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Defining Sustainable Migration

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Preface

This report has been prepared for the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security in the period January–March 2018. We are grateful to the Ministry for the funding enabling us to conduct this work, taking a broader perspective on international migration, in the current global context. The project team has consisted of Marta Bivand Erdal (project leader), Jørgen Carling, Cindy Horst and Cathrine Talleraas, at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO).

The notion of sustainable migration lies at the heart of a contested and politicized policy field. In the report we address the necessary coexistence of facts and norms as foundations for migration policy development. As researchers in the field, we work with the same two foundations, coupled with scientific integrity. One aspect of our integrity lies in contributing to informed debate and policy-making which, through democratic processes, may have outcomes based on values that are not our own.

Introduction

The objective of this report is to explore the term 'sustainable migration' as a potentially innovative term, describing a particular approach to the conceptualization of migration from poorer to richer countries in the world. We focus on the drivers and dynamics of such migration, and their implications for different actors, in the present, and with an eye to the future.

This report focuses on migration from lower- and middle-income countries in the Global South, to high-income countries in the Global North.[1] This is a specific geographic subsection of international migration that accounts for 35% of the global stock of international migrants. In comparison, South–South migration, makes up 38%.[2] While these numbers are illustrative, the notions of 'rich' and 'poor' countries, and a Global South and a Global North, are gross simplifications[3] that obscure important migration dynamics. For instance, many middle-income countries experience considerable immigration and emigration. The report's particular geographical perspective reflects the underlying mandate, but some of the conceptual discussions are of more general relevance.

Discussions about migration often centre on migrants. But migration also involves many other individuals, as well as the communities, societies and states that migrants depart from, settle in, and travel through. Migration is a journey which often takes a long time, involving multiple periods of transit, perhaps in several locations. As such, migration is an empirical phenomenon which cuts across both space and time.

Migration, as discussed in this report, includes a diversity of migrants, for whom very different legal regimes are relevant throughout their journey and upon arrival. We use the United Nations' definition of migrants as people who change their usual country of residence, irrespective of the reason for migration or their legal status.[4] In other words 'migrants' also includes people who qualify for international protection as refugees.[5]

In our discussion of the concept 'sustainable migration' we refer extensively to 'costs' and 'benefits' of migration. These are shorthand terms for diverse positive and negative impacts, not limited to economic ones, but rather including political, social or cultural impacts. In developing policy, it is important how different stakeholders perceive the various impacts as either positive (benefits) or negative (costs). But that does not imply that there is always an objective answer to whether an impact is *desirable* or *not*.

Understanding the dynamics and drivers of migration from poorer to richer countries necessitates a comprehensive approach, whether the aims are purely analytical or for policy making. Provisions for refugee protection need to be an integrated part of national and global approaches to migration management[6].

Migration data is often both messy and flawed, due, on the one hand, to politicization of counting and categories[7], and on the other hand, to insufficient resources for accurate data production[8]. Yet, at an overarching level, it is widely acknowledged that the total number of refugees and internally displaced people in the world has not been higher since the end of WWII[9]. While the number of those fleeing across borders has remained relatively stable during this time period, at present about 2/3 remain displaced within the territorial boundaries of their states of origin[10]. Of the world's approximately 22.5 million refugees, about 84% are hosted by developing countries[11]. Refugees constituted around 10% of the world's 258 million international migrants in 2017[12]. Given the rising numbers of people fleeing violence and conflict, from Syria, but also protracted situations in e.g. Afghanistan, international attention is often focused on the ways in which state concerns with border protection, can pose real challenges to individuals' opportunities for accessing another state's territory to seek asylum.

Most of the world's migrants cross international borders in a legal and orderly manner, underscoring the roles of migration management in contemporary international migration. Similarly, many international migrants contribute to societies of destination, economically, but also politically and socio-culturally, varyingly and to the extent this is made possible; they also contribute to societies of origin, as international remittances flows are testament to.

Whilst most countries globally deal with both immigration and emigration, 67% of the world's international migrants (including refugees) live in only twenty destination countries, predominantly in Asia, Europe and North America. These include richer countries in the Global North: the US, Germany, the UK, France, Canada, Australia, Spain and Italy, but also a range of poorer (including middle-income) countries in the Global South: Saudi Arabia, Russia, the United Arab Emirates, Ukraine, India, Turkey, South Africa, Kazakhstan, Thailand, Pakistan, Jordan, and Kuwait[13].

When focusing on migration from poorer to richer countries, and on questions of 'sustainable migration' in this report, we seek to do so in a manner that is attentive of the broader context of global migration trends. This entails the need for critical reflection on what characterizes countries of destination, including attentiveness as to whether Global North and Global South concerns about immigration can be assumed to differ.

The term sustainability is commonly used with reference to the need for responses to climate change, or to 'sustainable development' from the 1980s onward, which prompts our attention also for future effects. More recently, sustainability is associated with the framework of the 2030 Agenda and the *Sustainable Development Goals*. The term 'sustainable migration' may thus be put productively into dialogue with ongoing debates in policy circles surrounding the Sustainable Development Goals'[14], the ongoing processes towards a *Global Compact for Migration* and a *Global Compact on Refugees*, as well as with long-standing academic debates on the migration-development nexus[15].

This report draws on the contributing researchers' prior knowledge of the academic and policy debates on migration and development, migration management, and migration from poorer to richer countries, both in general terms, and pertaining to specific regional and country cases. It also builds on a targeted literature review conducted specifically for the purposes of writing this report.

The report sets out by placing 'sustainable migration' into the context of relevant existing concepts (2), prior to developing a definition of the term 'sustainable migration' which is applied in the remainder of the report (3). We then reflect on the inherent and often-times heated politics of migration concepts, as this relates to the present report (4) and consider the ongoing UN processes relating to migration and development (5). Based on a review of existing scholarship on relationships between migration and sustainability, key debates are identified (6). Next, we turn to applying sustainable migration as a lens on four empirical cases of international migration from lower- and middle-income to high-income countries (7). Finally, in the concluding section we summarize the promises and pitfalls of sustainable migration as an analytical concept and suggest some avenues for future research (8).

Box 1: Migration and social change

In migration studies, it is increasingly acknowledged that the effects of migration – whether on countries of origin, transit or destination – must be understood as part of broader processes of social change. In other words, 'migration is not an exogenous variable, but an integral part of wider social and development processes'.[105] This is an important observation, as it places human mobility as a normal, in the sense of relatively common, dimension of societal development, whether as internal migration, rural-to-urban migration, or international migration regionally or further afield. Historically, this is a well-known fact for many local communities globally. However, development studies, much like other social scientific disciplines, has suffered from a sedentary bias; one where development, often implicitly, is seen in sedentary terms.[106]

Four established concepts

The notion of 'sustainable migration' has similarities with other, more established concepts that describe what can be called 'migration with desirable characteristics'. Relating sustainable migration to this broader category makes it possible to examine elements that transcend the specific choice of words. There are four established versions of 'migration with desirable characteristics' that are particularly relevant:

1. *Orderly, safe, and responsible migration*
   Key consept of the SDG's target 10.7 (United Nations General Assembly 2015)[16]

2. *Safe, orderly and regular migration*
   Key concept of the GCM (United Nations General Assembly 2016)

3. *Humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all*
   Key concept in the IOM's mission statement (International Organisation for Migration 2018)

4. *A win-win-win scenario for migration*
   A prominent idea within early thinking on migration management (e.g. Martin *et al.* 2006)

The first three are formalized in institutional settings and serve as focal points for broader policy agendas. In particular, the notion of 'safe, orderly and regular migration' sits at the heart of the process of negotiating a Global Compact on Migration, formally known as a 'global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration'. When the concepts are so deeply embedded in specific policy structures, it can be challenging to detach their meaning from the implicit assumptions and priorities of those processes.

The SDG's notion of 'orderly, safe, and responsible migration' relates to a specific *goal*, namely the reduction of inequalities (Goal 10). Consequently, one might ask how the interpretation of 'orderly, safe, and responsible' should relate to inequality-reducing effects. Moreover, this overall goal seems to relate primarily to economically motivated migration, rather than, for instance family-related migration.

Also in the case of the global compact for 'safe, orderly and regular', it is the context rather than the words that limits their relevance. These are characteristics that should, as far as possible, apply to *all* migration, including migration to seek protection from persecution. However, the global compact is founded on an exclusion of refugees from its vision for migration.

The IOM's concept of 'humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all', by contrast, reflects the organization's own definition of migration as movement away from one's habitual place of residence, regardless of the motivation.

The context of these formalized policy concepts also shapes the meaning of specific words. Their wording sometimes reflects the underlying consultations and negotiations, more than the clarity of communication. For instance, the SDGs' reference to 'responsible' migration is open to a diversity of readings. The phrase makes it appear as if it is migrants that are urged to be responsible. However, the word also alludes to standards of migration management, implying a call for states to manage migration in a responsible way. This interpretation, in turn, raises the question 'responsible to what or whom?'. In the European context, 'responsibility' in reference to migration and asylum often refers specifically to the repercussions of a member state's actions for other member states or for the European Union as a whole.[17]

The fourth established concept, the 'win-win-win scenario', differs from the others in the sense that it emerged from policy-oriented research and has no institutional anchoring. It has often been associated

with particular forms of migration—especially circular labour migration—though it is also applied as a vision for migration more generally. It has been accused of sugar-coating potentially exploitative practices rather than describing real gains, and of obscuring the contested nature of what is a 'win'.[18] As Oliver Bakewell writes, 'the challenge which is being widely presented is how to identify the conditions under which this triple win can be achieved. However, the deeper challenge, which is often neglected, is to agree on the nature of the 'good' for the different actors involved.'[19]

Despite their differences and shortcomings, the four established concepts share a set of underlying perspectives. These are relevant to a discussion of 'sustainable migration'. They reflect important assumptions about the nature, consequences, and management of migration that are pertinent to draw upon when sustainable migration is defined.

- *A diversity of stakeholders*. Migration takes place in a landscape with various stakeholders. In the latter two concepts, the diversity of stakeholders is explicit: the 'win-win-win scenario' refers to benefit for (1) countries of origin, (2) countries of destination, and (3) migrants themselves; the IOM mission statement's notion of 'benefit for all' embodies similar ideas. This formulation is open but is often related to states and migrants as the two primary stakeholder groups. The adjectives *orderly, safe, responsible, regular*, and *humane* that occur in the first three concepts indirectly allude to the distinct perspectives of states and migrants. In each case, the combination of adjectives seeks to imply a balanced approach.

- *Positive and negative aspects*. Migration can have diverse consequences, both adverse and beneficial, for the various stakeholders. The 'win-win-win scenario' points very directly to the benefits from migration. The positive aspects are implicit but no less important in the other three concepts. Warnings about the negative aspects are captured by the adjectives used to describe desirable forms of migration. For instance, the mention of 'safe' migration alludes to the exploitation, suffering, and fatal risks that many migrants are exposed to. Similarly, the reference to 'regular' migration recognizes states' concern about irregular border-crossing and undocumented residence.

- *Dispersed impacts*. Migration has repercussions across the migration trajectory from societies of origin to societies of destination, and often also including societies of transit. The four concepts all reflect such a holistic approach to migration as a policy issue. They build upon the shift from one-sided 'immigration control' to collaborative 'migration management' as the dominant policy ethos, and they attempt to connect concerns about migration and development with the management of migration flows.

- *Potential for sound management.* The four concepts connect the disparate potential outcomes of migration with the promise of sound management. The underlying idea is that, with the right policies in place, the positive aspects of migration can be maximized while the negative ones are minimized. This idea is based on a belief that (1) migration processes can be effectively shaped by policy, and (2) the interests of different stakeholders can be reconciled if policies are right.

- *Conditional endorsement.* All four concepts express fundamentally positive attitudes towards migration, with reservations about the circumstances under which migration is a good thing. The perspective can, in other words, be described as 'conditional endorsement' of migration. It is evident in the *contexts* of the first three concepts—key documents that express commitment to *promote* or *facilitate* migration with these characteristics.

These five points reflect important developments in migration research and policy and serve as foundations for the concisely formulated concepts. Even if 'sustainable migration' as an alternative concept takes a distinct approach, it should have an underpinning which relates to these key ideas.

Towards a definition of sustainable migration

Compared to established concepts such as 'safe orderly and regular migration' or 'migration for the benefit of all', 'sustainable migration' raises greater doubts about what the concept is meant to describe. This is not just because other concepts are more established, but because 'sustainable' is an abstract term. For 'sustainable migration' to be analytically useful, it must be supported by a definition.

