



How the EU and third countries can manage migration

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The EU's response to migrants crossing the Mediterranean is shifting from internal reforms to deals with countries in Africa and Asia. This approach has potential pitfalls and upsides.

The sharp rise in the number of migrants coming into the European Union in recent years has presented the bloc with one of its most difficult challenges to date. In a new paper 'How the EU and third countries can manage migration', the Centre for European Reform examines the EU's response to the influx and considers what tools it has at its disposal to manage it. The paper concludes that in the long run, migration can only be reduced by improving security and economic opportunities in countries of origin. The EU's efforts to strike agreements to return migrants to their home countries have had limited success, while calls to process asylum applications outside the EU are unrealistic and raise human rights questions. Using the EU's financial clout to provide aid in exchange for more co-operation on migration from countries of origin and transit will require the EU to loosen its purse strings considerably.

"There is more scope for the EU to use its leverage to sign readmission agreements with countries of origin, or to support member-states in brokering readmission agreements. The EU can deploy a wide range of incentives in securing readmission agreements, from visa policy to aid. And the Union's vast financial resources remain an untapped asset in fostering economic development. The EU can do more to make use of them," says Luigi Scazzieri, a research fellow at the Centre for European Reform and co-author of the report.

Note for editors: This report is the first in a series for a new Centre for European Reform/Open Society European Policy Institute commission on EU justice and home affairs policy, which is being led by former Italian prime minister Giuliano Amato. Its purpose is not to argue for particular policies, which the commissioners will do themselves in their final report, but rather to provide an overview of the state of the debate, and evidence for the commissioners to consider in their deliberations.

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