MIGNEX

Lisa Andersson
Maastricht University

MIGNEX Background Paper

Migration-relevant policies in Ethiopia

MIGNEX

MIGNEX (Aligning Migration Management and the Migration–Development Nexus) is a five-year research project (2018–2023) with the core ambition of creating new knowledge on migration, development and policy. It is carried out by a consortium of nine partners in Europe, Africa and Asia: the Peace Research Institute Oslo (coordinator), Danube University Krems, University of Ghana, Koç University, Lahore University of Management Sciences, Maastricht University, the Overseas Development Institute, the University of Oxford and Samuel Hall.

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MIGNEX Background Papers

MIGNEX Background Papers are scientific papers containing the documentation and analyses that underpin the project results. Selected insights from background papers are also presented in non-technical form in other formats, including MIGNEX Policy Briefs and MIGNEX Reports.

Publication information

History of changes

Version	Date	Changes
1	10 November 2022	Version uploaded to the MIGNEX website.
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Contents

List of acronyms

ARRA   Agency for Refugees and Returnees Affairs

CD4D   Connecting Diaspora for Development Programme

CRRF   Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework

DSI   Durable Solutions Initiative

EDA   Ethiopian Diaspora Association

EDTF   Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund

EU   European Union

EUTF   European Union Trust Fund for Africa

GTP   Growth and Transformation Plan

IDP   internally displaced people

ILO   International Labour Organization

IOM   International Organization for Migration

JCC   Job Creation Commission

MoFA   Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MoLSA   Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

NBE   National Bank of Ethiopia

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Migration-relevant policies in Ethiopia

This paper presents the results of a policy review of the MIGNEX project in Ethiopia. It provides an overview of the key migration policies in Ethiopia and their interaction with development and development policies.

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Migration management in Ethiopia is to date mainly characterised by declarations, proclamations and legal documents, but a national migration policy is currently being drafted.

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A return and reintegration policy has developed rapidly in recent years, to respond to a growing number of return migrants in need of economic and social assistance.

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There is a shift in how labour migration policy is viewed in Ethiopia, away from solely focusing on the protection of low-skilled workers in the Middle East to more active promotion of labour migration of middle-skilled and skilled workers to new destinations.

About the MIGNEX policy reviews

This is one of 10 MIGNEX Background Papers devoted to a review of policies in the 10 countries of origin and transit covered by the project. The term **policy** can refer to many different phenomena. MIGNEX adopts a broad perspective and regards policy to include the existence and effectiveness of particular laws, common practices, development initiatives, policy interventions and the broader policy environment or framework. This inclusive definition encompasses the needs of the project's overall research.

Much of the analysis in the review involves policies that relate directly to migration and its link to development. The concept of **migration-related policies** includes both the migration policy environment and interventions that seek to affect the development impacts of migration. It also includes policy and projects that might have large effects on migration dynamics, even if not presented under a migration heading.

Methodological note

The background work to this review was initiated in the summer and autumn of 2020 with a systematic desk review of secondary sources including academic studies, policy documents and reports from international organisations. A second step identified experts to be interviewed in the spring and summer of 2021. Overall, 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted between 3 May and 14 June 2021. All interviews were conducted virtually by Dr Lisa Andersson using Zoom and Skype and were conducted in English. The respondents were identified through the desk review, through the researcher's network and through snowballing. After the interviews were completed, a second literature review was conducted to address certain information gaps and to ensure that all relevant literature published in 2021 were included.

The time period of the analysis of the paper is 2011–2021, with some reference to older legislation and documents where relevant. This time period was chosen as most of the key migration policies and legislation in Ethiopia have developed in the past decade.

Summary of main results

Ethiopia is simultaneously a country of origin, destination and transit. Migration has to date been guided by a long list of proclamations, declarations and other legal and policy documents, but a national policy is soon to be launched. There is a hope that a national policy will bring more coherence and a clarified mandate to the migration management framework.

Emigration policy in Ethiopia has so far largely focused on the protection of migrants and the prevention of irregular migration. Reports of serious mistreatment and abuse of workers in the Middle East led to a temporary ban on low-skilled emigration to the region in 2013–2018, while new legislations to better protect migrants were put in place. In recent times, more focus has been placed on creating new opportunities for labour migration targeting mid-skilled workers to new migration destination countries. Pilot projects are currently being designed and tested, led by the newly established Job Creation Commission (JCC).

To harness the positive impacts of migration, Ethiopia has put efforts into creating favourable policies for diaspora investment and remittances. The Diaspora Policy was launched in 2013, and a new Ethiopian Diaspora Agency was created in 2019.

In the light of the large number of returning migrants from different destination regions, a policy framework around return and reintegration has rapidly developed in Ethiopia. This has involved multiple actors and initiatives to provide individual reintegration assistance and develop institutional capacity. The European Union (EU) has through the EU Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) supported return and reintegration of migrants returning from the Horn of Africa and from EU Member States. A reintegration directive was put in place in 2018 to provide more

coordination and structure to the increasing number of initiatives. However, resources are limited in relation to the number of returning migrants, and more work is needed to harmonise programmes and develop capacity at local and national level.

Forced migration has also constituted an important part of the migration landscape in Ethiopia. The country has faced growing numbers of both refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), and a concern has been how to create sustainable livelihood solutions for these groups. One model supported by the EUTF is employment creation for refugees and nationals through the establishment of industrial parks in certain zones of the country. The initiatives are relatively new and not yet fully operational, but they may have limited impact on job creation due to the low wages offered and some mismatch between the employment opportunities available and the skills of the refugees.

Emigration

Main policies

Ethiopia lacks a comprehensive national framework to govern migration. In the absence of a national migration policy, migration is managed through proclamations, declarations and other legal documents. However, at the time of drafting this review, the government, with the support of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), was working on a National Migration Policy that, according to experts interviewed for this research, was expected to be finalised in the second half of 2021.

There are currently three main proclamations related to emigration in Ethiopia. The first is the *Private Employment Agency Proclamation No. 104/1998*, which regulates the operation of private employment agencies that hire and send Ethiopians abroad. It states that private employment agencies must provide pre-departure orientation to migrant workers and they are also required to facilitate the sending of remittances in accordance with the laws of the country of employment (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 1998).

In 2015, the *Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants Proclamation No. 909/2015* was introduced to deter irregular migration and encourage safe migration. The Proclamation includes various components of anti-trafficking action, such as penalties for the crimes of trafficking and smuggling and measures to provide assistance and protection to victims (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2015). The anti-trafficking and smuggling framework was revised and strengthened when a new trafficking and smuggling proclamation (No. 1178/2020) was passed in February 2020 and came into effect in April the same year (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2020).

