

**"Can migration flows exploit the potential
for complementarity that exists between
radically different demographic and labour
force structures? The case of the
Mediterranean region"**

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The underlying idea

- A potential for mutual benefit is inherent in demographic and labour force complementarity, in this case between the two banks of the Mediterranean
- It would make migration more beneficial for both sides (a win-win scenario)
- This could improve the public evaluation of migration
- History provides good examples for it
- This idea is enjoying increasing consideration

Some reasons for scepticism

- **It does not seem to be happening**
- **Relationships between outmigration and development are far from clear**
- **Outmigration may entail losses of human capital (brain drain)**

Is there complementarity in the Mediterranean?

- EU economies face labor shortages and need immigrants
- The ratio between active persons and inactive ones is worsening
- In the southern and eastern bank, employment is the foremost problem
- They would benefit from a safety-valve

Is complementarity sufficient for migration to increase?

- **It is not (there is nothing automatic about it)**
- **Powerful obstacles militate against the increase of migration:**
 - **a) the globalization of migration flows**
 - **b) the existence of alternatives to migration**
 - **c) skill mismatches**
 - **d) the political environment**
 - **e) restrictive, inadequate admission policies**

A complex, changing migration landscape

- **South-North flows in the basin are losing relative weight (the relevance of visa policies)**
- **Much outmigration goes elsewhere**
- **Increasing flows from neighboring countries**
- **Some traditional source countries are being increasingly seen as transit countries**
- **Neither side is homogeneous in migration terms**

Is there anything that can be done?

- **Enhance complementarity through skill formation...**
- **... through international cooperation**
- **Educational improvements**
- **Cooperation in education can compensate for losses of human capital**
- **EU Plans of Action can be instrumental**
- **EU immigration policies need to be reformed**
- **Economic growth needs to be fostered**