It has been suggested that sustainable migration could be used as a shorthand term for migration that contributes to achieving the SDGs.[20] This connection makes valuable reference to the potential benefits of migration in a broad development perspective. Yet it falls short of a useful explanation of the concept.

The word 'sustainable' means 'capable of being maintained at a steady level'[21]. With this in mind, 'sustainable migration' could be understood as migration that does not undermine the ability of societies of origin and destination to support future migration. However, this type of definition has two weaknesses: first, it frames migration as a societal threat without acknowledging the societal benefits; second, it is tied exclusively to the societal level, without recognizing the role of positive and negative consequences for individuals. Moreover, one could question whether sustaining migration at a particular level is intrinsically desirable. All societies experience demographic, economic, social and political fluctuations, and these could very well affect what levels and composition of emigration or immigration are desirable. With respect to labour migration in particular, part of the appeal to countries of destination is precisely that the supply of labour can be differentiated over time.

A more promising approach is to pick up on the notion of migration potentially affecting diverse stakeholders in positive or negative ways and extending the principle into the future. In other words, sustainable migration is not just about migration being safe or orderly today, but also about its longer-term repercussions.

The future-oriented perspective means shifting the focus from considering only the *characteristics* of migration to including also its longer-term *consequences* more explicitly. The approach taken by the established concepts would suggest a call for promoting migration that has positive impacts on all stakeholders, now and in the future. A more realistic and constructive approach, however, would be to acknowledge that migration entails both *costs and benefits* to individuals and societies, and to address the *distribution* of those costs and benefits, now and in the future. A possible definition of sustainable migration would be

> migration that ensures a well-balanced distribution of costs and benefits for the individuals, societies and states affected, today and in the future.

Costs and benefits should be understood in a broad sense, beyond purely financial ones. For instance, migration involves extreme cost in the form of loss of life and severe traumatization of migrants. Benefits include the opportunities for individuals to escape persecution or poverty, as well as the contribution of migration to economic growth. Some consequences of migration may be judged differently by different people; for instance, increased cultural diversity will be seen as a benefit by some and a cost by others.

The word 'well-balanced' is open to different interpretations. However, this openness is not a weakness of the definition since it is impossible to offer a universal and impartial prescription for *how* the costs and benefits should be distributed. The definition of sustainable migration implicitly points to the two necessary pillars for policy-making: (1) a sound understanding of the mechanisms that produce costs and benefits, and (2) a normative foundation for balancing potentially conflicting interests.

This combination applies to diverse forms of migration management. For instance, the practice of not returning foreign nationals who could face persecution in their country of citizenship is based on (1) a thorough assessment of the likely consequences for the individuals, and (2) a commitment to the principle of non-refoulement. In this case, the normative pillar is a legally binding one that renders other concerns (such as the financial costs to the countries) irrelevant.

In other cases, there is a political dilemma of balancing different concerns. For instance, large-scale immigration of skilled manual workers can relieve labour market bottlenecks and stimulate economic activity, but at the same time erode hard-won labour standards and undermine recruitment to the trades in question. There is no unbiased solution to such a dilemma. Again, the response rests on two pillars. On the one hand, we need insights into the likely distribution of costs and benefits under different migration scenarios, and about the scope for policy interventions that minimize the undesirable consequences and maximize the desirable ones. On the other hand, policymakers need normative guidance on balancing conflicting concerns. Even with a vision of migration for the benefit of all, and with the best-possible policy tools at hand, there will be choices that are essentially normative. What is the value of preserving national craftmanship, for instance? And can the eradication of one profession be justified by gains to many others?

The proposed definition of sustainable migration draws attention to the need for considering the diverse outcomes of migration, understanding the processes at work, and thereby delimiting the normative issues that should be addressed through informed, democratic processes.

The politics of migration concepts

Migration policy is debated and developed in a field of tension, which, in simple terms, is defined by the clash between fundamentally positive and fundamentally sceptical views on migration. This tension exists at the global level—where many countries of origin would like to see expanded opportunities for migration while countries of destination favour a restrictive policy—and in national politics in country of destination, where the degree of openness to immigration is a contentious issue.

The way in which concepts are developed, used, and understood cannot be separated from their political context. This holds true for the established concepts as well as for 'sustainable migration'. In both cases, there are specific reasons why certain concepts thrive within the field of tension over migration politics.

The notion of 'safe, orderly and regular migration' has gained widespread international support across political divides in views on migration. This is partly because the concept itself incorporates a balance between different perspectives. The safety of migrants is an important concern for countries of origin and migrant activists, while the references to 'orderly and regular' assuages destination countries' concern with controlling immigration. Moreover, the idea that 'safe, orderly and regular migration' should be promoted is acceptable to diverse groups because it can be interpreted in two ways: (1) that migration should be promoted, and made as safe, orderly and regular as possible, and (2) that migration is only acceptable if it meets the criteria of being safe, orderly and regular.

The use of 'sustainable' in connection with migration entails a similar duality vis-à-vis political differences over immigration. On the one hand, 'sustainable' has liberal and progressive connotations, underpinned by the concept of 'sustainable development'. On the other hand, it appeals to those who hold restrictive views on immigration, because the word itself serves as a warning about 'excessive immigration'. In light of the political context, 'sustainable migration' can serve a narrowly restrictionist function. The word 'sustainable' applied to immigration and asylum carries the potential for dog-whistle politics: it seems innocuous to the public at large but is taken as an expression of support by those who feel that current levels of immigration are intolerable and endanger our way of life.

With these caveats in mind, 'sustainable migration' should be anchored in a definition that emphasizes the holistic perspective on costs and benefits to different stakeholders.

Intersections with UN processes related to migration and development

On the international policy arena, migration is currently addressed within three prominent frames: the broad and long-term 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (which is the platform for the SDGs) and the more focused processes towards a Global Compact for Migration and a Global Compact on Refugees.[22]

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development contains 17 broad Goals and 169 specific Targets. One of the targets (10.7) mentioned above, specifically calls for 'facilitation of orderly, safe, and responsible migration' and 'the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies'. It is significant not only that this Target is included, but also *how* it is included: it figures under the Goal 'Reduce inequality within and among countries'. The formulation and context of Target 10.7 fits well with the vision for sustainable migration since it heralds the potential gains and simultaneously invokes the need for sound policies to manage the potential costs.

In addition to 10.7 six Targets refer explicitly to migration, migrants or trafficking.[23] Equally important is the relevance of migration to numerous Targets across the SDG framework. A recent study identified more than 40 links with migration under 14 of the 17 Goals.[24] Many of these links reflect the 2030 Agenda's general principle of 'leaving no-one behind'. When goals related to work, education, or health, for instance, are pursued, migrants are easily 'left behind'. This could be because of specific vulnerabilities or because they fall outside the scope of policy interventions. In the context of sustainable migration, it is pertinent to ensure that migrants do not support unreasonable costs while the benefits of their migration accrue to others, such as employers.

The links with migration 2030 Agenda can be mapped onto a sustainable migration framework by considering efforts to enhance benefits and reduce costs for the individuals, societies and states affected (Table 1). While Goal 10.7 embodies a vision for making the most of migration as a force for positive change, the specific migration-related Targets and other links with migration are more restricted. In particular, efforts to address the vulnerabilities of migrants are prominent.

Table 1. Selected aspects of the 2030 Agenda within a framework of sustainable migration

	Origin (Individuals, societies, states)	**Migrants**	**Destination** (Individuals, societies, states)
Enhancing benefits	Reducing the transaction cost of migrant remittances (10.c)	Preventing the discrimination of migrants in labour markets (8.5, 8.8)	Ensuring validation of qualifications to prevent deskilling among migrants (8.5) [c]
Reducing costs	Improving wages and career opportunities for health workers to alleviate push factors [a]	Eliminating trafficking in persons (5.2, 8.7), ensuring that migration is safe (10.7) [b]	

Note: Numbers refer to relevant SDG Targets; formulations are not reproduced from official 2030 Agenda documents.

a   Not addressed directly in the SDGs but deemed essential to achieving health-related Targets. Such interventions would also enhance the benefits of migration because of increased circulation and return of medical personnel from abroad.

b   These examples concern the potential direct costs of migration; many others concern the indirect costs that result from the discrimination of migrants vis-à-vis natives.

These Targets are important and welcome, but their prominence also reflects political realities: it is more feasible to achieve consensus formulations about the protection of rights (that are often already enshrined in other international agreements) than about the management of migration as a force for social change. There are no obvious links between the SDGs and the potential costs of migration for societies of destination.

Whereas the 2030 Agenda has largely implicit connections with migration, the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) and a Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) are explicitly migration-focused. The two documents that are currently being negotiated still exist only in zero-draft versions. The proposed actions are relevant to the three main stakeholder categories (migrants, origins and destinations) and many of them seek to enhance the benefits of migration, reduce the costs, or both. Table 2 presents selected actions of the GCM and GCR within such a framework.

Table 2. Selected actions of the GCM and GCR within a framework of sustainable migration

	Origin (Individuals, societies, states)	Migrants	Destination (Individuals, societies, states)
Enhancing benefits	Developing programmes and instruments to promote investments from remittance senders in local development and entrepreneurship in countries of origin (GCM 20.g) Developing targeted support programmes and financial products that facilitate migrant and diaspora investments and entrepreneurship (GCM 19e) Supporting conditions and opportunities favourable to voluntary and sustainable repatriation, including safety and security, economic recovery, and reconciliation (GCR §67)	Facilitating family reunification for migrants at all skills levels (GCM 5.g) Expanding refugees' access to secondary and tertiary education, including through scholarships and connected learning (GCR §53)	Offering accelerated and facilitated visa processing for employers with a track record of compliance (GCM 5e) Capitalizing on the skills, cultural and language proficiency of migrants (GMC 16i) Expanding and strengthening national systems for education, health, jobs, and other services, rather than providing parallel services for refugees (GCR §49)

Reducing costs	Compensating brain drain in countries of origin (GCM 2h)	Promoting pre-departure orientation trainings in countries of origin to inform potential migrants about the challenges and opportunities of migration, including on the risks and dangers involved in irregular migration carried out through traffickers and smugglers (GCM 3f)	Punish the incitement of violence generated by hate speech directed towards migrants by holding perpetrators accountable in accordance with national legislation (GCM 17b)
			Applying protocols for security screening of new arrivals (GCR §39)
		Supporting the identification, assistance, and referral for victims of trafficking (GCR §43)	Bolstering national capacity to address accommodation or environmental challenges in or near refugee-hosting areas (GCR §58)

Note: Numbers refer to GCM actions and GCR paragraphs in the zero draft versions of the two documents; formulations are in some cases shortened or paraphrased.

In both compacts, the proposed actions are restricted by the feasibility of consensus. Even though the drafts are not the product of a negotiated consensus, they have been written with this prospect in mind. The zero draft of the GCM explicitly addresses the concerns of diverse stakeholders and has challenged the subdued expectations of many sceptics. However, a point of criticism has been that it 'lacks a sense of overall direction and purpose'.[25] This is perhaps inevitable in a politically negotiated process that navigates a field of conflicting interests. But progress in line with a vision for sustainable migration requires acknowledging that there are dilemmas and conflicts of interest. One analyst remarked that the zero draft of the GCM suffers from the absence of bargains: 'In a bargain, people don't pretend their interests are aligned. They admit conflicting interests. And they partially concede, in order to come out better than they could by going it alone.'[26]

While the GCM and GCR processes are constrained by the consensus approach and the absence of bargains, the regional processes involving European and African governments have had a clearer foundation of seeking common interests and reciprocal concessions. The outcomes of the 2015 Valletta Summit on migration and the follow-up through the Rabat Process, the Khartoum Process and the Joint EU-Africa strategy are relevant in this respect.

Sustainable migration in existing research

The term 'sustainable migration' is not commonly used in academic literature on migration, and if it is, it is rarely defined. At the same time, the words 'sustainable' and 'migration' frequently appear in conjunction. The bulk of existing literature at the intersection of sustainability and migration relates to two main themes: 'migration and development' and 'migration management'. To unwrap the black box of sustainable migration from lower and middle-income countries to high-income countries, the point of departure cannot be the term itself, nor specific topics in the literature. Aiming for a holistic approach to investigate what is known about sustainable migration, the frame of reference needs to be an inclusive understanding of migration and migration outcomes, including the experiences of the stakeholders that are affected, directly or indirectly, throughout the migration chain.