The *Ethiopian Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 923/2016* has been one of the most significant legal documents governing emigration in recent years. It provides a framework to protect the rights, safety and dignity of Ethiopian migrant workers by ensuring that Ethiopian workers migrate to

countries for which there is a bilateral labour agreement in place. It establishes regulations around recruitment procedures, minimum age requirements, pre-departure awareness training and the appointment of labour attachés in host countries. The Proclamation further specifies that workers who take up employment abroad need to have completed eighth grade education and possess a certificate of occupational competence corresponding to the work the migrant is hired for abroad (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2016). The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) is the agency in charge of the implementation of this Proclamation. Since the introduction of the Proclamation, bilateral labour agreements have been signed with Saudi Arabia (2017) and the United Arab Emirates (2018). Interviewees also revealed that agreements with Kuwait, Oman and Lebanon are expected to be signed in the near future.

The expert interviews and the desk review identified a number of challenges in the implementation of the Overseas Employment Proclamation. On the migration management side, these include challenges in monitoring bilateral agreements and ensuring that licensed recruitment agencies operate ethically, particularly since it is difficult for the Ethiopian government to oversee rules and regulations in destination countries (Ogahara and Kuschminder, 2019). Furthermore, many migrants are likely to fail to meet the education requirements of the legislation, leaving them with the option to emigrate irregularly.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has supported the Ethiopian government in ensuring that bilateral agreements are respected by developing a system for online monitoring. The Overseas Employment Proclamation was also under revision in 2021, and an amendment was adopted in May 2021. The *Ethiopia's Overseas Employment (Amendment) Proclamation No. 1246/2021* was announced publicly in June 2021 and specifically eases some of the conditions for taking up employment overseas. For example, the requirement of having completed eighth grade education is replaced by a requirement that a worker who desires to take up domestic work abroad needs to be 'trained' (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2021). The existence of bilateral agreements or memorandum of understanding between the Ethiopian government and the destination country government is still a requirement for low-skilled workers to take up work abroad, while the requirement for skilled workers has been eased: the Proclamation demands an agreement between the Ethiopian government and either the destination country government or directly with the employing company. According to interviewees, this change was introduced to facilitate skilled emigration to countries where there are currently no bilateral agreements in place.

Ethiopia is also actively taking part in several international collaborations related to migration management, such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and multiple EU–African mechanisms such as the Rabat Process, the Khartoum Process and the Joint EU–Africa Strategy (Ogahara and Kuschminder, 2019), which is further discussed in the section on Externalisation of EU migration policies.

Trends

One of the most significant migration policy decisions in the last decade was the decision to ban overseas migration to the Middle East between October 2013 and January 2018. Reports of serious mistreatment and abuse of workers in the Middle East led the Ethiopian government to put a ban on overseas employment to the Middle East in 2013. The ban was seen as a necessary means to protect workers following reports of serious mistreatment and abuse of workers, and to address the mass deportation of undocumented workers from the Middle East. Despite the ban, however, emigration to Sudan and the Middle East persisted through irregular channels (ibid.). With the introduction of the Overseas Employment Proclamation, the ban was lifted in 2018.

Some experts interviewed also described a recent shift in emigration management focus, from an exclusive focus on prevention and protection of low-skilled migrants in Gulf countries towards more active labour market policies through pilot initiatives that explore labour migration of skilled workers and new migration corridors. The initiative is led by the JCC, which recently started developing initiatives to promote labour migration of mid- and skilled workers to new migration destination countries such as Poland. The initiative has identified a demand for mid-skilled and skilled workers in several sectors as showing promise for piloting the initiative, including in the medical sector (e.g., nurses) as well as the IT and construction sectors.

Impacts on emigration

It is difficult to know exactly what effect the ban on overseas employment and the Overseas Employment Proclamations to protect workers have had on emigration in Ethiopia. According to several sources, the ban likely generated an increase in irregular migration when legal channels to migration were blocked. The introduction of the Overseas Employment Proclamations has led to improvements in the protection of migrant rights, but enforcement is challenging, as discussed above. Some experts also pointed out that rural workers aspiring to emigrate often have a lower skills level than that required by the 2016 Proclamation for emigration, which may lead to persistent irregular migration. The amendment to the Proclamation in 2021 (which had not yet been announced at the time of the expert interviews) may address these concerns to some extent.

The initiatives related to labour mobility of more skilled workers initiated by the JCC are so far only under development, but could in the future encourage more diverse migration flows, both in terms of migrant skill level and geographical destinations.

Impacts on development

Migration has the potential to support national development, notably through remittances. Ethiopia receives large remittance inflows yearly. The World Bank (2020) estimated that the inflow of remittances exceeded US$504 million in 2020, which represents an increase from 2018 and 2019 but a considerable decrease on the peak years of 2014 (US$1.8 billion) and 2015 (US$1.1 billion). The highest inflow of remittances was recorded the

year following the introduction of the ban on emigration to countries in the Middle East, which indicates that there was no immediate negative impact of the ban on the level of remittances. However, it should be noted that remittances are difficult to estimate and there are large discrepancies between reported remittances across sources.[1] Studies of the impact on household and national development are still relatively scarce. A study on the development impacts of international remittances on household well-being revealed positive impacts on subjective well-being, while effects on productive asset investments seemed more limited (Andersson, 2014).

Several experts mentioned the new corridors for middle-skilled and skilled migrants that the JCC is planning to pilot as a promising initiative that can strengthen the development impacts of migration in the future. It could promote 'brain gain' if training for potential migrants also lead to skills enhancement in the local labour market, addressing problems of skills matching and the shortage of certain skills in the Ethiopian labour market. Putting in place a system of circular migration linked to training opportunities adapted to both the local and international labour market could hence address the high youth unemployment rates in Ethiopia, especially for those with a graduate degree. Other potential development impacts include higher levels of remittances, skills transfers and a formalisation of some of the current irregular migration flows.

Key incoherence across policies

The lack of a national policy and strategy was identified as a barrier to coherence in migration management by some experts. The National Migration Policy that will be finalised in the near future is therefore welcomed and may help streamline migration policy and governance in Ethiopia.

Experts also mentioned the decentralisation of migration management as an example of incoherence. Since 2016, regional governments and city administrations are assigned increased responsibility for the implementation of certain aspects of the Overseas Employment Proclamation. The decentralisation of emigration procedures does not apply to all parts of the emigration process, however, and some elements of the process remain highly centralised. For example, rural workers who want to emigrate can undertake pre-departure training in their origin communities, but key documents that are needed to travel abroad are only issued and validated by the federal-level agencies and this requires travel to Addis Ababa. Experts also pointed out that developing and maintaining institutional capacity and memory can be a challenge at regional level with high staff turnover.

Interaction with development policies

The development of the remittance market has been supported by a number of commitments and plans around financial inclusion and economic

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[1] For example, the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) published figures that are about four times higher than the World Bank for 2016, likely because the NBE takes into account to a higher extent remittances sent through informal channels (Isaac, 2017).

stability. Ethiopia is a signatory to the *Maya Declaration* since 2011, which implies that Ethiopia is committed to modernising its national payments systems, improving financial access, expanding digital financial services and improving financial literacy. Improvements in financial inclusion are also addressed in the first Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP I) and the National Financial Inclusion Strategy from 2017 (Isaac, 2017; Cooper and Esser, 2018). On the other hand, protectionist foreign exchange policy is believed to have created barriers to formal remittance sending and resulted in more remittances sent through informal channels (Cooper and Esser, 2018). The GTP II is a national five-year plan to improve the country's economy by achieving a projected growth in gross domestic product (GDP) of 11–15% per year. Among other areas, the GTP II recognises remittances as one of the contributing factors for positive development in relation to the national balance of payments.

