Migration Potential from North Africa to Europe

Dr. Susanne Schmid

Abstract: The article aims at obtaining well-grounded assumptions on the intensity of future migration pressure from North Africa to Europe. “Migration potential” is defined as a precondition of migratory movements and comprises all persons inclined to leave their region for a better place. The author sees migration potential as a qualitative concept and analyses the motives for migration on grounds of regional discrepancies between sending and receiving countries as well as based on supporting migrant networks. To what extent the migration potential will be conducive to real migratory movements depends on the migrants’ opportunities, their financial situation and the existence of helping networks. The article presents: (1) Firstly, the demographic, political, economic and ecological push- and pull-factors between North Africa and Europe. (2) Secondly, data on migrant stocks and flows from North Africa to the prominent European destination countries. (3) Thirdly, the migration potential from North Africa to Europe which has been deduced by the strength of identified push-pull-factors and existing migrant networks. (4) Fourthly, measures for the betterment of living conditions in North Africa.

The article will make clear how a concomitance of high levels of population growth and ongoing socio-economic and political crises in Africa will inevitably increase its migration potential which may, to an ever growing extent, flow into North African areas. Intercontinental migrants, particularly from North Africa to the EU, make additionally use of the established migrant networks. Therefore France, Spain and Italy might remain the preferred destination countries. The author reveals that the qualitative migration potential analysis yields a wider view on migratory movements in a world of unequal chances and a fading spatial distance between them.

1. Introduction

For some decades, North Africa meets the need of labor shortages in European industries and newly erected agricultural production. This constant flow of people in their active ages across the Mediterranean Sea requires a better and comprehensive insight into one of the most spectacular migratory movements in contemporary world.

Besides of the role of being a sending region of migrants to Europe, North Africa increased its significance because of growing emigration due to the political upheaval being rampant in the whole area since early 2011. Meanwhile North Africa acts as both an immediate sending region of migrants to Europe and a transit region for migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa on their way to Europe (de Haas, 2007). In contemporary world the crucial combination of highest population growth within an insufficient frame for economy and governmental action is found in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Northern Arab states of the continent are already entangled with the deficiencies in their southern neighborhood. They attract political refugees and economic migrants, even through crossing the Saharan desert (Schmid, 2010).

1 This article exclusively reflects the opinion of the author.
2. Methodological Considerations

The author defines migration potential as a qualitative concept and analyses the motive for migrating from North Africa to Europe on grounds of comparisons of lifestyles between these two regions. The sum of propensities, intentions and motivations in a society or social groups for leaving one’s region should be called “migration potential” (Schmid, 2010).

In general, the migration potential arises from regional discrepancies, differences in life chances, and from an obvious welfare gap (Schmid, 2007). Life chances are operationalized by demographic, economic, political and ecological factors (see Figure 1). How many potential migrants will follow their inclination and end up with a clear-cut decision to depart, depends on the migrants’ opportunities, their financial situation and the existence of helping networks (Massey 1999).

Figure 1  Migration potential due to regional differences in life chances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Push-factors Countries of origin</th>
<th>Migrants</th>
<th>Pull-factors Countries of destination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population growth, young age structure</td>
<td>Stable population, population decline, demographic ageing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate educational institutions, medicare and social security</td>
<td>Welfare state benefits, educational institutions, medicare, social security</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment, low wages</td>
<td>Labour demand, high wages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty, low consumption and living standard</td>
<td>Welfare, high consumption and living standard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictatorships, shadow democracy, bad governance, political upheaval, Conflict, (civil)war, terrorism, human rights violation, oppression of minorities</td>
<td>Democracy, rule of law, pluralism, political stability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecologic disaster, desertification, lack of natural resources, water shortage, soil erosion, lack of environmental policy</td>
<td>Peace, security, protection of human and civil rights, protection of minorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisions of the family or the clan</td>
<td>Better environment, environmental policy, protection of natural resources and environmental protection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information flows, media, transferred picture of country of origin</td>
<td>Information flows, media, transferred picture of destination country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibilities of (ir)regular immigration, routes of trafficking</td>
<td>Possibilities of (ir)regular immigration (right of residence)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own figure.

Migration can be explain, in general, by push- and pull-factors between regions and, additionally, by helping migrant networks on both sides (see Figure 1). To speak of North African migration potential points out foremost to the push-factors and the migrant networks between sending and receiving countries.

