawley and Blitz, 2019: 2270).

However, causes of migration are complex and show great variation. Analyses of emigration from Nigeria show different dynamics than the Horn of Africa: While especially the North-Eastern part of Nigeria is also affected by wide-

spread insecurity arising from Boko Haram violence, the desire to migrate is lower in this region than in areas less affected by insecurity (Thovoethin, 2021: 623). Instead, a majority of Nigerian migrants come from an educated, urban background (Bisong, 2020: 219; Thovoethin, 2021: 624). Thovoethin (2021: 624) cites the wish to increase household income through remittances as well as wanting to live in a more democratic state as prominent reasons for migration from Nigeria. While migration dynamics in Nigeria thus differ from realities in authoritarian states in the Horn of Africa, it is again not those parts of the population addressed by European development projects that constitute the largest share of migrants. Development projects in Nigeria are thus also unlikely to significantly decrease migration from Nigeria (Bisong, 2020: 219; Thovoethin, 2021: 623).

Additionally, EUTF funding is skewed towards transit countries rather than the main countries of origin of asylum seekers in Europe: In the Sahel and Lake Chad Window, most funding goes towards Niger and Mali, while Nigeria, one of the main countries of origin of African asylum seekers in Europe and the country with the biggest population in Africa, has received less attention (Langan, 2018: 165; Thovoethin, 2021: 628). Root causes of migration can hardly be addressed in transit countries, as migrants have already begun their migration journey. Instead, improving conditions and protection in a transit country could be a way of decreasing onwards migration. In Niger, however, as I have shown above, EU cooperation is largely based on coercive forms of containing and returning migrants before they cross into Libya, rather than improving protection of migrants in Niger. Nevertheless, here, too, policy assumptions do not seem to reflect realities of migration dynamics: According to IOM, migration through Agadez decreased by 75% from 2016 to 2017, however IOM itself acknowledged that it is likely that routes have simply shifted to circumvent Agadez, confirmed by interviews with migrants arriving in Italy, the vast majority of whom report they have passed through Niger (Raineri, 2018: 68). While the EU engagement in Niger thus largely follows an agenda of restricting migration and rewarding the Nigerien government for its cooperation in criminalizing mobility with development projects to make up for the loss of income from the migration economy, migration containment has not been very successful. This has also been explained with reference to widespread

corruption, leading to the common practice of bribing border officials and security forces at checkpoints for passage (Müller M., 2018: 40; Raineri, 2018: 69).

Additionally, the criminalization of smuggling also seems to have increased rather than decreased the vulnerability of migrants. While the EU largely justifies its push for criminalization as a way to protect migrants from criminal networks, the opposite effect has been shown not only in the Mediterranean sea but also in Niger (Abebe, 2019: 8; Guerry et al., 2018: 25; Hahonou and Olsen, 2021: 858). To circumvent controls, smugglers avoid known, safer routes or have even abandoned migrants in the desert in situations that could involve law enforcement. Since the 2015 law, numbers of people found dead or abandoned in the desert have thus increased (Hahonou and Olsen, 2021: 858; Lucht, 2022: 18; Müller M., 2018: 39). IOM as well as civil society organizations now run rescue missions for those abandoned in the desert (Müller M., 2018: 39). Additionally, as migration has become more clandestine, sexual violence and abuse against migrant women has further increased (Guerry et al., 2018: 26). Migration and smuggling thus continue but have become more dangerous for migrants.

Overall, the assumptions behind EU projects to address root causes of migration do not seem to take into account the variety and complexity of migration decision-making processes. The focus on economic development in the Horn of Africa does not address the largely political reasons for displacement while rural development in Nigeria is unlikely to affect migration decisions of largely urban migrants. Additionally, the criminalization of smuggling seems to lead to shifting routes and increased migrant vulnerability, rather than to migrant-friendly, sustainable reduction of irregular migration. It is thus doubtful, whether external EU migration policy can effectively address migration drivers in Africa.

EU migration policy vis-à-vis Africa thus, overall, does not provide a genuinely preventative alternative to securitized modes of migration control. Firstly, European migration control objectives play an important role in shaping implementation of the EUTF, leading to a focus of projects in regions relevant from an EU migration perspective, containment within Africa instead of opportunities for regular migration, the funding of security-based projects, and aid conditionalization on African cooperation with European migration control objectives. Secondly, the

potential of development projects, in the limited scope of an emergency fund, to address complex root causes of migration has been widely questioned.