This literature review aims to provide key insights from areas that address 'sustainable migration' defined as 'migration that ensures a well-balanced distribution of costs and benefits for the individuals, societies and states involved, now and in the future'. The review thus builds on the project's approach to 'sustainable migration' as a process with political, economic, social and cultural dimensions, affecting the individual, societal and state level, occurring at and between the stages of the migration chain i.e. in countries of origin, transit and destination. The overall approach guiding the literature review is illustrated in Figure 1.

The literature review identifies key debates and findings in existing academic studies and 'grey literature', including governmental and non-governmental reports. The key insights are found through a thematic clustering, in the areas reviewed. These include widely cited arguments and findings in articles in highly ranked journals.

The structure of the literature review builds on the identified stakeholders and places affected by migration and migration outcomes. The review is divided in three sections that consider sustainable

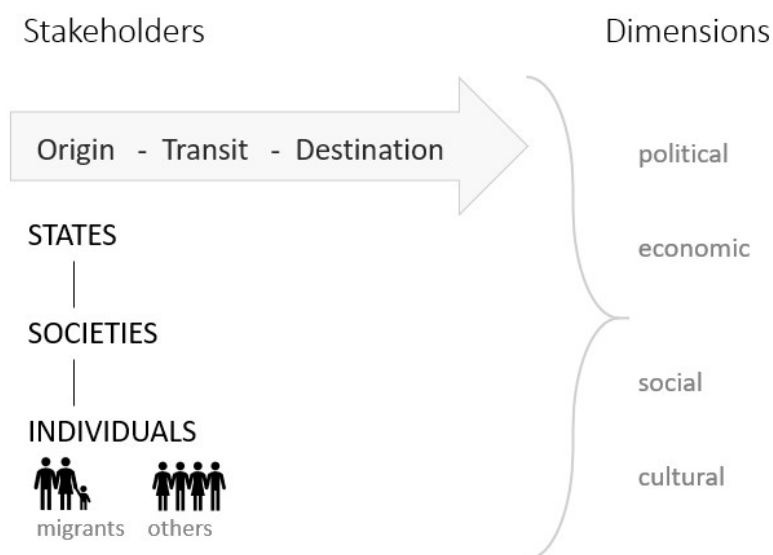**Figure 1: Stakeholders and dimensions of sustainability— factors guiding the literature review**

migration in relation to the migration chain; from poorer countries of origin, via transit hubs, to richer countries of destination. Each section discusses the costs and benefits of migration from the perspectives of individuals, societies and states. While we seek to highlight political, economic, social and cultural

dimensions, the focus of attention in each section reflects the focus of key debates and literature in the relevant context.

1.1 Sustainable migration in low- and medium income countries of origin

Key discourses of relevance to sustainable migration in countries of origin include research on how migration affects development, origin states' diaspora and emigration policy, transnational social fields, and discussions on 'root causes' of migration and on migration aspirations.

The effect of migration on development in countries of origin

The research-based assessment of the overall effects migration has on development in origin countries varies substantially. The effects of emigration are not only diverse, but often contradictory, and it is impossible to summarize the 'overall' effect migration has on development. This is related to the multi-faceted nature of migration, where migration's impact on development will depend on the type, size, timing and direction of the migration flows, the migrants' individual characteristics and human capital, as well as the socio-political context in the country of origin.[27]

One of the recognized ways in which migration can influence development is through money transfers sent from migrants abroad. Remittances are praised as a valuable economic impetus in many origin countries since they may improve living conditions for individuals and families, and support development at the societal level. In less developed countries with a large diaspora, remittances can make up a substantial part of the GDP. This flow of money is much larger and more rapidly increasing than the amount of international aid.[28] At the same time, however, remittances are recognized as a potential source of dependence. Both individuals and state economies may become dependent on money transfers from abroad, and thus be more vulnerable than if they were self-sustained.[29]

High-skilled emigration has potentially divergent effects on development. On the one hand, it can entail 'brain drain' that results in sector-specific skills shortages. A well-documented case is the health worker shortage in Africa, which is partly caused by international migration. On the other hand, highly-skilled migrants can return with new or enhanced skills after gaining work experience or pursuing additional training abroad[30]. The prospect of migration can also stimulate the pursuit of higher education and increase the domestic supply of highly-skilled labour if graduates end up staying.[31]

Origin
STATE
SOCIETY
INDIVIDUALS

The effects of migration on development
Diaspora and emigration policy
Transnational social fields
Alleviating root causes
Migration aspirations
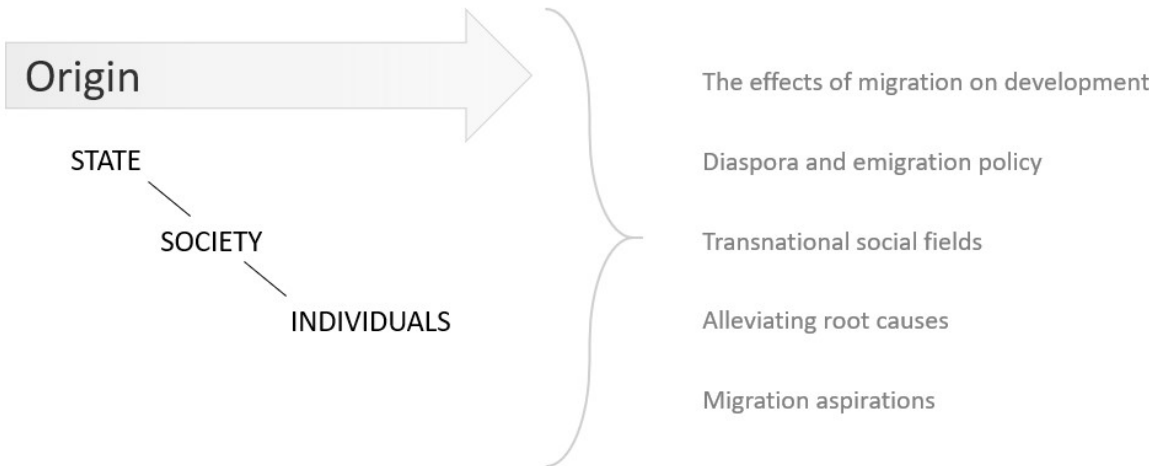
Figure 2: Key dimensions of sustainable migration in countries of origin

The general assessment of how migration affects development in origin countries has fluctuated between positive and negative views over the last decades.[32] While an optimistic view prevailed in the 1960s, a more negative approach surfaced from the mid-1970s onwards. In the decade following the turn of the

Millennium a more optimistic mood dominated, while the sceptical view currently seems to be re-emerging.[33] Increasingly, too, the question of how migration affects development has become one of a pair in the concept of a 'migration-development nexus'. The impact of migration on development has been, and needs to be, assessed in relation to the impact of development on migration.[34]

The literature strongly indicates that policy interventions can enhance the development benefits of migration. A case in point are efforts to increase the value of remittance transfers, affect their use, or connect them to promotion of financial inclusion.[35] In the field of migration and development, most policy interventions take migration flows as a given and concentrate on enhancing their benefits, rather than seeking to affect the flows—which would invariably be more contested. A prominent exception to this general trend are the 'labour export' policies of some developing countries, especially in Asia.

Diaspora and emigration policy

More than half of the UN Member States have government institutions devoted to emigrants and their descendants in the diaspora.[36] The surge of diaspora policies, programmes and institutions is related to the changing perception of emigrants. While they in the past were scorned, they are now in many instances praised and even granted new categories of 'external citizenship' or other opportunities for political engagement.[37] From the vantage point of origin states, the socio-political and economic engagement of diasporas is seen as an asset. Whilst the relationship between diasporas and origin societies may foster dependency, diaspora policies and institutions seek to secure future stability through diaspora engagement. By and large, origin-state institutions dedicated to emigrants and their descendants can be described as having three different aims: to 'tap' diasporas for resources, to 'embrace' them to support origin-state political identity and the achievement of political goals, or to 'govern' them to demonstrate adherence to global norms.[38] A specific example of diaspora policy is the proliferation of 'homeland tourism' and diaspora youth tours or events, intended to sustain and build ties to emigrants and their descendants.[39]

In addition to diaspora policies, several origin states also have extensive emigration policies. These can include labour export programmes, circular or seasonal migration policy and return policy. Historically, seasonal and labour migration programmes are not new inventions, but such policies have and are changing in response to the state's needs, the political climate, and structural restrictions imposed by destination states. As an example, when immigration restrictions were introduced in Europe, several Asian and North African states adjusted their labour emigration programmes and the Arab States became a main destination region. In 2015, there were 32 million international migrants in the region, constituting important resources for both the destination states and many of the origin states.[40]

> **Box 2: Integration versus transnationalism?**
>
> Migrants often maintain transnational ties to their country of origin. They may send remittances, build a house, go back to visit, or be politically engaged across borders. Some migrants are strongly attached to both their country of origin and country of residence, while others have strong ties to one but not the other. Yet others don't have strong attachments to any of the countries. In public debate and policy, it is often assumed that such ties are a threat to integration. Research on migrants' sustained ties have found that this is not the case. While cross-border attachments can create tensions on both receiving and sending sides, they are rarely the cause of inadequate integration.[107]

Origin states may also differentiate their policies towards different destinations and emigration groups. As in the case of Egypt, the state ranks 'temporary' emigrants in the Gulf as less important than 'permanent' emigrants in Europe and North America. While targeting the latter group with emigration and diaspora policies, labourers in the Arab region are not explicitly targeted—partly because they are expected to eventually return.[41] The Egyptian case illustrates that origin states can have multi-tiered

policy that distinctly favours specific emigrant communities.[42] The differences will depend on states' domestic objectives, and foreign policy objectives, specifically in relation to different emigrant groups[43], their length of stay abroad[44], their 'positionality'[45] and wealth.[46]

Diaspora and emigration policies are important facets affecting the sustainability of migration, and emigrants can indeed represent a 'resource that can be mobilized in support of the political or economic interests of the sending state'.[47] However, such policies and engagement are not necessarily beneficial. For instance, despite a rhetoric of protection of migrant workers, most of the states that encourage emigration to the Gulf do little to protect these emigrants.[48] Thus, the question of sustainability is different at the individual level, and particularly for the migrants who experience exploitation and abuse.[49] Also, on the state level, the long-term outcome of emigration policies can be questionable, particularly in cases where origin states' national development strategies include a reliance on the migration industry and other countries' need for labour.[50]

Transnational social fields

Transnationalism can be defined as 'the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multistranded social relations that link together societies of origin and settlement. We call these processes transnationalism to emphasize that many immigrants today build fields that cross geographic, cultural and political borders'.[51] While origin states secure formal structures for cross-border attachment through diaspora policies, 'transnational social fields' also include less institutional forms of sustained cross-border ties.[52] Emigrants themselves are often involved in numerous practices and networks that span borders.

In the literature on transnationalism, which has skyrocketed in the last two decades, the positive impact of migrants' engagement on origin country communities has been a focal point of attention. The beneficial impact of transnational engagement has been included in studies on economic activities (e.g. remittances and entrepreneurship), political activities (e.g. voting and political involvement in homeland parties) and socio-cultural transnational activities (e.g. visits and maintained contact).[53] Involvement in transnational social fields is, however, not necessarily only beneficial. As an example, research on children of immigrants have found that while some find origin country visits enjoyable, others are unsettled by cross-border involvement. In relevance to this is the question of whether transnational attachment obstructs immigrant integration. For a brief note on the academic research on this, see Box 1 in section 6.3 on sustainable migration in countries of destination.

> **Box 3: Sustainability now or for future generations?**
>
> When assessing the sustainability of immigration, it is relevant to ask whose sustainability we have in mind. The assessment will vary depending on whether we look at current and short run impacts, or if we look at how migration will influence the costs and benefits for future generations. The difference is illustrative of the argument put forward above: that immigration and diversity may erode social cohesion in the short run, while being economically and socially beneficial in the long run. Research on immigration to North America and Europe has revealed a general tendency of downward social mobility among the immigrants. They are therefore overrepresented in low-skilled or low-earning jobs. Research on the children of immigrants has shown that most experience upward social mobility, and some experience steep upward mobility. Despite a number of obstacles to labour market and educational success, descendants of immigrants improve substantially on their parents' generation. Doing this, they bring social and economic benefits for their families and communities and minimize the gap between the minority and the majority population. [108]

Causes of migration: 'Root causes' and migration aspirations

Factors such as poverty, environment degradation, and armed conflict are often referred to as the root causes of migration. The 'root causes' doctrine became part of European policy in the 1980s and gained popularity through the 1990s.[54] In the 2000s, it became engrained in European policy thinking about

migration and development[55], and it is commonly assumed that the most sustainable way to manage migration is to address its root causes.