So potential of migration is a crudely estimated entity which comprehends attitudes ranging from mere feeling and desire to migrate up to sharp cost-benefit-reasoning and decision-making about emigration. Inclination to migrate is a state of mind and an attitude towards one’s own country after having it compared to other places and forms of living. To aggregate this inclination on a scale of population yields the migration potential. Migration potential is not a quantitative, exactly defined and numbered group, but a qualitative concept concerning the degree of civic satisfaction with socio-economic and political standards of living.

North Africa is a convincing example in order to make the concept of migration potential comprehensible and to explain the demographic, economic, political and ecological factors behind. Migration potential arises – as mentioned – from the perception of different life chances.
3. Migration push-factors from North Africa to Europe

3.1 Demographic push-factors

A look at the demographic indicators is necessary. They offer the picture of a sharp divide between Africa and the outer world. The current rate of natural increase, on the average of the continent, lies at 2.3%. This will double the African population from 1 billion today (2010) to over 2 billion inhabitants in 2050. Such a high rate of natural increase means also a high total fertility rate (TFR), i.e. 4.4 children per woman. A particular issue arises from the very young age structure: 40% of the population is under 15 years old (see Table 1).

### Table 1  Demographic indicators for the regions of the world, 2010-2015 and 2050

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>6,896</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>9,306</td>
<td>10,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More developed regions</td>
<td>1,236</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>1,312</td>
<td>1,335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>738</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less developed regions</td>
<td>5,660</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>7,994</td>
<td>8,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>1,022</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2,192</td>
<td>3,574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>4,164</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5,142</td>
<td>4,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America &amp; Caribbean</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>751</td>
<td>688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * Medium Variant.  
Source: UNPD, 2011.

One must keep in mind that Africa shows varieties in many respects: North and Southern Africa have lower fertility levels, but even there, with a TFR of 2.6 and 2.5 they are situated above replacement level (2.1) and much more above the European fertility level of 1.6. The severest living conditions are found in Western, Eastern and Middle Africa (UNDP, 2010). It is not by chance, that in these regions the TFR lies at its highest that means between 5.2 and 4.7 children per women (see Table 2).

### Table 2  Demographic indicators of African regions and Europe, 2010-2015, 2050

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>1,022</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2,192</td>
<td>3,574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>856</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>1,960</td>
<td>3,358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Africa**</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Africa</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>1,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Africa</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>1,414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Africa</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Africa</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>738</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * Medium Variant; **North Africa: Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, Western Sahara.  
Source: UNPD, 2011.

In most African settings, reproductive behavior shows motivations contrary to those prevailing in Europe. For African women, high fertility means an access to resources (Caldwell, 2006), especially for women, such as higher status and economic support: in Europe, high fertility has gone with modernization. A higher status for women is reached by an extended period of formation in independence and therefore by a late marriage, which will bring down the numbers of birth per women
Female education and entering the labor force are the major causes of fertility decline (Lutz et al., 2008).

As demographic indicators show the African development is under way in the opposite direction. If shortage of labor force and ageing have become the problems of the modern West, than lack of labor for a “youth bulk” will become the problem of Africa, particularly felt in its Northern parts with Europe in front.

From a political point of view, the upheaval in North Africa might have been unforeseen, but from a demographic standpoint it was to expect. For quite some time, it was feared that the North African demographic development would cause political problems, when investments in education and labor markets for young people won’t grow in the same manner as the great juvenile birth cohorts do.

Compared to Sub-Saharan countries the demographic situation in North Africa seems to be less alarming. North Africa, however, still shows a significant population growth (see Table 2). The rate of natural increase is, currently, at 1.6%, the TFR lies at 2.6 children per woman. Furthermore, North Africa has, in general, a very young age structure: 32% of the population is less than 15 years old, 20% are between 15 and 24 years. Until 2050, the North African population will grow from 209 million (2010) to 322 million; until 2100 to region will count 344 million persons.

Confronting the North African indicators with those of Italy bring to the fore the great divide which goes through the Mediterranean basin: Young and growing populations stand nearby opposite to decreasing and ageing populations (see Table 3). In Egypt, for example, the rate of natural increase lies at 1.7% and the TFR is 2.6. In addition, 32% of the population is below 15 years old. In the contrast, the Italian population grows by the rate of 0.2%, the TFR is 1.5 and only 14% of the population is below age 15.

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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>5,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>31,870</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * Medium Variant; ** Gross National Income (GNI) per capita at purchasing power parity (PPP).
Source: UNPD, 2011.