3.6. DISCUSSION: EU MIGRATION POLICY VIS-À-VIS AFRICA IN LIGHT OF THEORIES

In the previous section, I identified two main incoherencies within the EU approach: First, despite a rhetoric of humanitarianism, mutually beneficial partnerships, migration management, human rights, and addressing root causes, EU policy practice includes considerable use of coercive containment, by directly funding border security projects and using development funding to leverage African governments to cooperate on returns and border security. Secondly, research on complex root causes suggests that development-oriented projects under the EUTF are unlikely to have the effect of significantly reducing migration, as underlying assumptions about drivers of migration do not reflect complex realities of migration decisions. Zaun and Nantermoz (2022: 510) show that EU policy makers designed policy aiming to address migration with development projects despite their knowledge of the scientific evidence which challenges this basic assumption. These criticisms raise the question why the EU employs migration policy with such clear shortcomings: How can EU migration policy practice vis-à-vis Africa be explained?

I argue that, firstly, autonomous practices of migrants overcoming existing EU restrictions to their mobility led to the EU seeking novel policy instruments that could be implemented swiftly and visibly. Secondly, widespread views of migration as a security threat explain the continued focus on containment of migrants outside of Europe and provide justifications for the subversion of development principles. Thirdly, the ‘root cause’ approach functions to provide a more humanitarian narrative in the face of increasingly visible deaths at the EU’s external border and works to circumvent legal norms that constrain restrictive migration policy.

Firstly, the expansion of EU migration policy instruments, including the intensified linkage between development and migration, and the shift towards Africa, can be explained as a response to the failure of existing EU migration control in the face of the autonomy of migration. The success of over one million asylum seekers

in 2015 in overcoming the EU's restrictive border regime, conceptualized as a historical and structural defeat of the European border regime by autonomy of migration theorists, made the continuing failure of migration control increasingly obvious (Hess et al., 2017: 6). In the autonomy of migration perspective, mobility continuously challenges attempts to control it, leading to a constant tension between mobility and its control (Hess, 2018: 93). Migrants, among a variety of actors, shape border and migration outcomes: As the EU and its member states move to close specific routes, migrants e.g. shift routes and adapt strategies to overcome barriers put in their way (Wagner, 2010: 230). The increased arrivals of 2015 can thus be seen to have increased awareness regarding the limitations of border control measures, leading to a search for alternative policy instruments.

However, migration policy research is far more developed with regard to limitations of specific policies, while consensus on effective policies that limit migration is lacking (Collyer, 2019: 173; Zaun and Nantermoz, 2022: 522). The lack of an evidence-based approach in combination with political pressure to address the 'crisis' thus contributed to an increasing willingness to overlook the evidence regarding migration and development (Collyer, 2019: 171). The framing of addressing root causes by providing development assistance appeals to common sense, and was widely known as the EU has employed this rhetoric throughout more than two decades (Zaun and Nantermoz, 2022: 517).

Secondly, the EU approach can be identified as based on a securitized understanding of migration as a threat to be contained at all costs. The crisis of the European border regime in combination with the image of migration as a security threat, then meant that member states and EU institutions needed to visibly react to the 'crisis' created by the perceived 'threat' (Zaun and Nantermoz, 2022: 517). This approach is even more clear and widely discussed with respect to the EU's direct borders, where the EU supports Italian collaboration with Libyan militias acting as coast guards to intercept migrants (OHCHR, 2021: 15–16; Reyhani et al., 2019: 8–9; Scarpello, 2019: 7), and the EU has done little to stop systematic, violent pushbacks by Greek authorities (Frelick and Randhawa, 2022: 24–26; Gkliati, 2022: 175–178). However, as I have shown, EU policy vis-à-vis Africa also exhibits the clear goal of containing the supposed threat of migration within Africa, rather than simply

managing migration, as no significant progress has been made on providing safe, legal pathways for migration to Europe. Although EU policy practice does include both coercive and preventative components, the main underlying goal of both aspects seems to be to contain migration within Africa as much as possible. Reducing numbers of irregular migrants in Europe is a point that EU member states have been able to agree upon relatively easily. The securitization of migration thus plays an important role in setting EU migration objectives.