The idea of alleviating root causes to reduce migration, however, is at odds with findings from scientific research. First, there is a long and complex chain of relationships from root causes to actual migration. While demographic trends, socio-economic development, environmental degradation and governance failures in origin countries are important to determine migration, so are people's hopes, desires and fears. Both structural factors and individual factors play decisive roles— and the latter is often disregarded in policy discussions on managing migration through the alleviation of root causes.[56]

Newer approaches to migration theory see migration as the outcome of, first, the formation of migration aspirations, and second, the ability to realize those aspirations.[57] Moreover, many in-depth accounts of migration describe how it is often not destitution that makes people turn to migration, but rather a feeling of inescapable stagnation.[58] Therefore, when discussing the sustainability of migration, it is also important to consider that the absence of migration can have negative consequences. In the majority of cases when people want to migrate from a poorer to a richer country, the desire remains unfulfilled. It can be blocked by restrictive policies, high smuggling fees, or other structural obstacles. The 'would-be' migrants are thus left with frustrated aspirations that can have important development implications. Additionally, other migration outcomes can occur, such as migration to other destinations (including South-South migration), failed migration attempts, or troubling migration journeys towards Europe that ends with death, return or prolonged stays in transit hubs.

When migration is prevented in conventional ways, through restrictive immigration policies and border enforcement, it can result in involuntary immobility.[59] If policy interventions are successfully directed at earlier stages in the migration chain, affecting political, societal and economic circumstances, and thus people's life prospects, people would be more likely to stay because they wanted to, and not because they are blocked from leaving.[60] However, such outcomes have proven extremely difficult to achieve through targeted policy interventions.

1.2   Sustainable migration in transit hubs

When considering sustainable migration in transit hubs, it is relevant to question where transit takes place and what transit entails. Following a brief account on this, the sections below elaborate on migration and development policies, and EU policy cooperation with third countries—research topics that are key to understanding the dimensions of sustainable migration in places of transit.

'Transit' as places of immigration, emigration and mixed flows

'Transit migration' is one of several 'new' migration concepts that have come to be used over the last two decades or so. While the term is common in both policy and academic contexts, it is often left undefined and based on assumptions, e.g. when it is implicitly used to signify illicit migration at the fringes of Europe.[61] States can also shape the meaning of the term through attempts to 'rebrand' *de facto* settlers as people who should leave, such as is the case with Sudanese migrants in Egypt.[62]

The term 'transit migration' can be misleading for several reasons. In the case of North Africa, it can be misleading because substantial numbers of migrants can settle for years in towns or cities along their route. For some, this may be a step on the way to their ideal destination, while for others this may become the final destination. Moreover, countries commonly identified as 'transit
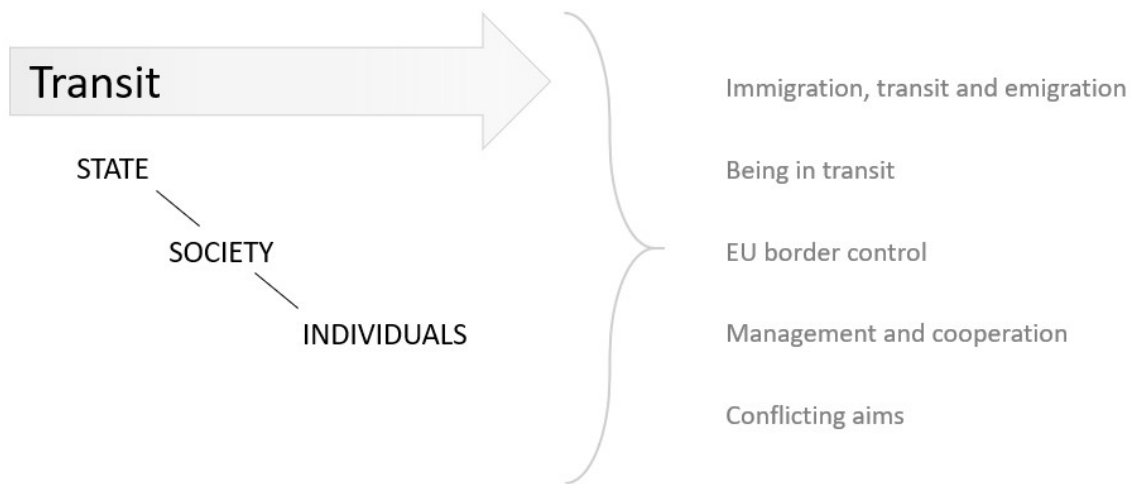
Figure 3: Key dimensions of sustainable migration in transit hubs

locations'—such as Mauritania and Algeria, and to some extent Morocco and Tunisia—have also been points of destination for labour migrants, students and professionals.[63]

Migrants in 'transit hubs' are therefore not necessarily 'on their way' from one location to the next. As is illustrated in section 7.3, describing the sustainability of migration in Tunisia, 'countries of transit' are also places of destination, and indeed also places of origin. It is important to mention that while places of transit often are thought of as countries, the locations where migrants pass through can also be islands, border regions, or specific cities along migration routes. Examples of the latter are for instance the desert towns Agadez (Niger), Gao (Mali), and Sebha (Libya) which have been particularly important transit points in trans-Saharan migration. Indeed, 'as a result of the migration business' these originally remote and poor Saharan communities have been revitalized. [64]

Individual migrants 'in transit' can have very different experiences of the costs and benefits of migration, and of the temporary nature of transit. Refugees, for instance, may be more vulnerable as they may not get the protection they need in contexts of transit. Additionally, while refugees and asylum seekers can be 'stuck in transit' in transit hubs outside European borders, they can also experience the sense of uncertainty and temporality associated with transit situations *within* European borders. Prolonged stays in reception centres or elsewhere, during or after the asylum application process, has been described as living in limbo. For months, or years, the migrants remain in transit, and have unclear prospects for the future.[65]

Conflicting aims in migration management and cooperation

The phenomenon of 'transit migration' has also had political consequences. During the 1990s, the attention of EU migration control shifted from southern EU member states to countries further south and east.[66] Countries of origin and transit outside EU borders agreed to cooperate with EU on migration management. This policy has been labelled the 'internationalization' or 'externalization' of EU border control, and it represents a disputed political field.[67] The contested parts of this policy are e.g. that EU states 'pressure' third countries to enter agreements that largely profit the EU, that some of these governments are undemocratic or accused of human rights abuse, that the support received contributes to strengthen the parties responsible for such human rights abuses, and that these policies do not provide people with other potential migration routes.[68]

EU migration cooperation with countries of transit and origin do not only include policies of direct border control. The links between migration and development have also received increased political focus over the last decades. Over the years, these two policy fields have gradually become interconnected. In 2005, a new EU approach incorporated an emphasis on cooperation on migration and

development with origin countries through the 'Global Approach to Migration and Mobility' (GAMM). Since then, the dialogues between Europe and Africa on migration, including bilateral, regional and continental dialogues, have taken place within the GAMM framework.[69] EU investments in these processes, such as the 'Migration and Mobility Dialogue', the 'Rabat Process', the 'Khartoum Process', the different 'Mobility Partnerships', and the 'Valletta Summit on Migration', demonstrate that cooperation with sending states is a key component in European migration and development policy.[70]

The objective of EU policy related to migration and development in these processes is often twofold. On the one hand, cooperation on migration control with third countries is hoped to stimulate improved migration governance, which again may increase the development benefits of migration. On the other hand, cooperation on development initiatives is seen to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement, stimulating orderly, safe and regular manners of migration. Development policies in this context are often concerned with supporting voluntary return and 'sustainable reintegration', reducing the cost of remittances, and promoting the role of diasporas in development initiatives.[71] These aspects are included alongside the thematic areas of 'legal migration' and 'border control' within the overarching cooperation frameworks.

The diverse parts of the EU migration cooperation with transit and origin countries remain both contested and praised. For destination states, this is part of the sustainable solution to migration management, but from the perspective of the individuals themselves, the effects of these policies are not necessarily part of what they see as sustainable. For instance, the integration of legal migration options and measures to ensure protection against human rights abuses in international agreements could be beneficial for migrants, aspiring migrants and origin states.[72] In countries with a high emigration pressure, the population may be opposed to increased immigration, and therefore support pro-emigration policies. The governments are thus left in a difficult situation when they seek to gain the benefits of international cooperation on migration restriction, such as e.g. increased trade or development aid, while also seeking to gain political support and avoid social unrest in the population.

Policies in the field of migration and development have been criticized for lacking coherence.[73] Policy coherence increases the possibilities of efficient implementation, and third country cooperation and migration management need to be part of a comprehensive approach to migration. This policy area has also been criticized for ignoring how policies are put into action, which has resulted in considerable discrepancy between official discourses, actual implementation and policy effectiveness. This has implications for the policy outcomes, and indeed the sustainability of those.[74]

Cognizant of the need for knowledge in order to develop better policies, work to develop a 'Migration Governance Index' has been launched by the IOM.[75] Here, an index of migration governance

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Box 4: A case for the desirability of (more) migration?

As the processes towards the Global Compact for Migration and Global Compact on Refugees are underway, and in need of faith in internationally acceptable policy solutions on migration, the political climate in many quarters is tending more towards isolationism, if not an anti-immigration stance, at least rhetorically. Against this backdrop, it is worthwhile to bring attention to some of the arguments which have, arguably, received less attention in the past decade, but which – if seeking a well-balanced view of possible and actual, long-term implications of international migration – merit being heard. Among these are several books, often built on economic analyses, taking a more or less clear stance on (more) open borders: *Exceptional People – How migration shaped our world and will define our future,* [109] and *Immigrants: Your Country Needs Them.*[110] A muchcited contribution, which also reviews existing literature on migration and development, from the perspective of potential economic gains from more migration, is Michael Clemens' *Economics and Emigration: Trillion-Dollar Bills on the Sidewalk?*[111]

is developed, including: institutional capacity, and policies on migrant rights, safe and orderly migration, labour migration management and regional and international co-operation and partnerships.

Currently, however, the prospect of well-managed migration for the benefit of all is jeopardized by genuine conflicts of interest and divisive political currents. For instance, while border control aims at decreasing migration, its effects can be that migrants are forced to use other routes. Also, while development initiatives are included to decrease emigration pressure, several countries that move from being less to more developed experience increased migration as part of the societal transition that takes place.[76] There is a lack of research addressing the connections between migration management and the migration–development nexus, and such knowledge needs to be better integrated in policymaking to enable better and more coherent policies in the field.[77]

1.3 Sustainable migration in high-income countries of destination

Among the research topics of relevance to sustainable migration in countries of destination, three aspects are vital to include in this report. First, the issue of economic sustainability nationally and globally, second, the question of how immigration affects social trust and cohesion, and finally the relationships between immigration, integration and welfare state legitimacy. After highlighting the importance of contexts and immigration flow composition, these issues are dealt with below.