So it is apparent that demographic factors contribute to the scope of a migration potential. But besides the demographic factors, there are other forces in North Africa behind the inclinations to emigrate. These other factors are economic, political and ecological ones and in constant interplay with demography.

3.2 Economic push-factors

In spite of the economic growth in the last years and of better prospects for investments, modernization efforts and other signs of hope, the (youth)unemployment rate is still high (ILO, 2011).

In 2008, the Gross National Income (GNI) in North Africa showed a very low income per Capita of 5,370 US-$, whereas in Europe it came to lay at 25,580 US-$.

In 2009, for example, the GNI for Morocco reached 4,400 US-$, whereas – in comparison – the Italian one was nearly 32,000 US-$ (see Table 3).
Under this aspects, North Africa might be an example for a complex known as disadvantageous for developmental success: it combines a weak economy and a substantial population growth. 52% of the North African population is below age 25. So the migration potential might grow because of an unknown future of its youth (Bigsten & Shimeles, 2007). Big juvenile age cohorts require vast educational institutions and occupational chances in labor markets (Wegner, 2008; Fargues, 2008).

3.3 Political push-factors
The “Jasmine Revolution” in Tunisia provoked a wave of uprising for democracy in North Africa. It was followed by the ousting of President Mubarak in Egypt. Also Libyans, Algerians and Moroccans are clearly expressing their will for political change. Millions of North Africans make emphatic demands for more democracy and political participation. Although the historical experience of the North African countries widely differs, they are all facing similar problems and challenges: democratic structures need to be installed anew and carefully implemented (BMZ, 2011).

As the political factors are concerned, Africa offers a counter picture to Europe like the demographic indicators have already shown. North Africa compiled deficient governance, political instability and an unsatisfactory situation of human rights. The political instability and the absence of law and security for private property deter urgently needed international investments and enduring developmental projects. If states are oil-providers (Libya, Algeria) or mostly living on foreign tourists (Tunisia), the major partner in internal and external trade is the state and its authorities. An influential middle class is hindered to come into existence. So frustration is rampant among the younger active population. In general, one can assume that the current political turmoil in North African states tied up with periods of economic stagnation will generate emigration flows.

A keyword for estimating the future migration potential from North Africa is called “revolution of rising expectations”: this may keep some of the migration aspirants in the hope for betterment in the country. But the impatient and highly mobile will make use of the chaotic situation and will set out to irregular emigration. Since the uprising in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, illegal migration is predominant because one can rely on the lack of border control. These boat migrants are neither “refugees” nor “refugees driven by poverty”, but they are mostly young single men seeking for a more promising future and find, for that purpose, a window of opportunity open. Referring to this, migration turned out to be an expensive venture: travel documents, flight tickets, trafficking and bribe must be paid. So the poorest parts of the population are seldom counted among migrants.

3.4 Ecological push-factors
Among the ecological factors making the migration potential grow, is usually counted climate change and increased population pressure on natural resources. They will worsen Africa’s problems concerning water and soil because political administrators are not familiar with ecological and environmental issues – let alone with conceptions of sustainability. A lack of ecological consciousness raises human vulnerability. In figure 2, human vulnerability is defined as a combination of natural, human, social, financial and physical factors (Erhart et al, 2009). Africa is the most affected continent from extreme weather, such as droughts, cyclones and floods, or other impacts of climate change and North Africa is not exempt from that (UNFCCC, 2006). A dwindling carrying capacity for viable livelihood will raise the number of people ready for leaving their region. North Africa is also prone to a number of climate-induced conflict constellations, which might further increase the migration potential (see Figure 3).
3.5 **Attendant circumstances increasing the migration potential**

Liberal migration laws, regular legalization campaigns, geographical closeness and existing migrant networks promote the choice of a particular destination country. Stricter entry requirements and border controls do not necessarily lead to effective immigration reduction but rather to increased irregular immigration, which often goes along with migration routes shifting. Making every endeavor to reduce the migration potential may be futile because – as the French demographer Alfred Sauvy stated some decades ago – “If wealth does not go where people are, people naturally go where wealth is.” (cited in Chesnais, 1991, p. 120). But also an improvement of living conditions in the countries of origin can paradoxically rise the migration pressure because in better times the number of persons being willing and able to migrate increases. This confirms the observation that not the poorest parts of the population migrate.
According to Gallup surveys\(^2\) conducted in late 2010 – i.e. before the unrest – 26% of North African adults said they would emigrate permanently if they had the chance (Algeria 31%, Tunisia 28%, Libya 27%, Egypt 24%, Morocco 24%). 14% of these potential North African migrants said they planned to emigrate in the next year (Esipova & Ray, 2011). The desired destination countries of these willing to migrate were France, followed by Saudi Arabia, USA, Italy, Canada and Spain. The favored destination country France reflects the high relevance of network factors: 75% of Algerians, 60% of Tunisians, and 50% of Moroccans said they would like to move to France because family members and friends live there.

