



EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

Migration is a multi-faceted term, which initially simply refers to a “migratory movement”, usually interpreted as emigration. In a globalised world such as ours, migration is a ubiquitous process, which takes place on a small and on a large scale, regionally as well as across borders and between continents. What has changed, however, is the numbers involved. For some years now, the number of people who migrate and leave their home countries voluntarily or to escape hardship has been on the rise. According to the United Nations, this group, including refugees, comprised 232 million individuals worldwide in 2013. By comparison: the figure was 154 million in 1990.

This trend is due to a variety of reasons. Besides economic motivation and hope for a better life, significant factors include political persecution, conflicts and regional crises as well as increasingly effects of environmental and climate change. Added to this are family reunification and the classic, often temporary, labour migration. While the last two categories usually involve regulated routes, which can be controlled through the relevant legislation, irregular migration generates particular challenges for the countries of origin and destination as well as the transit countries. We would like to take a closer look at these different facets in this issue of the *KAS International Reports*.

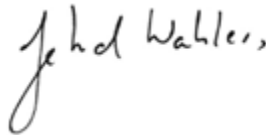
Europe (as a continent) ranks as one of the main regions of destination for migrants even ahead of North America. The countries most affected within the European Union are Germany, the UK, France, Spain and Italy. What is more, the countries bordering the Mediterranean are particularly affected by the persistent flows of refugees from Northern Africa and the Middle East. A cursory glance may give the impression that the burden is distributed unequally. However, there are deficiencies in the registration practices in Italy and Greece, for instance, where the authorities

even encourage migrants and asylum seekers to move on to other EU countries without registering them locally first. This reveals the weaknesses of the Dublin System, whose task it is to regulate the asylum process within the EU. There is a need for action in this area, which Katharina Senge confirms in her article on the migration and asylum policy in the EU. She explains that this policy area is fraught by mistaken assumptions and describes various options of how solidarity among the EU Member States could be enhanced in dealing with the reception of migrants and those seeking protection.

Helmut Reifeld examines the burdens migration imposes on transit countries by the example of Morocco. Because of the existence of the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, the country has direct external borders with the EU. While the two territories are closed off by elaborate fence systems, this does not stop thousands of migrants, mainly from Sub-Saharan Africa, from taking risks to overcome this obstacle. Leaving behind poverty and hardship is more significant than the dangers their escape attempts entail. Consequently, it might be wise to heed the author's conclusion and make greater efforts to coordinate migration policy and development cooperation. After all, as Reifeld writes, "convincing the migrants that it may be better for them to return to their place of origin is as surreal as the ever-expanding border fence system".

Migration and refugee movements are as prevalent in Asia and in the Americas as they are in Europe, as discussed in the articles contributed by Benedikt Seemann and Miriam Fischer as well as Dinorah Azpuru and Violeta Hernández. The former focus on the Filipino diaspora, which is one of the largest worldwide, numbering ten million. The Filipinos living abroad support the economy in the Philippines with money transfers back home. However, the emigration, which the government in Manila encourages, has its downsides, as Seemann and Fischer highlight. Azpuru and Hernández concentrate on Central America in their analysis of the causes and consequences of migrants heading for the U.S. In that context, they also examine the ongoing debates on U.S. immigration policy, which are likely to gain in relevance particularly in the course of the 2016 presidential elections.

We see the images every day in the media: people fleeing from Syria, from Iraq, from South Sudan or from Ukraine, overcrowded boats, washed ashore on Lampedusa or on Malta. We must not close our eyes when people seeking protection require our help. This is both a humanitarian imperative and a Christian duty. Even greater efforts must be made to appeal to the sense of responsibility of the governments in the countries of origin. After all, poverty, bad governance and conflicts rob people of their prospects of a secure future. They are pushed often enough to leave their home countries. Migration poses challenges and opportunities at the same time. It is essential for us to devise a forward-looking migration policy for Europe which involves actors from the fields of both foreign affairs and development cooperation and which is, as far as possible, based on a constructive dialogue with the countries of origin.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Gerhard Wahlers". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "Gerhard" and the last name "Wahlers" clearly legible.

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