Additionally, the securitization of migration functions to justify extraordinary measures. This includes not only the use of increasingly hostile border control practices, but also the subversion of the EU's commitment to policy coherence for development, through aid allocation according to migration policy objectives, including conditionality. The conditionalization of aid on migration cooperation, which had previously been rejected at the Seville European Council in 2002 (Lavenex, 2006: 342), thus became possible in the light of the 'crisis'. It increased the EU's leverage vis-à-vis African governments, leading to progress on EU priorities of returns and the adoption of European migration management norms, such as the criminalization of smuggling and increased border securitization, by various African countries (Zanker, 2019: 15). The issue linkage of development to migration thus also functioned to apply pressure to African governments and further externalize European migration control to African partners, using controversial strategies that became justifiable by the securitized view of migration as 'crisis'.

However, securitization theory cannot easily explain the increasing usage of liberal rhetoric, focused on prevention of migration through development and mutually beneficial partnerships. Why then does the EU continue to emphasize its humanitarian objectives, as former High Representative Federica Mogherini's statement on the MPF illustrates: "We have been working tirelessly to reduce human suffering and the loss of lives. With the Partnership Framework, we muster all EU foreign policy strands to better manage migration, to the benefit of the EU, our partners, and, most importantly, the people affected" (European External Action Service, 2016).

As I have discussed in the previous chapter, the general shift to externalization has been explained with respect to the liberal constraints European

actors face within the EU. These constraints include civil society, but also international legal norms, which require states to assess asylum applications submitted on their territory, provide protection to refugees, and which prohibit collective expulsion. Migrants can thus make use of legal arrangements e.g. to avoid deportation. Accordingly, the EU has long shifted to a strategy of preventing arrivals, to circumvent protection responsibilities under international law, while avoiding to outright violate it. The set-up of the EUTF and informal partnership agreements further limit democratic control over EU migration policy, e.g. by foreclosing the European Parliament's oversight powers (Guerry et al., 2018: 12; Kipp and Koch, 2018: 18). The increasing shift towards legally non-binding agreements with third countries then further allows the EU to circumvent constraints that domestic and international legal and institutional arrangements may pose.

The border control focus of much EU migration policy has also been widely criticized from a more liberal perspective. This was the case especially in 2015, when deaths of migrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean gained visibility, exemplified by the world-famous picture of the dead child Alan Kurdi (Pécoud, 2020: 383). Reports of deaths and other hardships en route to Europe illustrated the incompatibility between existing, restrictive migration policy and liberal beliefs in universal human rights and the right to asylum. This led to wide-spread practices of solidarity with migrants, as well as considerable criticism of EU border control practices and calls for more migrant-friendly approaches from within European societies. The increased EU focus on development and addressing root causes then took place in this context, in which criticisms of restrictive border control practices and support for refugees were widely voiced. Development as a tool for migration policy was then presented as a development-friendly alternative to restrictive policy (Collyer, 2019: 176; Gerloff, 2019: 167). It thus seems that securitization is not the only way migration is viewed within Europe. Instead, more liberal ideas seem to play some role in constraining EU migration policy and especially its rhetoric.

The simultaneous strength of anti-immigrant actors and actors who support respect for migrants' rights within Europe could then explain the focus on containment within Africa, rhetorically presented as saving lives and benefitting (potential) migrants, as the addressing of root causes renders migration to Europe

unnecessary. Policy targeted at addressing root causes can gain support from a variety of actors, as it aims to reduce migration to Europe, while, at least rhetorically, providing an alternative to controversial border control measures. Additionally, the very broad understanding of ‘addressing root causes’ allows for both genuine development projects and for projects focused on migration control, and thus functions to overcome inner-European disagreement within and between member states. Accordingly, the establishment of the EUTF allowed for the combination of divergent preferences within the EU: While some member states aimed to preserve development principles, member states with more populist, anti-immigrant governments as well as moderate governments of countries facing increasing support for populist parties aimed to focus more on migration control (Zaun and Nantermoz, 2022: 523). The ‘root cause’ approach can then function to unite different social forces within Europe, including those critical of the focus on border policing, as it provides a more humanitarian, migrant-friendly framing of EU migration policy.