4. The destination countries of potential migrants - Migrant Networks
After the stock taking of push-factors and influences on the migration potential it has to be ascertained where the real migratory movements will turn to. Statistical reports and political observations reveal two ways: either African inner migration or intercontinental migration.

4.1 North African inner migration
In North Africa, Libya and also Algeria, are due to their oil industries, destination countries of labor migrants. Libya is the main receiving country of guest workers from Egypt, Tunisia, Sudan and Western Africa. Morocco and Tunisia are meanwhile not only transit-, but also destination countries of migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa.
The analyses showed that the main destination areas of North African migrants are neighboring African regions and prospering cities. But to what extent this inner migration will rise depends on the absorptive capacity of urban regions of destination that means the capacity of labor markets to adopt newcomers in growing numbers and keep them away from dwelling in informal and exploitative work. It can be assumed that the trend of North African inner migration and, particularly, the migration into cities will continue.
The significance of North Africa as a region of immigration and transit might increase because the high levels of population growth, unemployment and the ongoing political crises in Sub-Saharan Africa might further raise the migration potential there.

4.2 Migration to Europe
As to the intercontinental migration, especially the migration to Europe, one can retain the following: Migration between Africa and Europe usually goes along the established migrant networks. Their size and numbers can be drawn from the registered migrant stocks and flow. The migration out of North Africa has foremost economic reasons. If regular immigration is not possible, an irregular entry is chosen. Irregular stay results more often by visa expiration ( overstayer) than by illegal border crossing. Regular migration from North Africa to Europe is mainly family reunion and to a smaller part work and study migration. Unfortunately valid data on the current regular migration flows from North Africa to Europe are hard to obtain.

(1) Migrant Flows
According to Eurostat and OECD, the main destination countries of North African nationals in the EU are Spain, France, Italy and Germany (see Table 4). In 2009, mostly Moroccans (62,000) moved to Spain followed by Algerians and Tunisians. Italy was main destination country of Moroccans (33,000)

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\(^2\) Results are based on face-to-face and telephone interviews conducted in October and November 2010 with approximately 1,000 adults, aged 15 and older, in 5 North African countries (Esipova & Ray, 2011).
and Egyptians (8,000). In 2008, mostly Algerians (28,500) and Moroccans (24,000) as people from the francophone Maghreb migrated traditionally to France. In 2009, Germany was the receiving country of 4,000 Moroccans followed by Egyptians and Tunisians.

### Table 4 Inflow of North African nationals in selected EU-Member States, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>6,376</td>
<td>1,132</td>
<td>28,454</td>
<td>1,543</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>7,977</td>
<td>861*</td>
<td>1,906</td>
<td>2,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>61,766</td>
<td>33,128</td>
<td>24,054</td>
<td>3,925</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>5,692</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>7,854*</td>
<td>1,837</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


(2) Migrant Stocks

In 2010, around 2.8 million North African nationals were residing in the EU-27. Nationals from the Maghreb lived, with respect to historical ties, in France (2005: 480,000 Algerians; 460,000 Moroccans; 147,000 Tunisians) (see Table 5). Also Spain and Italy became relevant receiving countries mainly of Moroccans. In 2010, Spain registered 741,000 Moroccan nationals and Italy 432,000. In Germany lived, in 2010, about 116,000 North African nationals, most of them were Moroccans (64,000), followed by Tunisians (23,000).