Diaspora

Main policies

The *Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Diaspora Policy* promotes diaspora investments and engagement and dates back to 2013 (MoFA, 2013). The Policy has the objective of building strong relations with the diaspora and of leveraging diaspora contributions by encouraging and facilitating the participation of the diaspora in peace- and democratisation-building processes and engagement. Ethiopia has also been active in extending rights to the diaspora, such as issuing an Ethiopian Origin Identity card, commonly referred to as the Yellow Card, to its expatriate citizens. Ethiopia does not allow dual citizenship, but the Yellow Card, introduced in 2002, practically grants the holder the same benefits as citizenship, with the exception of the right to vote (Kuschminder and Siegel, 2011).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) is in charge of implementing diaspora-related policies. MoFA first established a Directorate for Diaspora Engagement Affairs with two divisions, one related to research and information and the other on diaspora engagement. In addition, diaspora coordination offices were established in the regional states and city administrations of the country, and diaspora focal points were appointed in federal ministries and Ethiopian embassies (IOM, 2017). In 2019, MoFA replaced the Diaspora Directorate by creating the Ethiopian Diaspora Agency, with branch offices across the country.

Diaspora engagement is also mobilised through other institutions and means, notably the Ethiopian Diaspora Association (EDA) and the Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund (EDTF). The EDA was established in 2012 to serve as a bridge between the Ethiopian diaspora and the government, and it provides a range of supporting services to the diaspora. The EDTF was established in 2018 to raise funds for socioeconomic projects in key areas such as health, education, water, sanitation facilities and rehabilitation of persons with disability, agricultural development, technology, women's empowerment, youth, financial inclusion, small-scale entrepreneurship, and other income- and employment-generating projects. To date, the Fund has mobilised

US$6.82 million from close to 26,000 donors living in 93 different countries (EDTF, 2020). The first five projects to receive funding were announced in 2020, and an additional US$1.2 million has been raised to support the country with protective personal equipment (PPE) and related medical supplies in the response to COVID-19.

In terms of legal documents, one proclamation and a number of directives are relevant for diaspora policy in Ethiopia. *Providing Foreign Nationals of Ethiopian Origin with Certain Rights to be Exercised in their Country of Origin Proclamation No. 270/2002* specifies certain privileges for foreign nationals of Ethiopian origin[2] such as visa-free entry, residency and employment rights, the right to own immovable property in Ethiopia, and the right to access public services (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2002). The Proclamation was created in response to the significant number of foreign nationals of Ethiopian origin wishing to strengthen their ties with their origin country and the belief that foreign nationals can contribute to the development and the prosperity of the country.

Ethiopia has also been actively involved in promoting the creation of formal remittance schemes through the 2006 issuance of *Directive FXD/30/2006 Provisions for International Remittance Services* and its amendment of 2009 (IOM, 2019). The Directive aims to enhance incoming remittance transfers, reduce remittance costs and increase access to reliable, fast and safe remittance services (Isaac, 2017). Furthermore, *Directive No. FXD/31/2006* allows non-resident Ethiopians to open foreign currency accounts, to create incentives for the Ethiopian diaspora to invest domestically and improve Ethiopia's international foreign exchange reserves. The Directive allows accounts from the Ethiopian diaspora to be maintained in different currencies (notably US dollars, pound sterling and euros). These accounts can be used to make foreign payments for imports, to make local payments in Birr, to make transfers to other foreign currency accounts and to serve as collateral or a guarantee for loans or bids. Furthermore, the NBE has initiated diaspora investment projects in collaboration with the Ethiopia Electric and Power Corporation with the aim to encourage the diaspora to invest in electricity generation projects through the issuing of diaspora bonds (ibid.). Other measures to support the diaspora include double taxation avoidance agreements with Cyprus, Egypt, India, Ireland, Kenya, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Sudan, Switzerland, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and Qatar.

In recent years there have also been several diaspora and skilled return programmes in Ethiopia, including the IOM Netherlands Connecting Diaspora for Development Programme (CD4D). This programme has provided short-term assignments to highly skilled members of the diaspora to facilitate temporary return and stimulate knowledge transfers (discussed further in the next sections).

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[2] Defined as persons who have at least one parent, grandparent or great grandparent who is an Ethiopian national.

Trends

The diaspora has a tradition of engaging in development in Ethiopia, although there are no official statistics that measure the flows of financial and knowledge transfers that the diaspora brings. The Ethiopian Investment Authority records the number of diaspora investment projects per year, and data show a significant increase in diaspora engagement in the 2000s, reaching a peak in 2006–2007. In parallel, the Ethiopian government has also increased its efforts to develop policies to engage the diaspora. In the beginning of the 2000s, diaspora issues were handled by the Ministry of Expatriate Affairs and the Diaspora Coordinating Office of the Ministry of Interior, established in 2002. Diaspora initiatives existed at the time, but the government had few policies and coordination mechanisms in place.

The establishment of a Diaspora Policy in 2013 was a way to create more structure around diaspora engagement. Today the responsibility lies under MoFA and its Diaspora Agency. The creation of this Agency to replace the previous Directorate was seen by an expert interviewee as a sign of the commitment of the government to support diaspora policy and engagement. The interviews also revealed that there are discussions about revising the Diaspora Policy and developing a diaspora engagement strategy to update and further strengthen the diaspora policy framework.

Impacts on development

As stated above, it is difficult to know the exact impact of diaspora engagement in Ethiopia as there are no official statistics on diaspora investment flows. Nevertheless, the increasing number of investment projects recorded over time indicates that the diaspora is increasingly contributing to development in Ethiopia. According to the Ethiopian Investment Commission, diaspora investors have contributed to close to 3,000 projects and have generated more than US$106 million of investment capital in the country and about 4,500 permanent and more than 13,000 temporary jobs in the country (IOM, 2017). Allowing diaspora members to open bank accounts in foreign currency has, according to experts, also been important to spur remittance-sending and diaspora investment.

While the initiative to create diaspora bonds initially received a positive response, over time it has proven difficult to generate sufficient interest among the diaspora to create sustained impact. One potential reason for the limited interest in investing in diaspora bonds is an environmental concern related to the bonds being used for power and dam projects (Gevorkyan, 2021).

There has also been an initiative to support diaspora knowledge transfers. One is example is the CD4D initiative to attract diaspora from the Netherlands to work on a temporary basis in key sectors (such as education, and agriculture and rural development) in Ethiopia. According to the programme evaluation, the initiative has been successful and has led to positive development outcomes in terms of individual capacity development and improvement in structures and procedures in the workplace (Mueller and Kuschminder, 2019). The skilled return programmes implemented to

date are still quite small-scale with a low number of participants, however, and the impact on national development is likely to be rather limited.