While a detailed historical materialist analysis of different social forces within member states and the EU would go beyond the scope of this thesis, the increasing rhetoric of addressing ‘root causes’ suggests that such an analysis would be a fruitful approach for future research. Rather than viewing migration as uniformly securitized, historical materialists identify different social forces with different interests, struggling for hegemony and forming alliances. In the EU, an alliance between neoliberal and conservative forces is identified as dominating the border regime (Buckel et al., 2017: 24–30). While neoliberal actors have an interest in some migration, according to logics of economic utility, they rely on alliances with other hegemony projects to gain more widespread political support. Conservative actors largely oppose migration, viewing it as a cultural and social threat. While historical materialists identify the origins of this threat perspective in materialist terms, with respect to the regulation of contradictions in capitalist reproduction, rather than in securitization theory’s constructivist terms, the resulting view on migration as a security threat resembles securitization theorists’ analysis of contemporary perspectives on migration. However, in the historical materialist perspective, the securitized view of migration is conceptualized as one powerful hegemony project, facing competition from other hegemony projects, and forming

alliances in order to achieve widespread consent. Focusing on internal migration policy, historical materialists have thus argued that the neoliberal-conservative alliance saw a short-lived and partial destabilization in 2015 (Agustín and Jørgensen, 2016a: 10; Georgi, 2016: 191). Further research could further examine the alliance and struggles between the different social forces, taking into account the external dimension of migration policy and the ‘root cause’ approach.

The ‘root cause’ approach can thus be seen to employ liberal narratives that invite consent from actors and member states more concerned with migrants’ basic rights and development. Additionally, the set-up of policy instruments outside of the realm of parliamentary and legal control functions to avoid constraints posed by legal norms. Policies aimed at reducing immigration by promoting development allow governments to continue their commitment to decreasing immigration while also finding alternatives to controversial, ineffective, and morally and legally ambiguous border control-based migration policies.

However, as I have shown in my analysis of the EUTF and related policy instruments, the increasing focus on ‘addressing root causes’ overall does not provide a genuine shift to a preventative, migrant-friendly migration policy. The shift instead seems to be largely targeted at European constituencies, providing a politically feasible, visible response to the perceived ‘crisis’, in a way that contains migration according to a securitized understanding of migration as a threat, while at the same time avoiding extensive opposition from actors concerned with migrants’ rights. Lavenex (2018: 1208) has termed the incoherence between the EU’s official commitment to policy coherence for development and a policy practice in which migration and security concerns dominate over development objectives ‘organized hypocrisy’. As the interest in reducing migration proves difficult to reconcile with EU commitments on development and human rights, the EU rhetorically commits itself to norms, while focusing on its migration security concerns in practice, undermining its own commitments (Geiger and Pécoud, 2013: 372; Lavenex, 2018: 1208). Instead of sustainable, coherent approaches, based on in-depth understanding of migration dynamics, development and human-rights assessments, EU policy focus lies on short-term solutions following European political objectives (Bartels, 2018: 43; Bisong, 2020: 226; Guerry et al., 2018: 6; Oliveira and Zacharenko, 2018: 25;

Raty and Shilhav, 2020: 4). The design of EU migration policy instruments since 2015 thus speaks more to a European crisis mode focused on quick-fixes than concern for long-term solutions to complex challenges.

Overall, the EU's willingness in 2015 to establish policy instruments, which rely on assumptions widely challenged by scholars of migration and development, can be explained with respect to the search for alternative policy instruments in the face of the very visible, continued failure of existing migration control instruments, showcased by the large-scale success of migrants overcoming the EU's external borders. The containment-focused practice of the 'root cause' approach can be explained as motivated by the dominance of securitized understandings of migration as a threat, supported by growing support for the anti-immigrant conservative hegemony project. The migrant-friendly, development-focused rhetoric of the approach, on the other hand, can be explained as a strategy inviting consensus from those critical of the focus on border control instruments. The shift towards the 'root cause' approach is thus largely oriented toward European objectives and constituencies, rather than focused on finding sustainable solutions to displacement.