### Table 5 Stocks of African nationals in selected EU-Member States, 2010

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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>57,667</td>
<td>25,449</td>
<td>477,500</td>
<td>13,199</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>3,086</td>
<td>82,064</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12,278</td>
<td>9,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>1,468</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4,332</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>740,819</td>
<td>431,529</td>
<td>461,500</td>
<td>63,570</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>1,946</td>
<td>103,678</td>
<td>146,500</td>
<td>22,956</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


On account of the preceding migratory movements of North Africans to Europe it can be assumed that France, Spain and Italy will remain the preferred destination countries (see Table 4). In these three countries, the total North African migrant stock and inflow is on a high level. Particularly Spain and Italy register the fastest growing stock of North African population in Europe (see Tables 4 and 5). Migratory motivation is centered on family reunion, work and education (studies). It can be presumed that the migration of highly qualified manpower to Europe – the so called brain drain - might increase. As these persons cannot find an adequate employment in their home country or are attracted by job offers from European countries. So North Africans will continue to migrate to Europe mostly for familial, occupational or educational reasons.

(3) Irregular migration

Concerning irregular immigration, Italy, Spain and Greece have become the preferred destinations also of North African boat migrants (STATT Consulting, 2011; ICMPD, 2009). Since the beginning of the political upheaval in North Africa, more than 37,000 illegal immigrants landed in Italy; mainly on the Mediterranean Italian island of Lampedusa (Frontex, 2011; see Figure 4). But in this context it needs to be stressed again, that most of illegal African migrants enter Europe legally and then clandestinely overstay.
5. What can be done? – Policy Measures

The expression “Arab unrest” made its way in early 2011 as if the period of a rather quiet and politically pacified North Africa had ended. The uprising in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and other parts in the Middle East filled European politics, media and social science with amazement. Times when North Africa was the breeding ground for conflicts and threat toward European powers seemed to be a bygone age: Decolonization wars (Egypt, Algeria), seizure of power by charismatic leaders reinforcing anti-Western underpinnings, and the efforts of Islamists to gain ground by terror, religious tradition and vague promise began to form national identities and ideologies. Autocratic regimes justified their repressive measures by the necessity for guaranteeing law and order. For some decades, Western policymakers considered North African states stabilized and reliable partners in the future. But quite early, sociologists and demographers diagnosed an impaired situation in these countries when population growth and economic progress are not in tune. An uncommonly high portion of North African economies are in ownership and control of the state such as large-scale enterprises, and brings about that the bulk of gains and profits is assigned to the small circle of the ruling class, and that the countries show a socially unsound distribution of wealth.

What is called “Arab unrest, -spring or -awakening” is the uprising of well-educated and middle-class-minded people who will not longer bear the frustration of being excluded from political participation and social progress. What makes the rebellion remarkable are some observations: (1) the absence of any religious tutelage of the mass of activists and events, and (2) the absence of anti-West-manifestations, but on the contrary: the masses asked for democratic and personal liberties, what are achievements and values developed by the West.

The potential of political instability has not diminished since. Persistent reforms must restore economic and demographic imbalances. For this purpose, there exist plans and catalogues of measures to be taken to the development and modernization of Africa (UN, OECD). Here will be presented preeminent agendas compiled by international (G8) and European authorities (EU) as well as German Ministry proposals as paradigmatic to an EU-member state. They presuppose cooperation with North African counterparts.

5.1 International measures

For a long time, the African development is a high priority issue on the G8’s agenda. Almost ten years ago, the G8 Summit in 2002, adopted an “Africa Action Plan”, which was implemented within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) – an African-led initiative to
deal with the continent’s developmental challenges (G8, 2002). The G8 Africa Action Plan laid the groundwork for a strong partnership between the G8 and the African nations. It included the following eight points, which are still relevant:

1. Promoting Peace and Security
2. Strengthening Institutions and Governance
3. Fostering Trade, Investment, Economic Growth and Sustainable Development
4. Implementing Debt Relief
5. Expanding Knowledge: Improving and Promoting Education and Expanding Digital Opportunities
6. Improving Health and Confronting HIV/AIDS
7. Increasing Agricultural Productivity
8. Improving Water Resource Management

At the most recent G8 Summit in May 2011 in Deauville (France), the developmental aid for Africa, more precisely for North Africa and the Middle East, has been brought in the focus again. One of the outcomes was the launch of the so-called “Deauville Partnership” between the West and the emerging North African democracies. The G8 agreed that Tunisia and Egypt could be offered by multilateral development banks over more than 20 billion US-$ (2011-2013) in international loans if they continue their transformation into democratic and tolerant societies (G8, 2011).

5.2 European measures
Since the Tampere Council in 1999, the EU is in search of a common immigration polity covering immigration and asylum as well (EU, 1999). There were called four key areas which could deliver the frame: (1) partnership with the countries of origin, (2) a common European asylum system, (3) fair treatment of third country nationals and, (4) more efficient management of migration flows.

