



The Migration Studies Delegation

Newsletter from Delmi

january 2018

Dear readers,

The EU countries are currently in the midst of an intensive period in which they are attempting to create a new, more functional asylum system. Much of their discussion should be about the sharing of responsibilities, both within the EU, in the regions that are dealing with the greatest numbers of refugees, and in the context of the global refugee regime. These challenges were also raised at the most recent EU summit at the end of last year, linked to broader issues around the EU's internal and external migration policy. One such external EU issue – cooperation with Africa – was raised by Delmi at a seminar at Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) at the end of November. With the intention of helping to develop a more informed policy, Delmi has produced three reports on the sharing of responsibilities that will be presented at a conference on 7 February 2018.

2018 is also an election year in Sweden, and Delmi has already put forward two reports that are very topical in the circumstances: one on how migration is reported in the media and another on how people born in other countries vote in elections and how they are represented politically. Migration and integration are expected to be a major issues in the election.

Delmi has several reports forthcoming for 2018. These include two studies on children and young people and how they integrate, a book about bridging the gap between research, policy and public debate with examples from Europe and North America, and studies of the role of the diaspora in the development of countries of origin.

My colleagues and I hope you will attend one of our upcoming seminars and visit our website at delmi.se to download and read our reports.



Kristof Tamas
Director and Head of
Secretariat,
Delmi

Conference: Responsibility-Sharing for Refugees and IDPs

Historically, Sweden has taken in greater numbers of refugees than other European countries. The question is how we can identify joint solutions for future asylum policy within the EU that are characterised by solidarity while also establishing greater, and more effective, global responsibility.

This issue is to be discussed at an upcoming Delmi conference at Rosenbad, Stockholm on 7 February, which will include the presentation of three reports focusing on shared global responsibility for refugees.

Heléne Fritzon, the Minister for Migration, is expected to open the conference and the former Minister for Integration, Erik Ullenhag, will participate in the panel discussion. The conference ties in with the development of the *UN Global Compact on Refugees* by September 2018.

Further information will be posted on our website at delmi.se

Three reports on responsibility sharing

A Fair Share: Refugees and Responsibility-Sharing

At present, a very high proportion of the global refugee population is being hosted by a small number of countries in the Middle East and North Africa. It is however unlikely that a global system for the resettlement of refugees will be achieved in the current political climate. What is needed instead is a range of complementary measures and the political will to remove obstacles so as to establish rules and binding solutions at a variety of levels. The study has been led by Professor Alexander Betts of the University of Oxford.

[Download A Fair Share: Refugees and Responsibility-Sharing \(2017:10\)](#)

Responsibility Sharing for Refugees in the Middle East and North Africa

This report has looked at how responsibility for refugees works in practice in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region – who is involved and what the impact is on refugees' practices and choices. The study shows that increased international cooperation is needed to address the reasons why people become refugees and to identify sustainable solutions involving additional supplies, education and training, and collaboration with regional players. The study has been led by Professor Susan Martin of Georgetown University.

[Download Responsibility Sharing for Refugees in the Middle East and North Africa \(2017:8\)](#)

Reforming the Common European Asylum System: Responsibility-sharing and the harmonisation of asylum outcomes

This report points to the need for reform in the European asylum system – there is a need for a more balanced distribution of asylum seekers between the Member States and more uniform decision-making on asylum within the EU. A person seeking asylum should have the same chance of being granted asylum irrespective of the country in which the application is made. The four future scenarios presented in the study are based on changes being made to the Dublin Regulation. The study has been undertaken by researchers and migration experts Dr. Bernd Parusel and Dr. Jan Schneider.

[Download Reforming the Common European Asylum System: Responsibility-sharing and the harmonisation of asylum outcomes \(2017:9\)](#)

Responsibility Sharing within the MENA-region – prospects and pitfalls for refugees and local populations

QUESTIONS TO Susan Martin, author of Delmi Report 2017:8 Responsibility Sharing for Refugees in the Middle East and North Africa

What are the main obstacles for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region in the current negotiations and consultations regarding refugees and migrants?

The challenges and obstacles differ depending on whether we are discussing refugees or migrants. Many of the MENA countries host very large numbers of refugees and are therefore participating in the current consultations on the *Global Compact on Refugees* as potential recipients of assistance from the international community. They are asking for firm commitments to financial assistance and increased resettlement of refugees. They also want help in finding solutions to the conflicts in their neighbouring countries. Their leverage is small, however, relative to the countries that hold greater power in terms of financial resources, resettlement programs and seats on the Security Council and other conflict prevention bodies.