Accordingly, despite the EU's extensive engagement to contain migration, through development initiatives and the externalization of migration controls to countries far into other continents, irregular migrants continue to reach the EU. While numbers of first asylum applications gradually decreased from 1.28 million in 2015, to just under half a million in 2020, which may however also partially be due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, numbers of arrivals have been steadily rising again, with 632,325 applications in 2021, and further increasing numbers of applications throughout 2022, reaching 660,125 applications in the period January – September 2022 (Eurostat, 2022b, 2022c)⁴. In September 2022, almost 96,665 asylum applications were submitted in the EU, the highest number of applications within a single month since 2016 (Eurostat, 2022c). Particularly the Central Mediterranean route continues to be a topic of interest for the EU, with a new Action Plan proposed by the Commission on 21 November 2022, including further cooperation with Niger, particularly with regard to tackling smuggling (European Commission, 2022b). The intervention by Autonomy of Migration scholars, stressing

⁴ These numbers do not include Ukrainian refugees, as Ukrainian citizens and residents receive temporary protection rather than asylum in the EU.

that the struggle between different actors, including not only powerful states or the European Union, but also migrants themselves, determines migration outcomes thus continues to ring true. While the EU continues to externalize migration control, funds a variety of projects in countries of origin and transit aimed to preventatively and coercively contain (potential) migrants in their regions, and uses increasingly elaborate technologies to secure its external borders, migrants continue to find ways to reach the EU. However, the continued absence of safe and legal pathways for many migrants also means that migrants continue to die on their way to Europe, with more than 29,000 deaths recorded within the EU and at its external borders and over 5,000 deaths recorded in the Sahara desert since 2014 (Black and Sigman, 2022: 6–8). Europe thus continues to hold the tragic record of the world’s deadliest migration destination (Black and Sigman, 2022: 3).

3.7. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have argued that the increasing linkage between migration and development, through policy instruments such as the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa and the Migration Partnership Framework, overall does not constitute a genuine shift towards preventative modes of governing migration. Containment of migration away from the EU continues to be the main goal of EU migration policy, with the African priority of establishing new, extended pathways for legal migration remaining largely unaddressed in practice. Additionally, development aid has become employed for migration policy objectives, redirecting funding to projects relevant from a European migration control perspective. Accordingly, regions and populations relevant with regard to migration to Europe have been targeted, and development funding has been diverted to capacity building in areas of border control and the criminalization of smuggling. Additionally, aid conditionality has been employed to influence African migration and border policies and laws, leading to increasing criminalization of smuggling and border controls within Africa. With respect to funding and projects that are actually directed towards development, I have argued that policy assumptions of root causes and dynamics of migration are often simplistic and are therefore unlikely to fulfil goals of reducing migration on a large

scale. Limited projects targeted at economic development and stability are thus not likely to sufficiently improve the often political sources of displacement or provide sufficient economic opportunities for people to choose to stay in countries or regions of origin.

The limitations of policies aiming to ‘address root causes’ and the gap between policy rhetoric and practice thus point to explanations beyond the ones given by policy makers. I have argued that the ‘root cause’ approach is largely motivated by failures of border control policies at the external borders of the EU, and by political dynamics within the EU. In the face of migrants’ continuous challenges to European border control, the EU has turned to policy instruments targeting migration beyond the direct European neighborhood. The dominance of actors viewing migration as a security threat motivates the continued focus on containment of migration and lends legitimacy to expanding policy instruments, including aid conditionality. However, the securitized perspective is also continuously challenged within the EU, especially with respect to deaths at the EU’s external border. The migrant- and development-friendly narrative of ‘addressing root causes’ then also functions to make migration control practices politically feasible in the face of challenges to existing border control measures. Overall, EU migration policy thus continues to be oriented towards domestic dynamics, prioritizing ways to address the perceived ‘crisis’ of migrant arrivals in Europe, rather than working with partners towards developing long-term solutions to forced displacement and irregular migration.

CONCLUSION

Since the 1990s, EU migration policy has seen an increasing focus on external components, with considerable emphasis on ‘addressing root causes’ of irregular migration and mutually beneficial policy instruments since 2015. Then High Representative Federica Mogherini accordingly presented the 2016 Migration Partnership Framework as follows: “We muster all EU foreign policy strands to better manage migration, to the benefit of the EU, our partners, and, most importantly, the people affected” (European External Action Service, 2016). Policy tools such as the EUTF and the MPF, were thus presented as innovative instruments that contain migration outside of the EU, while also contributing to development and improved conditions for (potential) migrants. Both irregular migration and humanitarian tragedies at the EU’s external border were thus to be avoided.