Mixed flows and absorption capacity

The arrival of immigrants can bring different sorts of costs and benefits to individuals, societies and states in countries of destination. The nature of these effects cannot be generalized, as this will relate to the characteristics of the individual migrants that arrive, their reasons for migrating to that specific country and the overall composition of migration flows. The arrival of a high number of migrants with insufficient qualifications to immediately contribute to a host country's national economy will have different impact than the arrival of a smaller, specialized group of migrants who are skilled to fill a specific gap in the national labour market. The context in destination countries is crucially important, as the ways in which migration brings both costs and benefits depend on labour market needs, political climate, national economy and demographic trends. This has been purposefully demonstrated in the US context, focusing on the ways in which facilitating 'brain gain' as an immigration destination has been important.[78] [79]

The answer to the question of whether and how migration can be sustainable for countries of destination will also depend on what type of sustainability is discussed. Even if immigration yields economic sustainability in a country, it may foster social unrest or political distress. While

Destination

STATE

SOCIETY

INDIVIDUALS

Mixed flows

Absorption capacity

Economic sustainability

Social trust and social cohesion
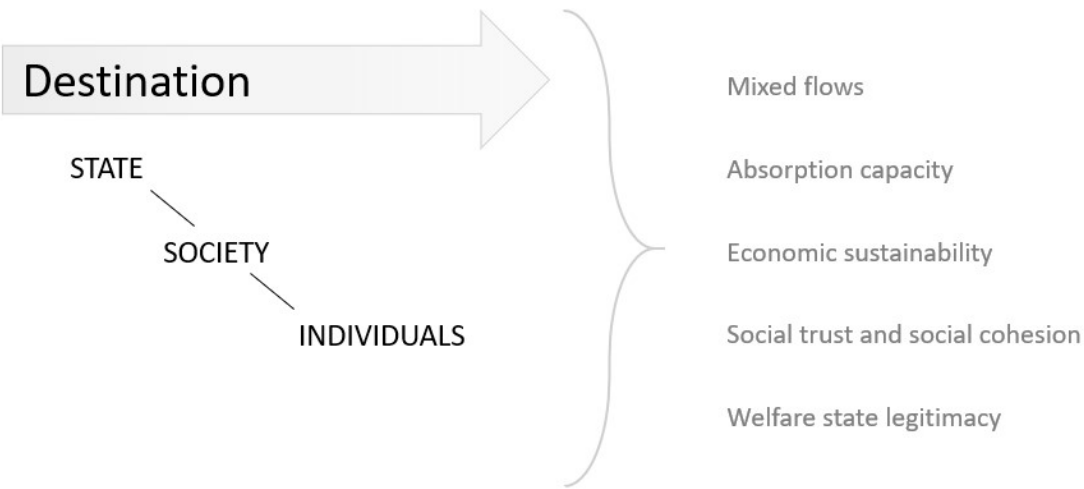
Welfare state legitimacy

Figure 4: Key dimensions of sustainable migration in rich countries of destination

migration may be experienced as more or less sustainable for the host state, this may be different to the experience of the specific parts of the population, and indeed to individual members, migrants and non-

migrants, in the population. The concept of 'absorption capacity' lends relevance in this regard. While it has been used to explore a 'society's capacity to absorb immigrants'[80] or 'the extent to which a receiving community is willing and able to absorb [immigrants]'[81], it is difficult to define exactly what the term entails. Different stakeholders can have diverse experiences of the society's absorption capacity, and in research on migration the term is often left undefined. In the EU, there is no official definition of absorption capacity, and it is arguably problematic that it 'is being used in official texts of the EU, whose language should have precise legal, economic or political meaning'.[82]

1.4 Economic sustainability

In terms of national economic consequences of migration, it is often feared that labour immigration will decrease wages, increase unemployment rates among natives and challenge the national economy. Some may fear that immigrants' use of public goods like public services will decrease the availability of such goods for the general population. Yet in economic research, there is no evidence that immigration has caused large declines in GDP or public service provision in destination countries.[83]

In general, there are two broad, though diverging, perspectives on the economic effects of labour immigration: The mercantilist assumption is that 'any wage-depressing effects of immigration at the destination [can] raise that country's welfare by increasing the competitiveness of its manufactured exports', while the most common argument is that 'immigration [has] deleterious effects on labor'.[84] The difference of these assumptions is that the latter is argued by micro-economists focusing on immigration, while the former is argued by macro-economists focusing on economic growth and development overseas.

When discussing the contested nature of migration economics, it is relevant to ask not only how different destination countries experience the economic benefits or costs of migration, but also whether there are any global gains from migration—which in the long run might be beneficial for all. In a review of existing estimates, it appears that it would be advantageous to reduce migrant barriers. Indeed, even a small reduction of barriers to labour migration would bring enormous gains to the global economy. This is partly because increased and orderly migration would increase global levels of production, it would be beneficial for the migrants themselves, and it would bring resources to the countries of origin. As most policy and migration economics focus on how immigration affects destination countries' economies, findings on the global benefits from increased labour migration often remain neglected.[85]

Social trust and social cohesion

Depending on the composition of the migration flow, the arrival of newcomers may increase diversity and decrease ethnic and cultural heterogeneity in the population. This can pose a challenge if heterogeneity is valued by the existing national population.[86] If integration fails or the existing population is in opposition to immigration, the sustainability of migration can be challenged. Hypothetically, this can happen if social trust decreases, if social cohesion is threatened, or if the (welfare) state loses legitimacy. In his research on American immigration, Putnam found evidence that 'in the short run […] immigration and ethnic diversity tend to reduce social solidarity and social capital'.[87] Researchers in Europe have put forward similar findings on social trust, i.e. arguing that social trust is negatively affected by ethnic diversity.[88] However, several authors also argue that the results of such studies are inconclusive.[89] Some argue the opposite, for instance in studies on contact theory where it is highlighted that personal contact with members of minority groups will reduce prejudice and increase trust.[90]

Similar disagreements exist in the academic discourse on 'social cohesion'. The feared threat of migration as a driver of difference, which in turn erodes social cohesion, is built on evidence which is methodologically thin. For in measuring the impact of ethnic diversity on social cohesion, a review of existing evidence points out, first, that the varying geographic scales of studies provides findings which are inconclusive (e.g. measurements at street, neighbourhood, borough, or citylevel), and second, that

attitudinal and behavioural variables are, more often than not, conflated, or that just one or the other is included, leading to findings which do not provide robust answers to the research questions posed[91].

More diversity does not lead to less social cohesion as a matter of course, although poorly managed diversity, especially in areas of socio-economic deprivation, may run parallel with weaker social cohesion, whether causal effects of one driving the other may be identified or not. The evidence-base which exists, suggests that ethnic and religious diversity are not the causal mechanisms driving tensions, rather inequality, and lacking institutional capacities to address inequalities are. Regarding the long-term impact of migration on social trust and cohesion, numerous studies suggest the opposite: that prolonged diversity will lead to more interethnic empathy, contact and trust. Even in Putnam's view, immigration and diversity will foster 'important cultural, economic, fiscal, and developmental benefits' in the long run.[92]

Welfare state legitimacy and sustainability

There is a long-standing supposition that there is a trade-off between pro-immigration and prowelfare state sentiments. This assumption builds on the idea that immigration and cultural and religious diversity make it more difficult to sustain feelings of shared belonging and solidarity, which are both crucial to maintain welfare-state legitimacy.[93] However, there are hundreds of studies on these issues, including those mentioned above, and reviews of these show that, in sum, the results are inconclusive and many researchers therefore dismiss that there is such a trade-off.[94]

Paul Collier, among others, notes that multiculturalism, increased immigration and generous social welfare programmes are unsustainable, based on the premise that diversity decreases solidarity.[95] Other authors have noted the opposite, namely that inclusive solidarity can be reached through well-designed institutions and multicultural welfare states.[96] While there is lack of research on the premises and sustainability of inclusive solidarity and its links with economic prospects and welfare state legitimacy, many point to Canada as an illustrative case where multiculturalism is found to contribute to society and nation-building.[97] This is achieved by the fact that Canada's national identity is based on an inclusive and pluralist understanding of who Canadians are.

Meanwhile, possible challenges to comprehensive welfare states, such as e.g. the Nordic welfare states, due to changing demographic compositions as a result of immigration, clearly merit attention. Sustainable integration is important for migrants, local communities and destination states. Lacking social, cultural, and economic integration, can have severe implications. While welfare states are built on a sense of nationhood and social justice, redistributive welfare systems are also based on inherent self-interest and strategic state action.[98] The integration of immigrants is therefore a major economic aim for destination countries.

In the Nordic welfare states it has proven difficult to include all immigrant groups to the same levels in the labour market.[99] Depending on levels of unemployment, there can be implications for the robustness of the welfare state and its economic sustainability. However, de facto knowledge on the extent to which variation in labour market integration among immigrants poses a challenge to destination countries' economic sustainability is scarce. In Norway, for instance, projections of the future of the welfare state's sustainability vary in terms of whether or not populations of immigrant background are considered central, or not. Where the roles of populations of immigrant background are not focused on, this is because both the effect of these populations on overall financial outcomes is relatively small (as compared e.g. to populating ageing), and because the uncertainty associated with future projection of their behaviour in the labour market is high.[100]

In the Nordic welfare states, despite the scarce evidence, there has been a growing sense that the economic integration of immigrants has failed, which in turn has affected public opinion and fed into policy change.[101] Public opinion on immigration appears to be increasingly driven by perceptions, rather than by realities[102]. As has been shown repeatedly in surveys, perceptions of levels of immigration, and

even more so of the numbers of Muslims in e.g. European countries, are consistently higher than actual levels.[103] These perceptions drive public opinion in ways which are revealing of gaps not just between perceptions and realities of numbers and characteristics of migrants, but also of the differences between perceptions on national and local levels, generational differences, class differences, and regional differences. An additionally interesting note in this regard is that whilst studies reveal increased negative attitudes towards immigrants and their impact, there is no apparent decrease in the public's trust in the welfare system.[104]

Sustainable migration in context

In this section, we apply the definition of sustainable migration as 'migration that ensures a wellbalanced distribution of costs and benefits for the individuals, societies and states affected, today and in the future' to select empirical contexts. The purpose of this exercise is to move from the more abstract and general level, to the empirical detail of specific geographic contexts, with their distinctive economic, political, and socio-cultural characteristics, historically and in the present.

In selecting cases, we have focused on origin contexts which are lower- or middle-income and in the Global South, with significant out-migration, including to Europe, but also considered the reality of complex multi-step migration trajectories, and the salience of destination contexts themselves, when considering sustainable migration. The choice of Somalia, Pakistan, Tunisia and Norway offers a mix of country income-levels, of contemporary migration flows, foregrounding conflict-related migration, and the need for protection, as well as the role of livelihoods needs in driving migration, whether or not linked to contexts of conflict.

The cases of Somalia, Pakistan, Tunisia and Norway differently bring to attention dynamics of emigration—of transit—and of immigration, whilst considering perspectives of differing stakeholders with (potentially) diverging perspectives, and including considerations pertaining to the present, as well as to the future. The cases have purposefully been limited in length, and thus do not provide an exhaustive analysis of all aspects but focus on what are considered to be the most important points in the context of considering sustainable migration.

1.5 Somalia
A long history of migration

To analyse sustainable migration in the Somali context—evaluating its costs and benefits for individuals, societies and states now and in the future—we need to first understand the historical and cultural significance of migration in Somalia. Migration has for centuries played a vital role in Somali lives and livelihoods through nomadic pastoralism, Islam, ancient trade patterns and more recent migration of workers, professionals and students.

An essential function of mobility has been that it enabled the Somali to deal with insecurity, as people move away from hardship and family members disperse to different places and engage in different activities to reduce risks.[114] Nomadism is well adapted to the harsh and highly variable conditions of the Somali environment, while trading linked Somalia to other eastern African countries as well as to Arabia and the Far East. Both before and after independence in 1960, students and the political elite received education and political training in the UK, Italy and Russia. In the early 1970s, labour migration to the Gulf took off, both because of the oil boom in the Gulf and a devastating drought in the northern and central regions of Somalia.[115]

Beyond providing a livelihood, migration is understood as a means to gain individual growth as well as community development. As most Somalis are Muslim, travel is important to them for religious reasons. Furthermore, young men, and women to a lesser extent, are encouraged to travel to gain education and life experience.[116]

Displacement during the civil war

With the collapse of the Somali state in 1991, over a million Somalis are estimated to have left Somalia while another million have been internally displaced. It is important to recognize that the Somali region has not been in constant crisis since 1991, as violent conflict and displacement have fluctuated greatly over time and by location.[117] Lindley distinguishes between three phases of the conflict in south-central Somalia since its start: 1) a major displacement crisis in the early 1990s, caused by the onset of the war;

2) a period of localization and stabilization between 1996 and 2006 which entailed much less new movement; and 3) the transformation of the conflict since 2006, in light of the global war on terror.[118] This new phase introduced new patterns of flight from political violence and persecution as well as from hunger after the severe drought in 2011.

Diaspora and remittances

Somalia's population is commonly estimated at 7.4 million, of whom more than one million live abroad, implying that some 14% of Somalia's population lives outside the country.[119] The largest concentration of Somali people outside Somalia is to be found in the region, and in particular Kenya, Ethiopia, and Yemen.[120] Another large community resides in several of the Gulf states. The third part of the Somali diaspora is dispersed in Europe and North America.[121] While most of this latter group arrived as refugees after 1991, the first Somali migrants in the UK, for example, already settled in major port cities in the 1880s.

The most substantial impact of migration to Somalia is experienced through the remittances being sent to the country.[122] Remittances in Somalia were estimated in 2015 to reach a total of 1.4 billion, supporting 23% of the country's GDP.[123] Remittances provide the country with much-needed capital, while at the same time supporting social sectors that the government is unable to finance sufficiently. Education and health are two key areas where migrants make substantial financial contributions and thus support the attainment of the SDGs. On a household level, remittances have played a central role in the sustenance of a large proportion of households in Somalia. Furthermore, remittances have contributed to the rapid growth of a vibrant private sector.[124]

The political impact of the diaspora in Somalia

Besides remittances, migration has had several other costs and benefits for Somali individuals, society and state. The loss of Somalia's most qualified professionals, especially because of migration during the civil war, is seen to have had a considerable impact on major sectors in the country. While many of these professional, business and political elites have continued to engage in the country transnationally, and some have returned in more recent years, such contributions of diaspora members receive mixed judgements.[125]

The political contributions of the Somali diaspora, for example—both from abroad and upon return—have been analysed as having both positive and negative impacts on the conflict and on peacebuilding processes.[126] Notwithstanding the many critical perspectives in Somalia on the political roles that diaspora members play, it is a fact that the current Somali government has a very high proportion of members who have been outside the country for a substantial part of the last few decades. Whether the political contributions following migration are seen to have benefited the state and the society is a matter of dispute in Somalia.