Key incoherence across policies

The importance of remittances and diaspora investment for national development is recognised by the government in several key documents and policies, including the GTP and the Diaspora Policy. At the same time, important barriers related to regulations, infrastructure and the functioning of the financial sector remain, which in turn hamper the sending of remittances through formal channels (IOM, 2019).

Interaction with development policies

Besides the explicit policies that support diaspora investment that are discussed in this section, other development policies and frameworks also mention the role of remittances (see the section on Interaction with development policies in the Emigration section) and the diaspora for national development. The National Foreign Affairs Policy and National Security Policy and Strategy both recognise the role of the Ethiopian diaspora in terms of sending remittances, investment and knowledge transfers (Isaac, 2017).

Transit migration

Main policies

Ethiopia is a transit hub for migrants and refugees from the Horn of Africa, especially migrants from South Sudan, Somalia and Eritrea who transit through Ethiopia in an attempt to reach Europe via Sudan and Egypt or Libya (Danish Refugee Council, 2016). Some forced migrants stay in refugee camps in the hope of being resettled by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), while others try to arrange their onward movement on their own after shorter or longer periods in Ethiopia.

Research reveals that transit intentions differ across refugee groups (Betts et al., 2019; Heelsum, 2019). South Sudanese refugees are more focused on returning back to their origin country and less likely to consider themselves in transit, and they tend to rely on UNHCR relocation schemes. Groups of Somali refugees consider moving onwards while others settle down in Ethiopia. Eritrean refugees who have recently arrived in Ethiopia are the group that to the largest extent consider themselves in transit and plan for onward movement (Heelsum, 2019). A survey among Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa showed that over 90% aspired to move onwards to Europe, North America or Australia (Betts et al., 2019). Some refugees leave Ethiopia voluntarily, while others are persuaded to leave or are abducted from refugee camps and are vulnerable to human trafficking in Sudan and Egypt. Somalis and Sudanese nationals also transit through Ethiopia to seek asylum in Kenyan refugee camps (Danish Refugee Council, 2016).

In terms of policy, there are no national policies that relate specifically to transit migration. Given that many transit migrants arrive in Ethiopia as

refugees[3] before taking a final decision on whether to continue onward movement or not, policies discussed in the section on Immigration are highly relevant to transit migration. In addition, EU policy to support the integration of refugees largely target potential transit migrants in Ethiopia with the objective to reduce transit movements towards Europe (Heelsum, 2019). For example, Ethiopia is one of the primary target countries and the third largest beneficiary of the EUTF, the main EU partnership mechanism to fight migrant smuggling and trafficking. Ethiopia has received a total of €270.2 million in support through the EUTF, with an important part of the funding targeted to supporting the socioeconomic integration of refugees via the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRFF) (Tadesse Abebe, 2020).

In terms of border control and detention, there is anecdotal and media evidence of Eritreans and migrants from Somaliland being detained and deported as they attempt to transit through Ethiopia to Sudan and Libya (Danish Refugee Council, 2016).

Trends

Transit migration has been part of the Ethiopian migration landscape for decades, but policy has to a large extent been characterised by recent initiatives and funding from the EU. The expert interviews revealed a limited national policy framework around transit migration prior to the large-scale investments in addressing transit migration by the EU.

Impacts on immigration and transit migration

Recent policy developments such as the Refugee Response Plan and the Jobs Compact that specifically target job creation and improved livelihoods for the refugee populations (see the section on Immigration) have been put in place with a specific objective to decrease onward movement towards Europe. However, the effectiveness of policies to support livelihoods are relatively limited according to experts and studies (see, for example, ODI, 2017). In the absence of adequate employment and other socioeconomic opportunities, irregular migration is likely to continue as the aspirations are strong for onward movement, especially among the Eritrean community.

Impacts on development

The review has not revealed any particular impacts of explicit transit migration policy on development. The development impact of policies that are put in place to prevent refugees from onward movement is discussed in the Immigration section.

Key incoherence across policies

EU policy to deter irregular transit migration through Ethiopia has focused on investing in integration support to refugees in Ethiopia. However, surveys

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[3] Ethiopia grants prima facie refugee status to most refugee groups residing in the country, and it is often difficult to make a clear distinction between refugees and other types of migrants in the country (Vemuru et al., 2020).

with potential transit migrants show that there are strong preferences for more legal migration pathways to Europe (Betts et al., 2019). Many of the transit migrants who reach Europe through irregular channels are aware of the dangers and initially aspire to migrate through formal means but turn to irregular channels when no other option is available (ODI, 2017). Hence, the current policy framework to deter irregular transit migration, which offers extremely limited legal pathways to migration, is not fully adapted to the evidence on the ground and is likely not able to stop determined transit migrants from continuing their journeys to Europe.

Interaction with development policies

Recent initiatives to support socioeconomic integration of refugees has been coupled with investments in job creation for Ethiopians, as discussed in the Immigration section.

Return migration

Main policies

Ethiopian migrants mainly return from the Middle East or destination and transit countries on the African continent, and to a lesser extent from Europe and the Americas (IOM, 2019). Ethiopia is one of the top countries when it comes to the number of beneficiaries of the IOM Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) programme. Many return migrants are vulnerable after experiencing abuse and other traumas during their migration journeys or in the countries of destination. This is particularly true for stranded migrants returning from transit countries such as Libya and Yemen, where they have often been held in detention prior to return. As a result, many return to Ethiopia in poor mental and physical health without savings or assets to support their livelihood.

A Reintegration Directive was issued in 2018 to guide the work on return and reintegration in Ethiopia. The Directive outlines the support mechanism offered, including rehabilitation, social services and economic support. The national lead agency in charge of return and reintegration is currently the Federal Urban Job Creation and Food Security Agency (under the Ministry of Urban Development and Construction), which is also leading the work on nationals returning from outside the EU and the Americas (IOM, 2019). However, many government and non-government actors are involved in different ways in return and reintegration assistance in Ethiopia. For example, the Agency for Refugee and Return Affairs (ARRA) is receiving funding from the EUTF to run a programme that offers assistance to returning migrants from EU Member States, and provides support to strengthen government structures and institutions related to return and reintegration. MoLSA is in charge of data collection and registration related to return and reintegration. The IOM is running a transit centre that registers return migrants upon arrival in Ethiopia and provides post-arrival assistance, and implements the EU–IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration programme that assists migrants returning from transit countries in the Horn of Africa such as Libya and Yemen. In

addition, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has been supporting the Ethiopian government in its work to carry out return and reintegration support and to strengthen institutional capacity at national and regional levels. Individual EU Member States have also provided reintegration support for returning nationals from their respective countries.

Several key proclamations introduced before the Reintegration Directive are also relevant for return migration, notably the *Ethiopian Overseas Employment Proclamation No. 923/2016* and the *Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants Proclamation No. 909/2015.* The latter addresses the repatriation and protection of victims of trafficking through training, rehabilitation and reintegration (Ogahara and Kuschminder, 2019).