This thesis has aimed to critically examine the practice behind these policy tools, analyzing the externalization of EU migration policy, focusing on those components that are presented as governing migration in a preventative, rather than a border security-focused way. I first discussed different theoretical approaches to migration and the way it is governed in the Global North. I then presented EU migration policy trends and situated them in academic discussions, identifying critical perspectives of externalization and the shift to addressing ‘root causes’. Finally, I critically assessed practical implementations of EU migration policy instruments vis-à-vis East and West Africa, and suggested an explanation of EU policy practices in light of theoretical approaches. I thus proposed answers to these two general research questions: What are critical assessments of the externalization of EU migration policy? Do trends in external EU migration policy towards Africa suggest a genuine shift towards preventative modes, as an alternative to securitized modes of governing migration?

To this end, I carried out a case study of EU migration policy towards Eastern and Western Africa. I examined statistical data on migration dynamics within and from East and West Africa, proposing that limited correlations between aid disbursements and decreases in migration do not allow for clear conclusions on the success of preventative components of EU migration policy. I then provided an

analysis of implementation practices of EU migration policy tools, focusing on the types of projects and allocation of funding through the EUTF. My analysis is based on reports by development actors and NGOs, as well as the broader academic literature in the field. An analysis of the types of projects funded in the name of preventing migration by addressing root causes allows me to make an argument on limitations and underlying rationales of securitization of these components of EU migration policy.

In this thesis, I have argued that the externalization of migration policy, overall, functions as a strategy to contain migration outside of Europe, shifting responsibility for migrants to third countries. Externalization limits migrants' access to rights their arrival in the EU would grant them access to, such as asylum procedures in the EU, and thereby functions to limit member states' responsibilities towards migrants. Externalization then also arises as a strategy of states which are relatively committed to liberal institutions and obligations under international law, but at the same time aim to limit their own responsibility for migrants.

I have also argued that EU promises to 'address root causes' and "enable migrants and refugees to stay close to home avoiding taking dangerous journeys" (European Parliament, 2022) do not hold up to close scrutiny. While EU policy instruments do include funding for classical development projects and for projects beneficial for migrants' reception in African host countries, a significant component of EU migration policy is oriented towards containing migration in Africa by building security force and border control capacities, both through direct funding and through the use of development aid as leverage for local policy changes. African and development actors' priority of providing new and expanded pathways for legal migration to the EU, on the other hand, has not been a significant part of EU policy practice. Development principles are thus undermined by aid allocation according to European migration policy objectives. Additionally, diverse root causes of migration are addressed with limited projects relying on simplistic assumptions about dynamics and causes of migration, hardly up to the task of providing the enormous developments in peace, stability, human rights, and economic opportunities that may lead to a reduction of irregular migration. I thus suggest that external EU migration policy continues to be focused on domestic migration control concerns, containing

the perceived ‘threat’ of migration, rather than providing a genuinely preventative, sustainable approach to the challenges of migration and displacement.

While concrete policy suggestions go beyond the scope of my thesis, my argument suggests some general directions for a potential alternative, more genuinely preventative policy. The expansion of migration control measures to countries within Africa, through capacity building for border security forces and pressure on African governments to criminalize mobility within Africa, does not address the causes that lead to displacement. Instead, such projects put further obstacles in the way of those who have already been displaced, thereby contributing to pushing migration towards increasingly dangerous routes. The branding of these projects as preventative and their funding with development aid thus detracts from a genuinely preventative approach.

A more genuinely preventative approach would instead focus on contributing to significant, lasting change regarding human rights, peace, and economic opportunities. Such a long-term approach focusing on sustainable development may not have an immediate impact on irregular migration, but may have effects on the root causes of migration in a long term perspective. It is thus crucial that the EU moves away from a securitized emergency perspective with a focus on decreasing irregular migration fast, and instead moves towards providing protection and safer migration pathways to displaced people while at the same time supporting sustainable development so that in future less people will find it necessary to migrate.

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