Tahriib: irregular migration

A further topic of relevance when discussing sustainable migration in Somalia relates to the increased debates in families and in public media on *tahriib*, or the irregular migration of young Somalis to Europe.[127] With youth indebting their families, often leaving without permission and risking their lives on increasingly dangerous journeys, this is a topic of public concern especially in Somaliland in the northeast, which has enjoined a considerable level of stability for almost two decades but struggles to offer its youth any sustainable future.

Debates on impact in countries of settlement

In countries of settlement, systematic studies on the impact of particular refugee communities are still largely absent, yet a range of topics are debated when costs-benefit analyses are made in the public debate. In regional host country Kenya, for example, which hosts the largest number of Somali refugees, concerns have been raised since the start of the war about the costs involved of hosting the refugees, the

demographic impacts of a population increase of half a million Muslims, the risks that the Somalis compete with Kenyans for scarce livelihood opportunities, and the security threat of hosting large numbers of refugees. The latter concern has increased substantially after the Westgate attacks in 2013, and partly related to the Kenyan military activity inside Somalia at the time. Besides these perceived challenges, benefits of hosting Somali refugees include the international donor support received, business investments and job creation in areas of where aid is concentrated and in the capital Nairobi. Very similar concerns are raised in western Europe, where Somalis are often amongst the most marginalized communities.[128] There, concerns are expressed on low levels of labour market participation and integration, welfare costs, youth criminality and gangs, and radicalization threats.

Return migration

Since 2011–2012, the number of people returning to south-central Somalia has increased considerably.[129] While no statistics are available, full daily flights into Mogadishu offered by Turkish Airlines and the visibility of diaspora investments in business and real estate suggest that return to Mogadishu is now much more frequent than it was a few years ago.[130] This is not only remarkable considering the continued security challenges that the region faces, but also if we take into account that a considerable number of those who are among the first to return left Somalia as children or were born abroad. Simultaneously, Kenya has increased its focus on less-voluntary forms of return for Somali refugees, developing and implementing plans to repatriate more than half a million people despite continued instability in Somalia.[131] In particular those who return from the region without citizenship rights in other countries are vulnerable within the fragile situation Somalia finds itself in. Furthermore, concerns are raised about the impact of the influx of large groups of returnees into a country that lacks functioning basic institutions, such as legal courts that could for example mediate in land- or property conflicts.

1.6 Pakistan
A country of emigration, immigration and return

Pakistan is among the countries in the world with the highest absolute numbers of emigrants, although this constitutes only 4% or so of Pakistan's population. Meanwhile, remittances comprise 7% of annual GDP (2015)[132], making migration an important economic and governance matter. This is reflected in the interest taken by Pakistani authorities, through various interventions, not least the State Bank of Pakistan led 'Pakistani Remittance Initiative'[133], as well as several institutions specifically tasked with efforts towards the population of Overseas Pakistanis[134], under the auspices of the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development.

Considering sustainable migration as migration that ensures a well-balanced distribution of costs and benefits for the individuals, societies and states, now and in the future, Pakistan is a country of both emigration and of immigration. Pakistan is affected by immigration, not least with the several million-strong Afghan population, residing in the country for the past three decades. Whilst the remainder of this discussion will focus on emigration, and especially on migration to high-income countries in Europe, it should be noted that immigration—as migration-related diversity—is an issue which raises public concern, also in Pakistan. When Afghan refugees are being coerced into returning to Afghanistan, political rhetoric and public opinion is concerned with perceived future implications, for service provision, as well as for social cohesion, echoing similar concerns in European immigration contexts. Returns from Pakistan to Afghanistan, amidst increasing violence and Afghanistan being reinstated as a country in conflict, rather than post-conflict, reached nearly 100,000 in 2017. Whether return to Afghanistan constitutes sustainable migration appears a relevant question.[135]

In the Pakistani context, societally, for individuals and their families, and at the state level, sustainable migration also intersects with questions of return. Increasing numbers of Pakistani citizens have been deported from countries in Europe based on lacking regularized status (denied asylum claims or over-

stayed visas), as well as from the Gulf (lacking working permits or contracts).[136] In relation to return, 'sustainability' is often assumed to entail permanent return, rather than remigration[137], although for individual migrants and their families, re-migration often remains part of future strategies, underscoring that different perspectives on what is or is not 'sustainable migration' are found among different actors.[138]

Emigration and demographic considerations

From the Pakistani state's perspective, emigration is one of several means to manage the youth bulge the country is experiencing.[139] The risk of losing young talent to international migration, however, is also a concern. The Pakistani state's approach to migration is nevertheless self-described as a 'pro-emigration' one, signalling the importance not only of remittances, but also of employment opportunities abroad, for sections – especially young and male – of the Pakistani society.

Some 60% of Pakistani emigration in recent decades has been to the Middle East and the Gulf.[140] This migration has relatively distinct characteristics, compared to migration towards OECD countries, among other, in terms of origin areas. Sustainable migration in the Pakistani context is very much connected with migration as safe and legal, for migrants.[141] This includes a focus on recruitment, the migration journey, and the conditions for migrants in countries of destination. Sustainable migration as a well-balanced distribution of costs and benefits for individuals, families and communities of origin, depend on the migration journey (and/or recruitment process) being successful in helping the migrant reach his (or her) destination.

A multiplicity of migration trajectories

Migration from Pakistan to high-income countries either happens in regular forms, as family reunification, student migration, or on various forms of expert visas, or as irregular migration. The Pakistani communities in countries like Greece, Italy and Spain are predominantly comprised of migrants who have arrived without a regularized status, though some e.g. in Spain and Italy over time gain legal status.[142] The sustainability of migration for individuals whose migration trajectories are often under construction over time is hard to assess in terms of whether or not there is a well-balanced distribution of costs and benefits for themselves, for their family members who they remit their earnings to, for local communities 'here' and 'there', or for societies and states.

Meanwhile, these migrants fill gaps in the labour markets in destination economies. While many have no regular status, and are neither contributing taxes, nor costing the public purse anything, they are nevertheless participating in the economy. Simultaneously, their contributions economically to families and communities of origin are often of critical importance for housing conditions, health and education, and investment in human resources, casting a different light on the sustainability of migration[143].

Migration and livelihoods in a developing economy

Considering the perspective of families and local communities on sustainable migration as wellbalanced distribution of costs and benefits, remittances—and emigration—can contribute to increase existing inequalities or produce new ones[144]. As such, especially the question of well-balanced distribution of costs and benefits of migration becomes central in many Pakistani local contexts.[145] Meanwhile, migration clearly over time provides much needed livelihood opportunities for individuals outside of local communities and contributes to increased living standards and investments in human resources at the micro-level.

Sustainable migration, as much else in the context of a country ranked 147 on the Human Development Index, with an adult literacy rate of 58% and a primary-school drop-out rate of 20%[146], becomes an issue of livelihoods, of economic considerations, at all levels. Meanwhile, socio-cultural and political aspects also play a role in considering what might or might not be a well-balanced distribution of costs and

benefits of migration. For instance, migration is associated in different ways with changing gender roles in local communities.[147]

Migration and long-term development perspectives?

Whether or not the impact of migration on local communities constitutes contributions to making migration sustainable, is variable. For instance, in a study of the impacts of migration on social change in Sindh, Pakistan, it was found that investments in education and human resources were hampered by lacking school infrastructure. Meanwhile, migration and money earned abroad contributed to males changing marriage patterns, with likely negative implications for women and gender relations.[148]

In this particular context, how can a well-balanced distribution of costs and benefits of migration be assessed, in the present and for the future? Everyone would not have been better off without migration, including migrants, their families, the local economy in areas of origin, actors within the migration industry (travel agents, recruiters, fixers), the Pakistani state whose foreign exchange reserves are helped by remittances, and employers in e.g. the Gulf states. Yet, there are some paradoxes, which point to the fact, first, that win-win-win scenarios of migration are perhaps too simplistic, and second, that the roles of governments in facilitating sustainable migration are critical, both in relation to migration-specific issues (e.g. managing channels for legal recruitment for labour migration), and in relation to investing in solid institutions which remittances and other gains from migration can help strengthen.

If widening the perspective, temporally and spatially, questions of sustainable migration might include the perspectives of individuals and families across transnational social fields, whose parents migrated, or whose parents remained. With particular reference to economic dimensions, but also socio-cultural and political dimensions, the time-frame within which sustainable migration is assessed appears critical and is something which there is insufficient systematic and longitudinal data on, e.g. in the Pakistani context, in order to meaningfully assess. The existence of transnational social fields—and diaspora populations—has bearing on evolving migration trajectories, and the prospects for fostering more—or less—sustainable migration in the future, and therefore is a dimension in need of systematic inclusion in governments' policy interventions to manage migration. Such interventions in origin contexts, like Pakistan, purposefully focus on the reduction of transaction costs on remittance transfers[149], yet, there is arguably a need for further policy development, including the socio-cultural and political implications of international migration in origin as well as destination contexts. Based on the case of Pakistan, there appears to be scope for much more focus on facilitating 'sustainable migration', and it is evident that whilst one set of challenges pertains to national issues of socio-economic inequalities and of continued need for improved governance, another set of challenges is related to the fragmented picture of interstate collaboration on international migration, and especially providing routes for safe and legal migration.

1.7 Tunisia
A country of origin, transit and destination

Tunisia is known as one of the major transit countries for Maghreb and sub-Saharan migrants aiming to enter Europe. Historically, however, Tunisia used to be a country of immigration, and it has recently re-emerged as a country of final destination. In the decades following independence from France in 1956, immigration was restricted and emigration was encouraged. Tunisians migrated to Western Europe until immigration bans were introduced in the 1970s, and the bulk of economic migrants then turned to Italy, Libya and the Gulf states. In the 1980s, many Tunisians sought family reunification in Europe, particularly in France. Following in the introduction of visa restrictions across Europe in the early 1990s, an increasing number of people turned to irregular channels and permanent settlement in Europe.[150]

Due to the structural constraints restricting onwards migration to Europe, Tunisia has re-emerged as a country of destination. It has an open-door policy to people fleeing conflict or persecution, and accommodated a large number of refugees following the Libyan crisis in 2011. Currently, it has a

relatively small refugee population, but as other countries in the region it is characterized by varied movements and hosts a mixed population of migrants.[151]

Migration pressure and socioeconomic distress

Since the revolution in 2011, which sparked the Arab Spring, the socioeconomic situation in Tunisia has been fragile. While the country's transition to democracy is in progress, political tensions remain and the country's economic growth is slow.[152] The unemployment rate has increased in recent years, affecting young people and university graduates in particular. Alongside with internal migration flows, more immigration and enduring emigration pressure, this has contributed to increased social tensions among the population.[153]

Reduced job prospects and changes in the population composition have also had socio-cultural implications. And while officials have 'demonized' sub-Saharan immigrants en route to Europe, there has been a surge in racial tensions[154]. While economic and social tensions have triggered some flows of student and high-skilled migration, e.g. to Germany and North America, there are few regular emigration options for the bulk of aspiring migrants.[155]

Fragile but increased human development

While Tunisian society currently is characterized by economic and political discontent, it has experienced a significant increase in human development since 1990. Life expectancy at birth, mean years of schooling and expected years of schooling have all increased by 3–6%. Tunisia's GNI per capita has risen by more than 80%, and it was ranked in the 'high human development' category on the Human Development Index (HDI) in 2015. Despite high levels of national development, both monetary and non-monetary development remain unequally distributed among the Tunisian territory and population[156].