Other countries in the MENA region are among the most important receivers of labour migrants and accordingly have high stakes in the negotiations on the *Global Compact on Migration*. In this case, the major challenge they face is ensuring that the compact balances their interest in having a flexible migration system that allows them to recruit millions of migrant workers with the interests of the source countries of these migrants in protecting the rights of their citizens.

President Macron, among others, have made suggestions regarding “hotspots” in Africa. What consequences could this have for the for the MENA-region?

The underlying idea is to try to keep refugees and asylum seekers in the regions closer to their home countries to deter irregular movements. But I don't believe that the "hotspot" idea per se holds much benefit for anyone. It is however a good idea to establish an effective system of responsibility-sharing and thereby bolster the ability of countries in the MENA region to assist and protect refugees within their territories.

So, a potential consequence could be that fewer people seek protection in Europe?

It should help reduce the numbers of people who might embark on dangerous trips because they see Europe as a viable alternative, given the lack of other opportunities. It is important to keep in mind that in 2015, when the World Food Program was forced to cut rations to refugees in Jordan and Lebanon because of funding shortfalls, it was one more reason that refugees with little hope of a better future in those countries decided to move on to Europe.

Why is it that Syrian refugees have received more attention as compared to other asylum seekers in the region?



Susan Martin is Professor Emerita in International Migration at ISIM, Georgetown University

Several factors explain the focus on Syrian refugees. The war in Syria generated far larger numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons than other conflicts. It has become a conflict of geo-political importance, with the major global and regional powers backing one side or another. The proportion of refugees to host country populations is staggering. For example, Lebanon – a country of 4 million – has absorbed more than one million Syrians. And the large number of Syrians, among other refugee groups, who moved to Europe in 2015 brought a great deal of visibility to this situation.

How could a policy centred on responsibility sharing improve the situation for refugees in the long term?

Refugees and practitioners in the MENA region want the international community to share responsibility for finding solutions to the conflicts that cause refugee movements and allow refugees to return home.

They also ask for responsibility-sharing in the resettlement of refugees. Aid focused on providing longer-term economic opportunities for refugees, rather than short-term humanitarian assistance, could also help refugees live in safety and dignity in the countries in which they are currently residing. A shifting focus towards development assistance that helps refugees as well as local host populations is a form of responsibility-sharing that has only recently been taking hold in refugee contexts.

What expectations do the governments in the MENA-region have on the Global Compact on Refugees?

Many governments in the MENA region are still in a wait and see mode with regard to the Global Compact on Refugees. UNHCR has the task of pulling the text together and consulting with governments prior to presenting the refugee compact for endorsement. This reduced role for governments mean that there will be fewer clues as to the position of specific countries about the text of the compact until the process is in the consultation phase, which begins next February.

Political uncertainty in Germany – does it affect the reform of the European asylum system?

The EU is currently negotiating a reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), after the European Parliament reached agreement in November on a proposal for changes to the Dublin Regulation. Included in the proposal is the introduction across the EU of a permanent system for re-settlement and the removal of the requirement for a refugee's asylum application to be determined by the first EU country of asylum. However, for this to become a reality, the proposal must be approved by the European Council – something that will require considerable compromise on the part of both the Member States and the European Parliament.

QUESTION ANSWERED BY Jan Schneider, Head of the Research Unit at the Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration.

The future political situation in Germany is uncertain; how does this affect the ongoing negotiations on the reform of the EU asylum system?

“Up to now it hasn't delayed the reform, as the negotiations have only recently started. But this could change if we enter 2018 without any clear signs of a new Social Democrat/Christian Democrat coalition government. If the coalition fails, the most likely scenario is a fresh election – and that cannot happen before March or April in 2018. If we assume that forming a coalition will then take another two months, the upcoming Bulgarian presidency will be almost over by that point – probably without any final agreement on the reform. Even though Germany has a strong position in the European Council, the current government will not be taking any ground-breaking decisions.”



Jan Schneider, Head of the Research Unit at the Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration. Joint author of Delmi's report *Reforming the Common European Asylum System. Responsibility-sharing and the harmonisation of asylum outcomes (2017:9)*.