Finally, Ethiopia is one of the partner countries in the EU 2016 Partnership Framework. A key objective of the Framework is the return and reintegration of irregular migrants. In 2017, the EU and Ethiopia agreed on readmission procedures for Ethiopians in EU Member States who do not fulfil the conditions for entry, stay or residence (Tadesse Abebe, 2020). Through this agreement, Ethiopia is expected to facilitate return migration from Europe by issuing and facilitating travel documents while the EU in return supports the reintegration process in Ethiopia.

Trends

The expert interviews revealed that return and reintegration support is a relatively recent policy area in Ethiopia. Ten years ago, there was almost no support to return migrants, and no structured policy framework or institutions around return and reintegration. The need to put in place support for return and reintegration became evident following a series of mass deportations of workers from the Middle East since 2013, most notably from Saudi Arabia where approximately 170,000 Ethiopians were deported at the end of 2013 and the beginning of 2014 (Adugna, 2021). Another approximately 300,000 Ethiopians were repatriated from Saudi Arabia between March 2017 and up to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 (Mixed Migration Centre, 2020).

Many Ethiopian migrants also find themselves stranded in transit countries, such as Libya and Yemen, on their way to destination countries in Europe or the Middle East. In 2019, the IOM helped over 15,200 migrants in difficult situations to return from Yemen and Libya through so-called voluntary humanitarian return assistance. Ethiopia was a top origin country for this type of assistance (IOM, 2020). In the light of these large waves of returnees, government- and non-government actors have over the last decade developed projects and programmes to support return and reintegration. A multitude of actors at both federal and regional level have been involved. The initial phase was, according to interviewees, challenged by a lack of coordination and harmonisation. Over time, a more structured way of addressing return and reintegration has been developed. Nevertheless, the interviews revealed that coordination and harmonisation remain a challenge, and resources are far from enough to address the assistance needs of all returning migrants.

Impacts on return migration

The establishment of a Reintegration Directive, together with the work to strengthen government institutions and harmonising the approach to return and reintegration in Ethiopia, has enabled many migrants in difficult situations to return to Ethiopia. Reintegration assistance offered to a share of return migrants has also improved the conditions for some, but not all, returnees. For example, the EU–IOM Joint Initiative has assisted more than 8,000 return migrants in Ethiopia since the start of the programme in 2017. The need for reintegration assistance far exceeds the support provided by the government and international organisations, however, due to limited budgets and institutional capacity.

Impacts on development

Reintegration assistance has largely focused on reintegration in three domains: economic, social and psychosocial areas. Several experts pointed to positive reintegration outcomes at individual and community level as a result of the programmes in place. However, given the large number of return migrants and the limited resources and capacity on the ground, the assistance far from covers the needs of all returnees. The interviews also revealed challenges in building more long-term and sustainable assistance with the government taking full ownership of the process. The current assistance is largely dependent on funding from international donors, notably the EU, on a programme basis.

Key incoherence across policies

The type of reintegration assistance that return migrants receive is not always fully tailored to the needs of the returnees. Rather, assistance offered is tied to the region from which the migrant returns. While the EU has funded large-scale programmes focusing on assisting the return and reintegration of migrants from Europe and from transit countries in the Horn of Africa, there has been much less funding to support returnees from the Middle East. The use of the resources that are mobilised to assist return migrants are hence not primarily based on needs and the number of return migrants by region, but rather political priorities.

As an illustration, a large programme has been put in place to assist returning migrants from EU Member States, while the numbers of return migrants from the EU is negligible in relation to the number of migrants returning from the Middle East and transit countries in the region. For example, in 2019 about 350 returning migrants from Europe to the Horn of Africa benefited from assistance from the IOM, compared with 4,220 migrants who received assistance to return from Djibouti (IOM, 2020). In addition, the type of assistance offered is not harmonised across different programmes – there have been examples of reintegration assistance funded by individual EU Member States in the form of cash assistance, while most other assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR) benefits are provided through in-kind support. One expert pointed out that providing cash could serve as a way to finance remigration. The many actors involved in return and reintegration assistance and some uncertainty around the mandate within the Ethiopian government were also identified as challenges

in providing a coherent policy response to return and reintegration in Ethiopia.

Another incoherence relates to the facilitation of the return of migrants residing in the EU while at the same time implementing policies to increase remittances (Tadesse Abebe, 2020). Assisting migrants to return from Europe might affect remittance inflows to Ethiopia, and thus goes against policies to support remittance-sending discussed in the sections on Emigration and Diaspora.

Finally, an interviewee noted that there is anecdotal evidence from the field of overlaps in the targeted beneficiaries for different programmes related to reintegration and those addressing irregular migration. This implies that programmes with different objectives and funding are largely targeting the same beneficiaries in an uncoordinated way.

Interaction with development policies

The reintegration of return migrants is closely linked to key policy areas such as employment creation and economic conditions in Ethiopia more generally. There are also interactions between return and reintegration support and other national development policy documents that aim to strengthen economic growth, employment creation and business development. This includes the GTP II and the Ethiopian Youth Revolving Fund (ILO, 2019). The goal of the latter is to strengthen job creation for Ethiopia's youth through financial support. The policy intersects with migration policy since youth constitute the highest share of labour migrants, return migrants and potential future migrants (Kuschminder and Ricard-Guay, 2018).

Immigration

Main policies

The principal law that governs immigration is the *Immigration Proclamation No. 354* from 2003 (Federal Democratic Government of Ethiopia, 2003a), which regulates the entry and residence of migrants in Ethiopia. The Proclamation includes regulations related to requirements and necessary documents for entry and departure, and also addresses the deportation of foreigners from the country. To have the right to work in Ethiopia, the Proclamation specifies that foreign nationals must be granted a work permit by MoLSA, while the labour proclamation states that employers who wish to hire foreign nationals must prove that no Ethiopian is qualified for the position (IOM, 2019). No system is in place to issue visas based on the demand in the local labour market. Other relevant legal documents regulating immigration issues include the *Ethiopian Nationality Proclamation no. 387/2003* (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2003b) and the *Council of Ministers Regulation No. 114/2004* that covers issuance of travel documents.

Regarding forced migration, Ethiopia has an open-door policy towards refugees, and it is currently the third largest refugee-hosting country in

Africa, hosting around 785,000 refugees and asylum seekers in June 2021 (UNHCR, 2021). The large majority of the refugees originate from Eritrea, Somalia and South Sudan. Nationals of these three countries receive refugee status on a prima facie basis (Betts et al., 2019). A majority of refugees are in a protracted situation and live in camps.