The diaspora: an important driver of development

While Tunisia is a country of transit and destination, statistics reveal that it by and large is a country of origin. In 2017, there were almost 1.3 million Tunisians residing abroad, a number which constitutes 12% of the Tunisian population.[157] Remittances sent from Tunisians living abroad is an important contribution to Tunisia's economy. While remittances made up 5% of the GDP in 2012 this proportion has constantly risen since the revolution and made up around 10% in 2016.[158] Remittances are five times the amount of international development aid and three times larger than annual revenues from the Tunisian tourism industry. The diaspora also invests across the industry, services and agriculture sectors, but appears as more reluctant to invest in Tunisia than in their countries of residency.[159]

The rise in remittances illustrates the close linkage between Tunisia and Tunisian emigrants. The diaspora has also surfaced as an important contributor to Tunisia development beyond the financial aspects. The process of democratization and increase in civil liberties post 2011 has triggered civilsociety activism among Tunisians in Tunisia and abroad. The diaspora is involved in domestic politics and plays an active role in the civil society's engagements in policymaking processes.[160]

Migration management in progress

From 1956 to 2011, Tunisia's migration policy centred on encouraging labour emigration and monitoring Tunisians residing abroad. It is only in recent years that Tunisian policymakers have addressed other issues of migration management, such as immigration from sub-Saharan Africa, asylum flows from Libya and irregular emigration to Europe[161]. Due to its geographical location and relative political stability, Tunisia appears as an ideal partner for EU actors seeking policy cooperation on immigration and transit management.[162] The Tunisian government has however been less willing to cooperate on such issues than its neighbouring countries. This is likely linked to the possibility that

policies aimed at restricting emigration, or hosting immigrants, could exacerbate socio-political tensions.[163]

The development of a national system of migration is progressing, but work remains to be done in several important fields. There is, for instance, no national system for asylum and refugee management. While the UNHCR remains in charge of refugees and asylum seekers, IOM and other external partners work in close cooperation with national agencies to manage other immigration and emigration flows.[164]

Ways forward for sustainable migration in Tunisia?

Following this brief review of Tunisian migration and development, it is difficult to argue that current Tunisian migration ensures a well-balanced distribution of costs and benefits for the individuals, societies and states involved, now and in the future. Despite developmental and political progress, the current situation in Tunisia is marked by socio-political distress and economic instability. While there is an enduring emigration pressure and persisting immigration flows, there are few migration alternatives available to people aspiring to migrate from Tunisia. It is clear that the effects of migration are dispersed, and perspectives on the sustainability of current migration differ between the diverse stakeholders involved. While emigration has positive effects on political and economic development in Tunisia, the inability to migrate feeds into socio-political tensions.

Current characteristics and outcomes of migration in Tunisia are clearly not sustainable from the perspectives of the Tunisian state, society and individuals. There are, however, potential avenues for future sustainable migration in Tunisia. An apparent leeway is proliferation of emigration through regular channels. For Tunisia, this could improve the economic situation, support the continued transition to democracy and decrease societal distress. For other actors involved, such as EU institutions and European societies, this is unlikely to be an appealing sustainable solution. The opening of regular immigration from Tunisia might stir socio-political unrest. The economic aspects of this will depend on, among other factors, the characteristics of the migrants, and labour market needs in European countries.

Another alternative, and nevertheless needed, avenue to ensure sustainable migration in Tunisia is the creation of a well-functioning national migration management. This goes hand in hand with the general development processes in Tunisia, where improved life conditions for the population may enable a political climate giving room for democratic and effective governance of migration. Better bodied structures managing migration would provide Tunisian policymakers with better tools to control both undesired and desired immigration and emigration.

1.8 Norway

Taking as a point of departure a definition of sustainable migration that ensures a well-balanced distribution of costs and benefits for the individuals and societies, now and in the future, this section discusses sustainable migration in the context of present-day Norway. It starts out by setting out basic demographic patterns, including emigration and immigration, and sets this within a historical context. On this backdrop, questions of how sustainable migration is, in economic, sociocultural and political terms, are discussed.

Demography, immigration and emigration

The population of Norway as of 2018 counts nearly 5,300,000 inhabitants, with 747,000 immigrants (14.1% of the population), 170,000 persons born in Norway to two immigrant parents (3.2% of the population)[165]. Population growth in Norway has been driven primarily by net immigration since the 1990s, though stable fertility levels and increasing life expectancy also contribute. Population statistics and demographic concerns figure centrally in public debates over migration and the sustainability of the welfare state, as we return to.

Norwegian migration history includes the emigration of about 800,000 Norwegians to the USA between 1825 and 1925, motivated by, among other things, poverty, scarce livelihood opportunities, and to a more limited extent also religio-political reasons, but also the idea of pursuing opportunities in America played a role. Norway today has five officially recognized national minorities, including the Sami indigenous peoples. This forms an important historical backdrop to considerations of the sustainable migration in the present and for the future, from societal, nationstate, and individual perspectives, as it speaks to the central challenge of how societal diversity is approached and sought to be managed.

Clearly, the experience of the large-scale emigration to America from Norway had both costs and benefits, in the Norwegian emigration context. It was more or less sustainable, depending on the perspective taken: for the families who migrated, for their local communities, for the state and society at large, and for the context of immigration in the US too. Even if a historical parallel after such a long time, and under completely altered economic conditions, may not yield many insights, it is an important reminder of the time-frames within which questions of sustainable migration are often considered. Neither the benefits nor the costs of the substantial emigration from Norway a century ago gain much traction.

Debates on the sustainability of migration in Norway

In present-day Norway, migration and sustainability are first and foremost debated in conjunction with the future of the welfare state, dependent as it is on tax-payer contributions. These debates have been underpinned by two Government commissioned reports on the sustainability of the welfare state in specific connection to immigration.[166] Whilst the Norwegian welfare state model overall is challenged by an ageing population, echoing challenges across Europe, levels of employment and tax contributions are equally critical, especially among younger aged population groups, notably including immigrants.[167]

A key question emerging from various government reports relates to integration, especially in the labour market, of immigrants in Norway, to ensure the sustainability of the welfare state. This is a question of economic sustainability but is also closely intertwined with social cohesion and trust in political institutions.[168] In this context, the term 'absorption capacity' has re-appeared in Norway, a term used in migration studies in the US context, drawing ideas from economics about the absorption capacity of labour markets. Meanwhile, future scenarios and population forecast are only as robust as the foundations models build on, and always prone to increasing risk of error the further into the future they project.

Contrasting perspectives on migration as well-balanced

As regards the costs and benefits of migration being well-balanced, in economic terms, the answer lies very much in the eyes of the beholder. For most migrants arriving in Norway, its universal welfare state system is a more robust mode of social protection, as a public good, than what can be found almost anywhere in the world. Meanwhile, without the large-scale immigration from within the EU (and EEA), Norway's economy would have suffered from a deficit of workers, especially in the construction sector, for substantial parts of the last decade. A well-balanced perspective on the costs and benefits of migration, in terms of its sustainability, often includes both societal, nationstate and individual perspectives.

Sustainable migration in the Norwegian case, is closely intertwined with the economic, but also socio-cultural and political involvement of half of all immigrants, who originate from Europe. However, the employment rates among immigrant groups originating from Africa and Asia are below the national average, causing concern about their future tax contributions. This is a concern which is often also transposed onto their children born in Norway, though the evidence as to how these children over time fare in the Norwegian labour market is still rather scant. The Norwegian concern over the sustainability of the welfare state translates into concerns about the sustainability of immigration, in terms of economic

costs and benefits, not least because of its universal and egalitarian mode, where newcomers are included within it, and levels of inequality are sought to be held at bay.

Migration-related diversity and social cohesion

The notion of well-balanced costs and benefits of migration, for society, in relation to cultural change, has been the subject of heated debate in Norway, much as elsewhere, especially in Europe. Meanwhile, rather than being questions of good or bad, threatening or not, questions of sustainable migration, in terms of present and future well-balanced costs and benefits at a societal as well as individual level, are dependent on p*olicies which seek to manage diversity in constructive ways*. Such *immigration and diversity management* policies are necessary in order to foster social cohesion and address socio-economic inequalities.

At the societal level, socio-cultural and political dimensions matter, together with economics. In the Norwegian context, surveys suggest that the population at large is moving towards increased acceptance of immigrants and immigration, in most spheres. Nevertheless, there is scepticism, though this decreases with, among other factors, levels of education, contact with immigrants, and with age. Thus, in terms of what is publicly seen as a well-balanced distribution of costs and benefits of migration, what is sustainable, first of all, this will vary, and second, it is also reasonable to assume that it will involve acceptance of increased diversity as *normal* among tomorrow's adults.[169][170]

Towards a 'sustainable migration' approach in Norway?

Whereas economic dimensions are clearly and objectively more profound to questions of sustainable migration, whether for states, societies or individuals, in Norway, as elsewhere, increasingly perceptions are driving public opinion, as much, or more than realities. These perceptions drive public opinion in ways which are revealing of gaps between perceptions and realities of numbers and characteristics of migrants. Furthermore, they reveal how perceptions differ across and can be shaped by class, generational, and regional divides. Putting sustainable migration into context, the Norwegian case foregrounds tensions between concerns over economic, social or cultural sustainability of migration, on the one hand, and the potential which individuals see for policies to *manage diversity* in ways which foster social cohesion and need not exacerbate socio-economic inequalities*,* on the other hand.

Conclusion

1.9 The promises and pitfalls of 'sustainable migration' as an analytical term

Building on insights from the four contexts to which the term 'sustainable migration' has been applied in this report, Somalia, Pakistan, Tunisia, and Norway, it is possible to argue for both its analytical and policy relevance. Its promise lies in careful application that is mindful of the multiple actors and perspectives involved. Sustainable migration as a term can facilitate and contribute to holistic analyses of international migration and its effects, for individuals, societies and states.

Yet, a main pitfall lies in applications of the term which prioritize certain perspectives as *more legitimate* than others. Notably, 'sustainable migration' can serve a narrowly restrictionist function and carries the potential for dog-whistle politics: it might seem harmless to the public at large but can be taken as an expression of support by those who feel that current levels of immigration are intolerable and endanger 'our' way of life. To realize the potential which lies in the term 'sustainable migration', its use ought to be anchored in a definition that emphasizes a holistic perspective on costs and benefits to different stakeholders, not just in the short-term but also from a more longterm perspective.

Across the four country-cases discussed, it is evident that there are contradictory perspectives on the costs and benefits of international migration—in the present—and over time. Most significantly, individual and family concerns may be at odds with societal or state perspectives, e.g. as regards short-term gains from emigration in the form of increased income and better living standards vs. long-term effects of a society losing human capital which is necessary for the future, yet where few jobs are available in the present. Such contradictory perspectives—whether of actors, or with regards to the temporal frames applied—become even more complex when multiple geographic contexts, and both origin and destination states, are included.

Bringing the review of existing literature and case-studies presented into dialogue with the four key concepts, and the five underlying assumptions, which dominate current debates on approaches to international migration (see section 2), sustainable migration as a term appears to align in crucial ways. First, a *diversity of stakeholders* is acknowledged, secondly, both *positive and negative aspects* are accounted for, third, the fact that *impacts of migration are dispersed* is recognized, and fourth there is a basic positive attitude to migration, as an empirical phenomenon with both costs and benefits, described in terms of *conditional endorsement*. Where sustainable migration potentially differs, is in relation to a clear programmatic stance on the potential for *sound migration management*, which is less clearly articulated.

Box 5: On uses of research in policy development

According to political scientist Christina Boswell, the increasing turn towards 'evidenced-based policy' is driven by a problem-solving approach. 'According to this account, governments and civil servants recognize that expert knowledge is crucial for improving the quality of their output. They are keen to draw on research to fill gaps in their knowledge, in order to adjust policy in a way that will achieve the desired societal impacts. […] The problem-solving account of the role of knowledge in policymaking appears to be prima facie plausible, and may well characterize some cases in which policymakers solicit research to guide policy'.[112] Meanwhile, in her book 'The Political Uses of Expert Knowledge: Immigration Policy and Social Research' Boswell argues that in addition, there are two alternative reasons why policy-makers look to research; 1) as a way of lending authority to their preferences; or 2) to signal their capacity to make sound decisions. Applying her framework for researchpolicy interaction to the focus on 'impact', Boswell and Smith argue that there are four modes of interaction: (1) knowledge shapes policy; (2) politics shapes knowledge; (3) co-production; and (4) autonomous spheres.[113] These are, arguably, also applicable in the context of migration research and policy.

Whether sustainable migration as a concept is applied from the perspective that there are certain given preconditions for it—and other preconditions, which run counter to it—or from a perspective where any set of preconditions is amenable to shaping, and thus interacting dynamically with migration, clearly matters. If sustainable migration is a test put to migration—given static preconditions, rather than dynamic ones—this limits the (potential) roles for policy. Arguably, this is true for preconditions of an economic nature, as well as those related to the political, social, but also cultural spheres—reflective of how societies change over time. Given the inherent intertwinement of social change, with processes associated with international migration (much as with globalization), the roles of policies— at global, international, national and local levels, which deal with migration as part of ongoing societal development—remain crucially important.