From its beginning onward, a contrast came to the fore between the European Commission and the member states. The latter would not concede too much power and competence to the Commission and this could explain why the area “management of migration” became dominant at the expense of others. Concerning immigration, the EU adopted a ward-off tendency. It became the preferred field of action on migratory matters and let widely untouched the national legislations of the member states. So the political measures of the EU reflect the predominance of migration control.

Member states became cautious in view of anti-immigrant parties on the rise across Europe.

Relevant measures regarding migration management are:

- Readmission agreements between European destination countries and North African countries of origin,
- Reinforcement of border controls and increased cooperation with international border security organizations,
- Support of mobility partnerships and circular migration programs,
- Better cooperation between transit countries and countries of origin,
- Combat brain drain,
- Create better living conditions and future perspectives in North Africa in order to reduce the migration potential.

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2 The May 2004 ENP Strategy Paper contains recommendations on the development of regional cooperation and integration, e.g. through cross border cooperation involving local and regional authorities as well as non-governmental actors, as a means to address certain issues arising at the EU’s external borders (EC, 2004).
Therefore pacification and political stability are needed but they must be seconded by a middle-class economy and absorptive labor markets. The measures for a North African development need to be implemented in an efficient manner. This could decrease the migration potential sustainably. Economic direct investments are only made if political stability and rule of law exist. Such a developmental policy opens future opportunities for the North African youth and will be the only reasonable alternative to emigration. Especially with the objective of avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbors, already in 2004, the “European Neighbourhood Policy” (ENP) was developed. ENP aims at strengthening the prosperity, stability and security of all partners. The North African partner countries of the EU are Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco and Libya.

5.3 German measures
The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ, 2011) will provide strong, long-term support for the transformation process taking place in North Africa. This support will focus on the following areas:

- Good governance and the rule of law, in order to contribute to the development of a pluralistic, participatory society
- Education and training, in order to reduce inequalities in educational and vocational training opportunities
- Media freedom and freedom of opinion, in order to facilitate the transition from state-controlled to free media
- Employment, in order to prevent further impoverishment of the population and offer people, especially young people, better prospects for the future
- Transformation of the economy based on social and market-economy principles, in order to improve the region’s competitiveness and boost economic growth
- Strengthening civil society
- Developing and strengthening democratic control of security forces by parliament, the executive, the judiciary and civil society

The EU is also currently engaged in elaborating a short- and medium-term package of measures to support the transformation processes.

6. Conclusions
Between North Africa and Europe (especially the EU) exists a welfare gap. It is made apparent by the difference of demographic, economic and ecological indicators which reflect the life chances in each of both regions. To what extent migration potential will lead to actual migratory movements depends on the migrants’ opportunities, their financial situation and the existence of helping networks. The high level of population growth, unemployment and socio-economic shortages in Africa and the ongoing political crises in Sub-Saharan Africa might further increase the migration potential. Therefore, North Africa will gain importance as region of emigration, immigration and transit. The Mediterranean basin is one of the places on earth where the sharp social discrepancies which go through the world population encounter. If the divide persists and continues, then it will be at the roots of mischief and impediments on the road to democracy, market economies and to the coming of a self-conscious middle-class into being. As in our age even much different lifeworlds come closer through communication and information technology, Europe will get in immediate touch with the destiny

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North Africans will undergo. An approximation of life chances and similar standards in human development on both sides of the Mediterranean Sea will be the presupposition of a durable peace. This means much effort from both parts. The betterment of demographic indicators pointing out to a longer life in health is impressive. The decline of birth rates reflects progress in modernization and formation, especially of the young women. Greater political freedom has to create room for discussion and dissident. Youth unemployment requires investments into labor-intensive manufacturing and service sectors. Europe must open its market for goods and products from the neighbors from across the sea and help to make their products esteemed commodities in a growing world trade. It needs a “knowledge-sharing” between North and South of the basin: modern technology should not remain with North African protesters but, moreover, must also be comprehensively applied in North African industries and working places.

More than seven years ago, the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan pointed out to the European Parliament that better migration policies would be a benefit to all: “In this twenty-first century, migrants need Europe. But Europe also needs migrants. A closed Europe would be a meaner, poorer, weaker, older Europe. An open Europe will be a fairer, richer, stronger, younger Europe – provided Europe manages immigration well.” (Annan, 2004).

References


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