In recent times, Ethiopia has made far-reaching changes to its refugee policy framework to promote durable solutions for refugees (World Bank, 2020). Ethiopia participates as one of 15 pilot countries in the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). The CRRF was created as a way to implement the *2016 New York Declaration on Addressing Large Scale Movements of Refugees and Migrants*. In relation to the launch of the CRRF, Ethiopia made nine pledges in line with the CRRF to address refugee livelihoods, education, environment and protection (Vemuru et al., 2020) (see Box 1). Furthermore, in 2019, a new legal framework was put in place in the form of *Refugee Proclamation 1110/2019* (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2019). The Proclamation supports a strategy of providing more services and freedom of movement for refugees. However, the law also states that ARRA 'may arrange places or areas within which refugees and asylum seekers may live', which seems more in line with an encampment policy and raises some questions about how the Refugee Proclamation will be implemented in practice (Vemuru et al., 2020).

Box 1: Ethiopia's nine pledges in alignment with the CRRF

1. To expand the existing out-of-camp policy to benefit 10% of the current total refugee population.

2. To increase enrolment of refugee children in pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary education without discrimination and within the available resources.

3. To provide work permits to refugees and to those with permanent residence identification, within the bounds of domestic law.

4. To provide work permits to refugees in the areas permitted for foreign workers.

5. To make 10,000 hectares of irrigable land available, to enable 20,000 refugees and host community households (100,000 people) to grow crops.

6. To work with industrial partners to build industrial parks to employ up to 100,000 individuals, with 30% of the jobs reserved for refugees.

7. To provide other benefits, such as issuance of birth certificates to refugee children born in Ethiopia, and the possibility of opening bank accounts and obtaining driving licenses.

8. To expand and enhance basic and essential social services for refugees.

9. To allow local integration for refugees who have lived in a protracted refugee situation who have lived for 20 years or more in Ethiopia.

Source: Ogahara and Kuschminder (2019); Vemuru et al. (2020).

The UN Refugee Summit in 2016 also generated the Jobs Compact, an agreement between the Ethiopian government and external donors (the UK, EU and the World Bank) to invest US$500 million in the creation of 100,000 new jobs through building two new major industrial parks. Around one-third of these jobs are guaranteed for refugees (Vemuru et al., 2020).

The relevant authorities with mandates and responsibilities related to immigration include the Ministry of Peace (in charge of citizenship, the issuance of key identification documents and political asylum seekers and returnees), as well as ARRA (with responsibility for the coordination of refugee programmes) (IOM, 2019). Furthermore, the Immigration, Nationality and Vital Events Agency is responsible for enacting immigration policy.

Trends

Despite a relatively generous policy towards refugees, Ethiopia was for a long time relying on an encampment policy that required refugees to reside in designated areas with restricted socioeconomic rights. The 2004 Refugee Proclamation prevented refugees from accessing formal employment, obtaining business licences, owning mobile property or opening a bank account without prior authorisation from ARRA (Betts et al., 2019). Some exceptions to the encampment policy existed for Eritrean refugees who were able to provide for themselves and for refugees with specific medical, protection or humanitarian reasons (ibid.). However, in the past five years Ethiopia has taken steps away from the encampment policy and has committed to provide refugees with better access to employment, land, education and other services to improve the socioeconomic inclusion of refugees. Ethiopia's participation in the CRRF has mobilised funding from the international community to support the integration of refugees. In 2019, the policy change was followed up by a change in the legislation through the passing of the new Refugee Proclamation with expanded refugee rights, although some barriers remain for refugees to enjoy the same rights as the national population.

Impacts on immigration

The Ethiopian Refugee Response Plan grants refugees the right to work and connects them to factories in the industrial zones. However, salaries in the textile factories in the industrial zones have shown to be very low and are not adapted to the cost of living in the country (Heelsum, 2019). It is thus quite unlikely that these job offers have an impact on immigration rates, or stop people from onwards migration as discussed in the section on Transit migration.

Impacts on development

The approach to create employment opportunities in factories in industrial zones will likely not have significant positive impacts on development as both refugees and nationals are hesitant to accept employment offers in the industrial parks due to the low wages offered. Another challenge is the high turnover in the textile and agro-industrial sectors in Ethiopia, including in the industrial parks (Barrett and Baumann-Pauly, 2019). A study by Betts et al. (2019) further shows that Eritrean and Somali refugees residing in Addis still struggle both with economic integration and mental health issues, and the large majority of Eritreans continue to aspire to move to Europe. Policies to support refugee livelihoods have also created some tensions with local communities in areas with large refugee populations (Genest, 2018).

Key incoherence across policies

With the newly established refugee framework, refugees are given the right to work in theory, but there are still barriers to employment. Refugees need to apply for work permits before taking up employment, and employers need to prove that the position cannot be filled by an Ethiopian national. It is also not clear how to ensure that one-third of the workers in the industrial parks are refugees as set out in the nine pledges of the CRRF, especially in the

light of the high turnover of workers and the fact that the encampment policy only covers 10% of the refugee population. Access to education and health services are also mentioned in the new policies and legislation, but the documents specify few details on the means to achieve this and it is subject to available funding, as discussed below.

Interaction with development policies

Ethiopia has set an objective to achieve universal health coverage, including coverage for refugees and other migrants. However, within current legislation, it is not clear under which conditions refugees will be offered such rights (IOM, 2019). The Refugee Proclamation from 2019 provides for access to available health services for refugees and asylum seekers, but it does not specify further details around how this should be achieved. The Government of Ethiopia is also committed to facilitate access to education for the most vulnerable, but it is not clear if migrants have access to public education. The Refugee Proclamation does include a provision guaranteeing access to pre-primary and primary education for refugees and asylum seekers under the same conditions as nationals, however, and it promotes access to secondary, higher and adult education subject to available funds (ibid.).

Internal migration

Main policies

Internal migration in Ethiopia is characterised, on the one hand, by internal movement between and within rural and urban areas and, on the other hand, by forced displacement mainly due to conflict and environmental factors. Ethiopia has one of the largest populations of IDPs, with an estimated 3.19 million people forcibly displaced in 2019 (IDMC, 2019). Following the recent conflict that started in the Tigray region in November 2020, more than 2.1 million people are estimated to have been displaced in the northern part of the country between November 2020 and July 2021 (OCHA, 2021a). The spread of the conflict to other regions caused continuous large-scale displacement in the autumn of 2021, notably in conflict-affected areas in Amhara, Afar and Western Tigray (OCHA, 2021b).

The primary factor for internal displacement in Ethiopia is conflict, followed by climate- and weather-related reasons (notably drought, famine and flooding), and in the past also reallocation programmes. In 2018, the National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) released the Humanitarian and Disaster Resilience Plan (HDRP) which addresses the impacts of disasters driven by conflict and climate factors. The HDRP takes IDPs into account and outlines the impacts of displacement.