A key question, as regards the promises and pitfalls of sustainable migration as a useful term for analysis and policy, is thus related to whether or not (or to what extent) there is faith in policy, as a means to control or shape international migration. Adding to this, it is widely acknowledged that migration policy—as other policy—is prone to have unintended consequences, alongside intended ones. Sometimes unintended consequences may be desirable from the policy makers' perspective, other times, not. Whatever the case, the role for policy in fostering migration which is sustainable— in line with the definition proposed in this report, for a diverse array of actors, in the present and for the future—is crucial. Yet, it remains less clear, how and to what extent, national as well as international policies—on migration, and beyond—are able to gain sufficient support, in order to enable such sustainable migration.

Three cross-cutting conclusions emerge from this study. First, migration from poorer to richer countries—and the sustainability thereof—cannot be understood in isolation from other mobilities, whether internal or to other international destinations. Second, the temporal perspective applied, having an eye to the future, but also historical perspective, makes a difference both to what is considered, and to how the costs and benefits of migration are understood. Third, there are inherent dilemmas and conflicts of interest, where the answer to what 'well-balanced distribution of costs and benefits' migration means, is always going to be a political question. As such, the term 'sustainable migration' is also inherently vulnerable to politicization.

1.10 Approaches and themes for future research

Drawing on the review of existing literature and case-studies presented in this report, four key areas for future research that might shed light on 'sustainable migration' have crystallized. These reflect a perspective on 'sustainable migration' as a multi-stakeholder, multi-level phenomenon. Different research themes foreground contrasting combinations of stakeholder perspectives, which jointly would enable bringing academic and policy conversations on 'sustainable migration' forward.

We propose the following cross-cutting approaches as guidelines for policy-relevant research on sustainable migration.

- *Sensitivity to diverse stakeholders, levels, and time scales.* The definition of sustainable migration recognizes that migration affects diverse individuals, societies and states, today and in the future. Research policy and funding should allow for migration research with a broad scope, so that the migration research portfolio increasingly reflects the diversity of effects.

- *Attention to dilemmas, trade-offs, and conflicts of interest.* The idea that migration affects different stakeholders in different ways is central to the notion of sustainable migration. Consequently, it is a field where policy must navigate conflicting interests and difficult dilemmas. Research can play an important role not only in prescribing specific interventions, but also in bringing out the precise nature of dilemmas and trade-offs in policy-making.

- *Scepticism to claims about the consequences of migration.* There are large methodological challenges in assessing the consequences of migration because it is not obvious what the alternative would have been. An imagined situation without migration would have been

  different in many (unknown) ways, for instance as a consequence of labour shortages.[171] Appropriate ways of addressing such challenges depend on the methodology and topic. Respect for the difficulty of assessing consequences should inform all research on migration, as well as the communication of findings to broader audiences.

- *Consideration of migration beyond 'migration research'.* Research-based knowledge on migration must be built in two ways: (1) through focused research on migration dynamics and their consequences and (2) through incorporation of migration concerns in other research fields. The second point will often require collaboration across institutions and specializations. Research policy and funding can stimulate such collaboration.

We propose the below four themes for future research on 'sustainable migration' as particularly promising to pursue:

- *Pathways to legal migration.* Most international migration globally takes place in legal and orderly ways, yet, the knowledge about the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches and programmes remains fragmented. Applying sustainable migration to analyses of the wide range of legal migration routes and programmes available might yield valuable and transferrable insights.

- *Social change and migration.* Whereas migration research is a burgeoning research field, knowledge about the medium-to-long term effects of migration on societies, and the connections between migration and social change, is still a field with need of more basic, empirical research, over time. This is true in contexts of origin, transit and of destination, with different actors' perspectives in mind, and with a focus on economic, political, social or cultural spheres.

- *Transnational dimensions.* The dynamic transnational connections that result from migration play a key role in the distribution of costs and benefits. Examining whether this distribution is 'well-balanced' (as indicated in the definition of sustainable migration), requires analyses that take a transnational approach and are attentive to the consequences that transcend national borders.

- *Perceptions and realities of sustainable migration.* Sustainable migration is a concept that rests on both facts and normative assumptions. Both how the dynamics of migration affect individuals, societies and states, as well as how those effects are assessed, politically and ethically, are relevant. Policy development and public debate will benefit from new analyses of how data, norms, and rhetoric are used and interact in the contentious field of international migration.

Mobilizing the term 'sustainable migration' can shed light on critical interconnections between international migration and social change. These involve different stakeholders and places over time and across economic, political, social and cultural spheres. Several steps are required to make 'sustainable migration' useful in this way. First, a clear-cut definition of sustainable migration must be applied; second, insights from existing research must be activated to avoid fragmented and piecemeal contributions; and third, care must be taken so that the question: 'sustainable for whom?' is not left implicit.

The question of sustainable migration is inevitably political. Choices have to be made about which stakeholders' perspectives are the point of departure, which perspectives are potentially excluded, and how the costs and benefits of migration are gauged, in order to achieve well-balanced outcomes. But if a rigorous and transparent approach is adopted, in which normative dimensions are acknowledged and scrutinized, the concept of *sustainable migration* may offer opportunities for genuinely holistic analyses of international migration and its short-term and long-term effects. Such analyses can provide foundations for future policy making.

Notes

1. Recognizing that distinctions between 'developing' and 'developed' countries are increasingly complex, due to substantial progress in human development globally in recent decades, which challenges previous assumptions about large proportions of the Global South as 'developing' Fernholz 2016
2. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2015
3. Khokhar and Serajuddin 2015
4. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 1998
5. See also www.meaningofmigrants.org for additional information about different definitions of 'migrants' and their relationship with 'refugees'.
6. Boswell 2005, Boswell and Hampshire 2016
7. Erdal and Oeppen 2018
8. Ginnetti 2017
9. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 2017
10. Ferris 2017
11. Edmond 2017
12. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017
13. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017
14. ODI 2017
15. Bakewell 2008, de Haas 2010a, Raghuram 2009
16. Target 10.7 contains the SDG's most explicit reference to migration management, but many other goals and targets are also relevant to migration. See section 0.
17. Commission of the European Communities 2008
18. Wickramasekara 2011
19. Bakewell 2008, 1355
20. Informal memo, Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security.
21. Paraphrased from several similar dictionary definitions.
22. United Nations General Assembly 2015, 2016
23. Targets 5.2, 8.7, 8.8, 10c, 16.2, and 12.18.
24. ODI 2017
25. Quotation from Marta Foresti in Alfred 2018
26. Clemens 2018
27. Carling 1996
28. Carling and Talleraas 2016, Gammeltoft 2002
29. Sharma 2009
30. Kinfu 2009
31. Collier 2013
32. Carling 1996, Castles 2009
33. Gamlen 2014
34. Carling and Talleraas 2016, Sørensen 2002
35. Carling 2004
36. Gamlen 2014
37. see e.g. Bauböck 2009, Collyer 2013, Erdal 2016
38. Gamlen, Cummings, and Vaaler 2017
39. Brubaker 2005, Gamlen 2008, Mahieu 2017
40. ILO 2018
41. Tsourapas 2015
42. Tsourapas 2015
43. Delano 2011
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88. Dinesen and Sønderskov 2012
89. Ziller 2015
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94. Van der Meer 2014, Stichnoth and Van der Straeten 2011, Stolle and Harell 2013
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101. Brochmann and Hagelund 2011
102. Ipsos 2014
103. Semyonov and Gorodzeisky 2008
104. Brochmann and Grødem 2017
105. de Haas 2010b
106. Bakewell 2008
107. Carling and Pettersen 2014, Erdal and Oeppen 2013, Waldinger 2017
108. Papademetriou, Somerville, and Sumption 2009, Borjas 2006, Crul et al. 2017
109. Goldin, Cameron, and Balarajan 2011
110. Legraine 2014
111. Clemens 2011
112. Boswell 2009
113. Boswell and Smith 2017
114. Horst 2006b
115. UNDP 2009
116. Rousseau et al 1998
117. Menkhaus 2006, 2009, Lindley 2013
118. Lindley 2011
119. UNDP 2009
120. UNDP 2009 121. Abdi 2015
122. Horst 2008
123. The World Bank 2016
124. Ahmed 2000, Musa and Horst 2017
125. Horst 2017
126. Horst 2008, Liberatore 2017, Tellander and Horst 2017
127. Nimo-Ilhan 2016, Simonsen 2017
128. Open Society Foundations 2015
129. Return to Somaliland has a longer history, and has become more substantial especially since the introduction of the multi-party system in 2003 Bradbury, Yusuf, and Yusuf 2003.
130. Horst 2017
131. Horst and Nur Anab 2016
132. FRED 2015
133. Pakistan Remittance Initiative 2018
134. Overseas Pakistanis Foundation 2018
135. UNHCR 2017
136. Koser and Kuschminder 2015
137. Kuschminder 2017
172.

138. See also Harpviken 2014, and Iaria 2013 for discussions of post-return mobilities in the context of Afghan and Iraqi regional migration.

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141. ILO 2016
142. Abdin and Erdal 2016
143. Erdal 2014 144. Erdal 2012
145. Ahmed, Mughal, and Klasen 2016
146. UNDP 2018
147. Khalid 2011
148. Wassan et al. 2017
149. E.g. the Pakistani Remittance Initiative, co-ordinated by the State Bank of Pakistan: http://www.pri.gov.pk/
150. Bel-Air 2016, Lixi 2017, Natter 2015
151. UNHCR 2017
152. The World Bank 2017
153. Bel-Air 2016, Natter 2015
154. Corbin 2018
155. Bel-Air 2016, Natter 2015
156. UNDP 2016
157. Bel-Air 2016
158. Malouche 2014, ANIMA 2017
159. Malouche 2014
160. Natter 2015
161. Lixi 2017
162. Geddes and Hadj-Abdou 2018
163. Torelli 2017
164. UNHCR 2017, IOM 2016
165. SSB 2018
166. Brochmann et al. 2011, Brochmann et al. 2017
167. Dahl and Flatabø 2018
168. Kymlicka 2015
169. Erdal et al. 2017
170. Demiri 2015
171. The point can be illustrated by a parallel question: what has been the effect of oil and gas on the Norwegian economy? Simply subtracting the income, innovation and employment that this sector has generated does not provide a meaningful answer. For instance, it is possible that the absence of oil and gas would have spurred much greater innovation in other sectors, or that Norway would have taken the lead in developing alternative energy sources.

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Appendix 1: Literature review technical background

Searching for literature that contains the phrase 'sustainable migration' gives few results. Google Scholar, a search engine that search for scholarly literature across different disciplines and sources, find 416 mentions of the exact phrase in the literature. These sources are books, grey papers and some journal articles, where sustainable migration by and large is mentioned briefly as an 'empty' term without proper definitions. The Web of Science's Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) is a leading index of citations between publications in world leading academic journals in the social sciences. The citation index gives a good overview of academic trends and locates the literature with the greatest impact. When searching for 'sustainable migration' in the SSCI, there are only two hits in the list of results. Searching for 'sustainab*' AND 'migration', however, gives 2197 results in SSCI, and more than 2 000 000 results in Google Scholar. Clearly, there's a lot of literature dealing with sustainability in relation to migration, while the term 'sustainable migration' itself is much less used.

While the exact term 'sustainable migration' occurs in existing literature, it is clear that it does not have a concrete definition. It is largely used in policy papers, and it is largely applied to underscore sustainability for a variety of aspects or structures. A large part of the literature deals with the links between migration and development, where the 'sustainable' is linked to 'development'. The second thematic bulk in the literature that uses the term 'sustainable migration' is migration policies and management. Among the top 100 most relevant results on Google scholar, sustainable is used to underscore sustainability in a variety of dimensions, including: development, economies, economic growth, livelihoods, climate, ecosystems, management, fair-trade coffee, return, post-conflict return, nursing, land-use practice, agriculture, population growth, cities, refugees' long-run strategies, regional development, and global development.

The bulk of existing literature in the intersection between sustainability and migration clearly relates to two main areas of the literature, namely 'migration and development' and 'migration management'. While each of these bodies of literature includes discussions of sustainability, the consequences of more or less sustainable migration go beyond these two thematic clusters. The focus of attention also comprises the four established concepts describing 'migration with desirable characteristics', as described in section 2, and deals with notions of 'orderly', 'safe', 'responsible' 'regular' and 'humane' migration, including suggestions and critiques of 'win-win-win scenarios'.