European Council (EC)

Setting up legal routes for labour migration

Research Report

Leiden Model United Nations 2024

"Out of this World"

Forum: European Council (EC)

Issue: Setting up legal routes for labour migration

Position: President

Introduction

Legal routes for labour migration refers to the structured pathways established by governments to allow foreign workers to enter and work in a country legally. This topic is crucial as it addresses labour shortages, supports economic growth, and ensures the protection of migrant workers' rights.

In the European Council, discussing legal routes for labour migration is essential due to the diverse economic needs of member states and the demographic challenges they face. Establishing clear and fair migration policies can help balance labour markets, promote social cohesion, and enhance the EU's global competitiveness.

The topic involves creating transparent regulations, ensuring fair treatment of migrants, and fostering cooperation among member states. By setting up legal routes, the European Council can address both the economic demands and humanitarian aspects of labour migration, contributing to a more inclusive and prosperous Europe.

During LEMUN, you will engage in discussion about this topic. You will represent different positions and create new ideas. To help you prepare, I prepared an overview with the most important information as well as the major parties involved and possible solutions.

I wish you a great time for your research!

Cecile Clemens

Definition of Key Terms

Labour migration [1]

The movement of people from one country to another for the sole purpose of employment.

Push- factors [2]

This term describes the reason why people want to leave a place or escape from a particular situation. Possible factors include not enough job opportunities, famine, natural disasters, war or poverty.

[1] Labour migration, Website of the European Commission, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/european-migration-network-emn/emn-asylum-and-migration-glossary/glossary/labour-migration_en (22.10.2024)
[2] Push-pull factor, Website of the European Commission, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/european-migration-network-emn/emn-asylum-and-migration-glossary/glossary/push-pull-factor_en (22.10.2024)

Pull factors[3]

Pull factors are the reason why they move to this country. Possible factors include better living conditions, security, job opportunities or better medical care.

General Overview

As mentioned before, labour migration is a critical aspect of the global economy, allowing for the movement of people across borders to fill labour shortages and contribute to economic growth. Therefore, it is essential to set up legal routes for labour migration to ensure the migration is safe and beneficial for those countries, both sending and receiving.

Economic benefits

By setting up legal routes for labour migration, the labour shortages can be addressed in various sectors, such as agriculture, technology and healthcare. The European Commission highlights how non.EU citizens are increasingly filling important gaps in occupations persistently affected by a shortage of workers. This contributes to economic growth and productivity. Further, remittances sent by migrant workers to their home countries can support their local economies and reduce poverty. [4]

Social and Cultural Benefits

Labour migration can also lead to cultural exchange and diversity, enhancing the social fabric of receiving countries. Migrant workers bring different perspectives, experiences and skills, encouraging innovation and creativity. Legal migration routes can protect the rights and well-being of migrant workers, ensuring they are treated fairly and with dignity. The European Parliament emphasises the need for better legal labour migration channels to reduce irregular arrivals and meet the needs of the economy.[5]

Regulatory and Policy framework

Developing a comprehensive regulatory and policy framework is essential. This is one of the main challenges since these frameworks must include the needs of the labour markets while protecting the rights of migrant workers. Policymakers must consider various factors, such as labour market demands, immigration quotas, and the socio-economic impact of migration.[6]

Further Struggles and Challenges

One of the struggles about the topic is the issue behind integration. Labour migrants should be effectively integrated into the receiving countries' society, including housing, employment and if needed education, in order to learn the language or about their employment.

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[3] Push-pull factor, Website of the European Commission, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/european-migration-network-emn/emn-asylum-and-migration-glossary/glossary/push-pull-factor_en (22.10.2024)

[4] Legal migration and integration, 06.06.2024, Website of the European Union, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/legal-migration-and-integration_en (01.10.2024)

[5] 'Better legal migration to reduce illegal immigration', Website of the European Parliament, **https://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/en/article/20211111STO17183/better-legal-labour-migration-to-reduce-illegal-immigration** (20.09.2024)

[6] Chishti, M. and Gelatt, J. and Meissner, D., May 2021, Rethinking the U.S. Legal Immigration System, Website of the Migration Policy Institute, https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/Rethinking-LegalImmigration-Roadmap_FINAL.pdf , (14.09.2024)

The receiving countries' societies often see this process as critical. There can be resistance from the population due to job competition, cultural differences or the feeling of less security.[7]

One of the challenges for the local migration centres is ensuring compliance with legal migration routes for including monitoring and enforcing labour standards.

Major Parties Involved

Several countries play a vital role in setting up legal routes for labour migration. In this part, I will introduce some of those countries. If your country is mentioned, please be reminded that your country plays an extra important part during this debate. If your country was not mentioned, please also prepare accordingly.

Germany

Germany is one of the largest economies in Europe and a key destination for labour migrants. They are involved due to labour shortages in various sectors, including healthcare and IT, and actively seek skilled labour from non-EU countries.

Italy

Italy has a significant demand for labour in sectors such as agriculture, construction and domestic work. Their labour migration policies aim to address these shortages and integrate migrants into the workforce.

United Kingdom

The UK has a strong economy with a high demand for labour in healthcare, technology and agriculture. Following Brexit, The UK has developed new immigration policies to attract skilled workers from non-EU countries to fill labour market gaps.[8]

Poland

Poland has a growing economy with demand for labour in construction, manufacturing and agriculture. They have implemented policies to attract labour migrants from neighbouring countries to meet labour market needs and support economic development.[9]

European Commission

The European Commission is the executive branch of the EU, responsible for proposing legislation and implementing decisions. They play a crucial role in shaping labour migration policies, coordinating with member states and ensuring the implementation of EU-wide initiatives.

Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME)

DG HOME is responsible for EU policies on migration, asylum and security. It is one of their tasks to aid migrants and collaborate with governments to improve migration management.

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[7] Crisp, J., 06.12.2022, 'Unpicking the notion of 'safe and legal' routes', Website of the Mixed Migration Centre, https://mixedmigration.org/unpicking-the-notion-of-safe-and-legal-routes/, (20.09.2024)

[8] Labour Migration, 12.06.2024, Website of Migration Data portal, https://www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/labour-migration (02.10.2024)

[9] Kontos, M., 23.03.2011, Between Integration and Exclusion: Migrant Women in European Labor Markets, Website of the Migration Policy Institute, https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/between-integration-and-exclusion-migrant-women-european-labor-markets/ (10.10.2024)

Timeline of Events

2003 **Long-term Residents Directive (2003/109/EC)**
grants long term residents of third country nationals similar rights to those of EU citizens

2009 **EU Blue Card Directive (2009/50/EC)**[10]
It provides a fast-track procedure for issuing work permits and offers conditions for family reunification. This attracts highly skilled workers from non-EU countries.

2011 **Single Permit Directive (2011/98/EU)**[11]
simplifies the process for migrants and employers by establishing a single application procedure for a combined work and residence permit

2014 **Seasonal Workers Directive (2014/36/EU)**
This sets the conditions for entry and stay for a third-country national for the purpose of employment as seasonal workers, addressing the needs of sectors like agriculture and tourism

2015 **Migration Crisis**
This highlighted the need for a coordinated EU approach to migration.

2019 **Fitness Check on Legal Migration**
The European Commission completed an evaluation of the existing legal framework, identifying areas for improvement such as reducing administrative burdens and preventing labour exploitation.[12]

2021 **New Pact on Migration**
This should prevent irregular migration on dangerous routes and instead open more legal ways into the EU. This includes a Skills and Talent package. It also includes a review of the Single Permit Directive to simplify the admission and residence conditions for third country workers who do not fall under the "highly skilled" category. This means that workers with advanced skill levels will be granted access to an easier and quicker procedure to apply for the combined residence and work permit. It also improves the protection from the risk of labour exploitation.

2022 **EU Talent Pool** [13]
Proposed to establish the first EU-wide labour platform and matching tool to attract skills and talent, addressing labour shortages and demographic changes

2024 **EU's Pact on Migration and Asylum**
The Council of the EU adopted the pact, establishing a set of rules to manage arrivals and ensure fair burden sharing between Member States.

[10] EU Blue Card, Website of the European Union, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/legal-migration-and-integration/work/eu-blue-card_en (02.10.2024)
[11] A single permit for work, Website of the European Union, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/legal-migration-and-integration/work/single-permit-work_en (02.10.2024)
[12] Legal migration fitness check, Website of the European Union, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/legal-migration-and-integration/legal-migration-fitness-check_en (01.10.2024)
[13] Legal migration and integration, 06.06.2024, Website of the European Union https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/legal-migration-and-integration_en (01.10.2024)

2024 **Single Work and Stay Permit**[14]
The Council gave the green light to a single work and stay permit for non-EU nationals.

Possible Solutions

Visa and Work Permit Process

To solve the issue around the administrative burdens, you can think about simplifying and speeding up the visas and work permits process. This would make it easier for both countries as well as the labour migrants. For example, this could be achieved through digital platforms. A well organised process reduces the time and cost that belongs to this topic, making it more accessible for workers to migrate legally.

Support Services

You may also think about the labour migrants that could migrate into your country. Try asking yourself how your assigned country could ensure the well-being of those workers. Some countries would offer support services such as legal assistance or health care, while others would also include social integration programs or language classes. Those services can address the challenges a migrant may encounter while navigating living and working in a new country.

Labour Market Assessments

As a country you should think about conducting assessments about your labour market. This can help identify sectors with labour shortages and inform migration policy. Labour migrants can make informed decisions about where to seek employment based on that information about the assessments.

Bilateral and Multilateral Cooperation

Establishing bilateral and multilateral agreements can facilitate the movements of workers between countries. Such agreements provide legal pathways for migration, ensuring the protection of the people as well as their rights. Try to find possible agreements your country already has in place and what could be improved.

Conclusion

During the last couple of pages, we have talked about legal migration and why it is important for the economy of the European Union. At this point you should be able to explain what this topic is and what possible problems are. Before the conference finally starts, you should do some research about your assigned country.

During your research, you will not always find simple answers to your questions. In such situations, it becomes valuable to analyse the available facts and sources and to ask yourself what your country may do and what is in line with their position.

It is important to remind yourself that during LEMUN you are a delegate of your assigned delegation. You do not have to act completely within your country's position since it is sometimes possible to recognize that diplomatic compromises are possible with other countries. Be aware of the boundaries you can push and those that remain non-negotiable for

[14] Legal Migration: Council gives green light to single work and stay permit for non-EU nationals, Website of the European Union, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/04/12/legal-migration-council-gives-green-light-to-single-work-and-stay-permit-for-non-eu-nationals/ (01.10.2024)

you.

To help you with your research I wrote this research report to familiarise you with this topic. Please do not use this report as your only resource. Feel free to do your own research or use the links that you can find in this.

I am very excited for LEMUN and I hope this research report helps you with your research! If you have any questions, please feel free to try and contact me.

See you all in LEMUN,
Cecile Clemens

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