At a regional level, a Durable Solution Working Group for IDPs, consisting of representatives from the regional government, international organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), was formed in the Somali regional state in 2014 to work towards finding durable solutions for IDPs. This Working Group has been serving as a role model for the establishment

of similar working groups in other regions of the country. At a national level, the Durable Solutions Initiative (DSI) was launched in 2019. The DSI is a national platform developed by the government together with the international community to establish an operational framework to support durable solutions for conflict and disaster-related internal displacement. It brings together representatives from relevant government ministries and the international community. The DSI is led by the Ministry of Peace and targets national, regional and local levels to provide policy, legislative, institutional, planning and operational support. In terms of legislation, Ethiopia ratified the Kampala Convention in response to internal displacement in early 2020, ensuring that responses to displacement are conducted in line with international standards (GP20, 2020). Despite these policy and legislative initiatives, however, experts pointed out that gaps remain in Ethiopia's response to the IDP situation in the country, especially in terms of service delivery.

Besides forced displacement, internal migration also takes place through internal movement mainly driven by employment reasons, but also the pursuit of education (Schewel and Fransen, 2018). Internal labour migration in Ethiopia remains relatively limited, but the structure of the migration patterns has changed over time. Between 2005 and 2013, rural-to-rural migration decreased and rural-to-urban movements became the dominant migration pattern, with increasing numbers of young rural dwellers moving to urban areas in the wake of the urban renewal and construction boom in 2008 (Bundervoet, 2018: OECD, 2020). Intra-regional internal migration is more common than migration between regions, excluding migration to Addis Ababa. Regional capitals are a magnet for internal migration, as it is more affordable for rural migrants to move regionally than to travel larger distances (OECD, 2020). There is no explicit policy framework that neither encourages nor restricts internal migration for economic purposes in Ethiopia; however, there are indirect barriers to internal movements, as discussed below.

Trends

Internal migration for economic reasons remains relatively limited in Ethiopia, but it is on the rise and likely to increase further in the future as youth become more educated and aspire for lives and employment beyond rural areas (Bundervoet, 2018; Schewel and Fransen, 2018). Internal migration trajectories have also seen a shift from rural-to-rural migration to increasing movement towards towns and cities, including new forms of 'industrial migration' to urban areas (Schewel and Asmamaw, 2021). However, internal migrants face important barriers to movement such as difficulty in obtaining urban ID cards, opening bank accounts, accessing public services and securing employment, which stems from the negative attitudes to internal immigration of local authorities and a tradition of trying to limit or prevent internal movements.

Other government policies, not related to migration, also have implications for internal migration. Land policy in Ethiopia is restrictive and does not allow people to own or transfer land. In addition, households are allocated small land plots, and there is a lack of new land allocation for youth, which limits agriculture output and could spur rural-to-urban migration (Dessalegn

et al., 2020). Recently, the JCC has begun initiatives to assist internal migrants in urban areas, notably by facilitating the issuing of ID cards for internal migrants to improve access to public services and by introducing mechanisms for job matching through the strengthening of migrants' IT and job search skills.

When it comes to IDPs, the recently developed national framework through the establishment of the DSI is seen as a positive step forward in finding durable solutions. However, there are still operational and financial challenges, especially in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the large-scale new displacement wave following the civil war that has shifted focus and resources in other directions. In response, the federal-level Durable Solution Working Group is considering establishing a Durable Solutions Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) to strengthen the support to find durable solutions for IDPs.

Impacts on internal migration

There are as mentioned above few explicit policies governing internal migration in Ethiopia. Negative attitudes towards internal migration, policies related to land, and access to identification documents have, on the contrary, posed challenges to internal migration. Internal movement has nevertheless risen in past decades, particularly intra-regional rural-to-urban migration (Schewel and Asmamaw, 2021).

Recent regional and national policy frameworks could help find solutions to internal displacement, but the initiatives have so far faced operational challenges mainly due to a shortage of funding. The recent displacement of millions of people due to the ongoing conflict will be a huge challenge to address for future policy.

Impacts on development

Research shows that internal migration has positive economic impacts for individual migrants and for rural development in general (Bundervoet, 2018). Increased internal migration has been an important driver of structural transformation and economic growth in Ethiopia, and has also led to welfare gains for migrants who are experiencing higher standards of living through both rural-to-rural and rural-to-urban migration (ibid.). However, as discussed above, internal migration remains relatively limited. Addressing the barriers and facilitating intra-regional migration could drive rural transformation processes and allow migrants to diversify their income sources (OECD, 2020).

Key incoherence across policies

The lack of an internal migration strategy and policies to support internal movement could be seen as a missed opportunity in Ethiopia to support government objectives around poverty reduction, rural development and structural transformation (Bundervoet, 2018). Current land policies are also restricting internal movement, as households need to be present and involved in farming to keep the right to their leased land. At the same time, scarce land allocation and low agricultural output are driving out-migration,

alongside more large-scale development processes such as education expansion and economic and infrastructure development.

Interaction with development policies

In the search for durable solutions for the IDP population in Ethiopia, plans are underway to integrate IDPs in rural public works and livelihood programmes. Given that rural-to-urban migration is driven partly by low agricultural output and restricted access to land, interviewees also linked internal migration to policy initiatives such as job creation and agriculture subsidies to support the agriculture sector.

Given the increase in rural-to-urban migration, policies related to urban development, and notably housing policy, will matter for internal migration patterns and outcomes. Rural-to-urban migration is estimated to have accounted for 24% of the growth of the urban population in Ethiopia as of 2012 (Matsumoto and Crook, 2021). An important barrier to rural-to-urban migration is the high costs of living and scarcity of affordable housing in urban areas, however, which also undermines employment creation. Despite policy programmes to increase affordable housing, such as the Integrated Housing Development Programme (IHDP), the increasing demand for urban housing is largely unmet. Low-income households in Addis Ababa are only able to access informal or low-quality (*Kebele*) housing (ibid.).

Externalisation of EU migration policies

Main policies

Ethiopia has become a key country of origin for European policy-making that looks to tackle the 'root causes' of migration following the large inflow of migrants to the EU in 2015. Ethiopian emigration to the EU is, as mentioned above, relatively limited compared to the large number of emigrants travelling to other regions such as southern Africa and the Middle East. However, the mixed movements of migrants and refugees makes it a target country for EU assistance to fight smuggling, trafficking and irregular migration, as well as support for return and reintegration.

The EU–Ethiopia cooperation on migration is taking place through several instruments and frameworks. In 2015, Ethiopia signed the Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility (CAMM), and in 2016 it became one of 16 EU 'priority' countries under the New Partnership Framework. It is also a member of the Khartoum Process launched in 2014, and the broader framework of the Joint EU–Africa Strategy adopted in 2007. The Khartoum Process is a platform for political cooperation for countries situated along the migration route between the Horn of Africa and Europe. It aims to establish dialogue for enhanced cooperation on migration and mobility, and implement projects to address trafficking and smuggling. Furthermore, Ethiopia and the EU have committed to an annual Ministerial Meeting and six sectoral dialogues on a range of themes, including migration. Aside from these explicit migration frameworks and mechanisms, cooperation has been

incentivised by support in other areas such as aid and trade (Tadesse Abebe, 2020).

The EU–Ethiopia migration cooperation is guided by the objectives in the Joint Valetta Action Plan, namely:

- to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement

- to enhance cooperation on legal migration and mobility

- to reinforce the protection of migrants and asylum seekers

- to prevent and fight irregular migration, migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings

- to work more clearly to improve cooperation on return, readmission and reintegration.