Facts about: The Common European Asylum System (CEAS)

At the meeting of the European Council in Tampere in 1999, and then in The Hague in 2004, the EU Member States agreed to establish a Common European Asylum System (CEAS). In summary, CEAS aims to bring about greater harmonisation in terms of the reception of asylum seekers, the processing of asylum applications and the sharing of responsibilities between the EU countries.

The refugee situation in autumn 2015 demonstrated that there were significant failings in the system, making it apparent that the CEAS needed to be reformed. In autumn 2016, the European Commission set out seven proposals for change that, at the time of writing, are being considered by the European Parliament and the Council.

Proposals for:

1. a revised Dublin Regulation.* Under the current system, a person who flees their home country for Europe must seek asylum in the first safe country they arrive in.
2. standards for the reception of asylum seekers.
3. standards for when people are to be considered entitled to international protection.
4. common rules for how protection in the EU should work.
5. databases to check fingerprints and identify asylum seekers.
6. the creation of a joint asylum agency.
7. new frameworks for resettlement (quota refugees).

* Criteria and mechanisms for determining which Member State is responsible for examining an asylum application.

The role of research in achieving a reformed European asylum system

Why do we need to reform the asylum system?

The refugee situation in Europe in 2015 showed that the current regulations and the Dublin system did not work. Some EU Member States took in a large number of asylum seekers, others hardly any. The difficulty for asylum seekers was that Member States' decision-making practices were not harmonised; uniformity would have allowed anyone seeking asylum to have the same chance of being granted asylum regardless of which country they made their application in. Uniform asylum outcomes are related to an approach to responsibility sharing on the part of the EU countries that is characterised by solidarity, and progress needs to be made with both of these aspects.

How are they related?

A redistribution of asylum seekers between the EU countries is unfair if applicants' chances of being granted asylum vary from country to country as much as they do in reality today. At the same time, if the EU does not have a system to distribute asylum seekers fairly, the states may use more restrictive practices for decision-making and reception so that they are less attractive to those seeking asylum.

What aspects of the current asylum system need to change?

We need a global sharing of responsibilities, with the EU taking the lead through a European system based on solidarity. The Dublin Regulation currently represents the EU's common approach, but it places a heavy burden on the first countries of asylum, such as Greece and Italy. One proposal from the EU Parliament is to replace the Dublin Regulation with a new system that takes account of the links an asylum seeker already has to a particular country. Those without any links will be distributed between the countries using a quota system in the spirit of solidarity.

Do researchers agree on how to reform the asylum system?

Researchers have often looked at different aspects of the asylum system but have not always considered the system in its entirety. We should really be looking at all the different elements of it – reception, asylum procedures and decisions. Research suggests that we need a common policy. Our current asylum policy also has credibility issues, as refugees can only seek asylum once they have managed to get into the EU or arrive at the border of an EU country, but it is illegal for most people to travel there. So one suggestion is the need for resettlement and legal routes to Europe to supplement the current "territorial" asylum system.

To what extent are the EU Parliament's proposals inclusive of the research?

They are quite inclusive. Researchers have been looking at issues around a better system of protection and responsibility



Bernd Parusel is a migration expert at the Swedish Migration Agency and the European Migration Network (EMN), and one of the authors of *Reforming the Common European Asylum System. Responsibility-sharing and the harmonisation of asylum outcomes* (2017:9).

ty sharing for some time, and most advocate a more coherent European asylum policy. There is nothing in the research to suggest that we should go back to nationally based asylum rules.

If the proposals become a reality, how would they affect migration into Sweden?

We suggest that responsibility is shared by means of quotas that take into account the population and financial capacity of the Member States. If we work on the basis that a million asylum seekers arrive in the EU in the course of a year, Sweden's share would be just over 25 000 people. In 2016, approximately 1.2 million people applied for asylum in the EU. Sweden's share of that would have been just under 32 000 people, a little more than the 29 000 or so that were taken in that year. By contrast, in 2015 Sweden could have taken many fewer asylum seekers than the 163 000 that actually arrived.

But more importantly, a common EU system would help to generate more long-term solutions and thus defuse the situation and calm the polarised debate around refugee policy, not least in Sweden. However, some EU countries want to make their own decisions, and it is possible that we won't come to an agreement on responsibility sharing in the long term – it's an issue that is both urgent and controversial.

The Council has not yet agreed on the Dublin proposals. What are the barriers to reach an agreement?

A minority of countries are against compulsory responsibility sharing. They may need to be forced into a reformed common system. But the EU Parliament has proposed a soft transition for "sceptical" countries, a phased introduction starting with a smaller quota. There is a need to apply pressure; the question is how severe that pressure should be. The principle of solidarity is written into the EU treaties – all countries need to help each other.

Finally, how do you think this report will help?

We hope that it will provide a sound factual basis for decision-makers in Sweden and also in Europe. We want to assist in the political process and public debate, and let people know what the consequences of current EU policy are. But of course, in the final analysis, it is the politicians who decide.

[Download the report and the summary Policy Brief](#)

“We need knowledge and creativity if we are to build a system that works”

HELLO Alexandra Wilton Wahren, lawyer and Delmi delegation member.

What are the major obstacles to a functioning system of shared responsibility within the EU and at the global level?

Unfortunately the greatest obstacle to a functioning system of shared responsibility is that many countries are simply not willing to get involved and take responsibility for people needing asylum. This is true both within the EU and globally. For example, remember that within the EU, the Council had to resort to a qualified majority vote to get the redistribution decision passed in September 2015. This decision also led to a deep political division in the membership that is still in place as the Common European Asylum System is being negotiated.

How can research facilitate the work of politicians and other decision-makers to achieve a better sharing of responsibility?

It is not easy to put in place a functioning system for responsibility sharing. Responsibility can be shared in many different ways; we need to consider the form this sharing takes, for example financial contributions or hosting people, and how responsibility is shared, i.e. how the chosen method is to be used – for example, how asylum seekers should be distributed. Both these issues are addressed in Delmi’s reports. Many factors need to be taken into consideration, sometimes factors that you wouldn’t normally associate with the hosting of refugees. It’s also a sensitive issue in political terms. So a great deal of knowledge and creativity are needed to build a system for shared responsibility that works both politically and in practice. Where researchers can assist is by developing our knowledge of the factors that need to be taken into consideration and of the effects of different measures, as well as by putting forward suggestions for different types of distribution mechanisms, such as those that Bernd Parusel and Jan Schneider have proposed in their report.

Alexandra Wilton Wahren is Director-General for Legal Affairs at the Swedish Ministry of Finance and was previously Director of the Migration Law Unit at the Ministry of Justice.



Can you give any concrete examples of how Sweden has driven the issue of greater responsibility sharing within the EU?

The Ministers responsible and the Prime Minister are constantly advocating the importance of internal solidarity within the EU at meetings of ministers, European Council meetings and bilateral meetings with their European colleagues. Sweden is also part of a number of groups of like-minded countries at different levels in which the issue has been highlighted. When Hungary and Slovakia appealed the redistribution decision to the Court of Justice of the European Union, Sweden intervened in support of the Council. The Government has also proposed that Member States that do not assume their responsibilities in terms of migration policy should not get access to EU support in the way that they currently do. This is an issue that may be key to negotiations on the next multi-annual financial framework that will soon be getting underway. In terms of extended resettlement, Sweden is driving EU projects related to capacity-building.

Apart from Germany, which countries are aligned with Sweden on this issue?

Overall, the Member States are quite divided if, for example, the topic under discussion is a redistribution mechanism (the proposal that currently falls within the scope of the Dublin Regulation), but it could be said that what is known as the Visegrád Group, led by Hungary and Poland, is on one side and the other Member States are to varying degrees on the other. Some Member States at the outer borders of the EU, for example Italy and Greece, are keen to go even further within the scope of the Dublin Regulation, as they say that as first countries of asylum they have to take responsibility for a disproportionate number of asylum seekers.



Seminars on migration and sustainable development

Migration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda stresses the importance of safe, orderly and responsible migration and the importance of the humane treatment of refugees and migrants, with full respect for human rights. This was apparent at the seminar arranged by Delmi and Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) in partnership with the UK's Overseas Development Institute (ODI) on 28 November.

At the seminar, Dr Jessica Hagen-Zanker presented the *Migration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* report. Responses to the report were given by Johan Hassel from the Swedish Delegation for the 2030 Agenda and Elisabeth Dahlin, Secretary General at Save the Children Sweden. The Director and Head of Secretariat of Delmi, Kristof Tamas, provided a summary of the discussion.

[Find out more about the seminar at delmi.se](#)

Migration, mobility and development – Reflections on the future Africa-EU Partnership

A seminar on EU-Africa cooperation was held on 29 November, organised by Delmi, Sida and the Mistra Geopolitics research programme. Rainer Münz, senior adviser to Jean-Claude Juncker, outlined the preparatory work for the 5th African Union-EU Summit, which took place in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire on the same day. The Director and Head of Secretariat of Delmi, Kristof Tamas, provided a brief background prior to the discussion based on Delmi's research overview *Migration – within and from Africa (2016:5)* by Professor Aderanti Adepoju. Responses were provided by Nicola Clase from the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Lisa Åkesson from the University of Gothenburg and the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala, and Joakim Palme, Chair of Delmi and one of the core team-members at Mistra Geopolitics.

[Find out more about the seminar at delmi.se](#)

KEEP AN EYE ON:

Theme: Children, young people and migration

Sweden has a long tradition of taking in children and young people fleeing from war, conflict and poverty in their home countries. Between 1939 and 1944, for example, around 70 000 children were sent to Sweden from war-torn Finland. Issues around children and migration once again came to the fore during the refugee situation in autumn 2015, when just over 35 000 unaccompanied children and young people applied for asylum in Sweden. Of the 4 650 unaccompanied children whose asylum applications resulted in a decision in 2015, 3 100 (about 88 per cent) were granted asylum; in 2016, the figure was 6 800 (approx. 86 per cent).**

In brief, this means that there is now a large number of children and young people, both unaccompanied and within families, who need to become established in Swedish society. Research can provide important knowledge for a better understanding of how they are received in Swedish society and to facilitate their engagement. Delmi has two ongoing projects focusing on children and migration.

**Source: The Swedish Migration Agency. The figures relate to people who have applied for asylum without a parent or guardian and who were under the age of 18 at the time of the decision on their residence permit (excluding applications determined by another state under the Dublin Regulation, applications withdrawn etc.).

Report: Unaccompanied children making their way in Swedish society

To what extent have unaccompanied children and young people succeeded in becoming established in Swedish society? This project looks into both the composition of the group that arrived between 2003 and 2014 in respect of aspects such as nationality, age and gender, and how they have fared in terms of education and entering the labour market. The authors are Eskil Wadensjö, Professor of Economics, and Aycan Çelikaksoy, PhD in Economics. The report is expected to be published in spring 2018.

Dissertation news II: From refugee camps to integration in school and working life

The report includes six summaries of current dissertations about children in the migration process that are relevant to policy discussions. It is expected to be published in spring 2018. The launch of the report will be accompanied by a seminar for politicians, civil servants, journalists and other interested parties and stakeholders.

[The report will be published on delmi.se](#)

Theme: Reducing the gap between research and practice

In recent years, the gap between research into migration and integration and the policies able to make use of research findings has increasingly widened. Public debate has tended to be characterised by opinions and beliefs rather than by research and knowledge. A new Delmi book project discusses and evaluates various actions in order to develop research that can be applied in practice and form the basis of political decisions.

Book project: Bridging the gaps

The aim of *Bridging the Gaps* is threefold.

The project will:

- provide a conceptual framework for the analysis of the relationships between research, debate and migration and integration policies.
- discuss and identify the causes of failure or success of a number of initiatives aimed at enhancing the role of research in both political and public debate.
- identify effective strategies to link research to public debate and decision-making on migration and integration in various national and institutional contexts.

Bridging the Gaps brings together writers from more than 10 countries. Professor Martin Ruhs of Oxford University, Joakim Palme and Kristof Tamas from Delmi are the co-editors. The book is expected to be published in 2018.

Further information will be posted on our website.

Delmi publications IN PREPARATION

Report: The Swedish-Somali diaspora

The study looks at how members of the Somali diaspora in Sweden are undertaking development work and conflict-resolution activity in the Somali region. It brings together Swedish-Somali diaspora associations and interviews with key figures in the Swedish-Somali community, decision-makers, support workers and researchers in Sweden. The study is led by Nauja Kleist, Senior Researcher at the Danish Institute for International Studies.

Report: Academic exchange and international migration – a study of the scholarship students on the Swedish Institute Visby Programme 1997–2015.

The study looks at the Swedish Institute's scholarship students on the Visby Programme between 1997 and 2015. It focuses within knowledge transfer and the impact of the scholarship students mainly in their home countries, any relationship they may have with Sweden and the extent to which their studies in Sweden may have functioned as a springboard into the international labour market. This is a quantitative study run in conjunction with the Swedish Institute. The project is led by Andreas Åkerlund, Senior Lecturer in History at Södertörn University, Mikael Börjesson, Professor of Sociology of Education at Uppsala University, and Astrid Collsiöö, PhD student in Sociology of Education.