The main financial instrument behind the EU's political engagement with Africa in the field of migration is the EUTF. The migration partnerships set up with five African countries in 2016 were mainly funded through the EUTF, which received an additional €500 million from the European Development Fund for this specific purpose (Kipp, 2018). Ethiopia is the third recipient of financial support from the EUTF, with a focus on two areas: socioeconomic integration of refugees in Ethiopia (via the CRRF); and return and reintegration.

Trends

Although funding has been allocated and projects have been initiated to address the five objectives under the Joint Valetta Action Plan, experts revealed that progress has been slow in some areas, particularly when it comes to creating more legal pathways to migration. There have been some efforts to create new pathways through student mobility, notably through the Erasmus+ framework (EC, 2016; 2020). In 2014–2020, Ethiopia was involved in 135 short-term university mobility projects in which students from Ethiopia were given an opportunity to study in a foreign university for up to one year, and 204 Ethiopians obtained funding to study a double degree in universities in the EU (EC, 2020). However, student mobility initiatives to increase legal migration to the EU are scarce, and although improved ways for regular migration to the EU is mentioned in early EU progress reports of the partnership, references to such objectives have disappeared over time (Concorde, 2018).

Putting in place formal readmission agreements between EU and African states has also proved challenging due to political reasons. The EU has instead resorted to an informal agreement with Ethiopia, with Ethiopia having been criticised for helping EU Member States to avoid transparency and accountability for their responsibility under human rights and refugee law (Tadesse Abebe, 2020). Return rates of Ethiopians from the EU have also shown to be some of the lowest in the region, which has led the EU to impose some conditionality through linking refugee support to advancement in readmissions (Concorde, 2018).

Impacts on immigration, emigration, return migration and transit migration

As discussed in the previous section, EU policies and support have to date particularly focused on support in the area of return migration and transit migration. The financial support provided to return and reintegration programmes has enabled thousands of Ethiopians to return from abroad, mainly from transit countries in the Horn of Africa but also from European countries and the Middle East. For example, over the period 2018–2020, the IOM provided assistance to 16,273 return migrants, the largest share being in 2019 (10,002 return migrants), followed by a sharp decrease in return in 2020 (1,479 return migrants assisted) due to the pandemic (IOM, 2020). Interviewees specifically pointed out that the support has been instrumental both at individual and community levels, but that it has also enabled investments in strengthening the capacity and mechanisms in place. However, the experts also revealed that funding is limited in relation to the needs, and there are challenges in building long-term and sustainable national capacity to provide assistance to all migrants returning to the country in need of support.

The cooperation around stemming irregular migration and the onwards movement of refugees has had some, but limited, effect according to respondents in the interviews. Several experts recognised the difficulties in stopping people from migrating. As discussed in previous sections, attempts to create employment opportunities for refugees via the creation of industrial parks have so far seen limited effect due to the low wages offered. Other EUTF-funded projects provide technical and vocational education and training (TVET) to stem irregular migration. The TVET programmes are designed to improve young people's skills, strengthen the local labour market and boost their chances of finding employment, and thereby reduce incentives for irregular migration. An assessment of the programme on migration dynamics found that participation in the TVET programmes seems to increase intentions to migrate, but that the intentions mainly concern internal migration and not international migration (Research and Evidence Facility, 2019).

The partnership has likely not generated much impact on legal migration from Ethiopia to the EU, as this area of collaboration has received very limited attention from the EU so far (Concorde, 2018).

Impacts on development

EU migration policy in Ethiopia has focused partly on improving development and protection dimensions of migration, which could generate positive impacts on development. For example, several large-scale projects with funding from the EUTF focused on stemming irregular migration through investments in local development, which has led to positive development outcomes through improved living conditions (ibid.). The impact on development of projects to support reintegration of return migrants and job creation to support refugee integration is seen as very limited, however, as discussed above. The strong focus on readmissions could potentially even have negative impacts on development if it leads to a

reduction in remittances sent by migrants in Europe and other destination regions.

Key incoherence across policies

An incoherence in the EU's approach to deter irregular migration that was mentioned by interviewees is the lack of creation of legal pathways for migration towards Europe. Efforts to create and improve employment and livelihood options in Ethiopia were not seen as enough to fully address irregular and transit migration flows. Offering some options of legal migration, through mobility programmes, humanitarian visas or scholarship opportunities would, according to the experts, strengthen the migration management system and add more balance to the migration collaboration between Ethiopia and the EU.

The EUTF is largely funded by overseas development assistance (ODA), mainly from the European Development Fund. This has raised concerns that development assistance is being used to stem migratory flows to Europe rather than to support development in countries of origin. This may be of less concern in the case of Ethiopia as many EUTF-funded projects implemented in the country build on existing development projects introduced before 2015 (Concorde, 2018). The majority of projects focus on addressing root causes of migration and the protection of migrants, not migration management per se. However, it has been noted that EU migration support to Ethiopia lacks overall coordination and it is difficult to get a clear overview of all components of the support (ibid.). This may have negative impacts on harmonisation of different interventions and ultimately overall coherence in the EU migration support.

Finally, some inconsistency in the framework and focus areas of the EU–Ethiopia migration partnership was also highlighted by experts and previous literature. As mentioned above, the focus on return and reintegration may have negative consequences for remittances, which constitute an important source of income for a significant proportion of Ethiopian households. The strong emphasis on readmissions from the EU side has also been put forward as potentially undermining the overall migration collaboration with Ethiopia (ibid.).

Interaction with development policies

There are several interactions between the EU funding to support migration in Ethiopia and development support by the EU. Many projects funded under the EUTF were in fact already in place before the signing of the migration partnership, and the EU was already providing development assistance related to migration before the EUTF was put in place (Concorde, 2018; Kipp, 2018). As mentioned above, many interventions to stem irregular migration have focused on support to local development and livelihoods. Nevertheless, as discussed in the previous section, policy incoherence across different policy areas exists, including incoherence with some fields of development policy.

Main development policies

The selected policies

In terms of national development, Ethiopia's GTP II was put in place in 2015 and spanned five years, with the main objective of the country reaching lower-middle-income status by 2025. The Plan explicitly mentions several migration aspects, such as the need to combat illegal human trafficking, encouraging Ethiopian diaspora to participate in investment activities and recognising the potential of remittances to improve the country's balance of payments.

At sectoral level, rural development, agriculture and land policy are closely linked with migration dynamics. Ethiopia's land policy has imposed restrictions on land possession. Current policies do not allow private ownership of land and they prohibit the transfer of land. There has not been any new allocation of land in a long time, and many youth in rural areas lack access to land.

Another policy area with a close connection to migration in Ethiopia is the labour market and employment creation. Ethiopia is facing challenges to create sustainable and inclusive jobs for its rapidly growing population, with potentially 2 million youth entering the labour market each year. Enabling sustainable job creation has become a top priority for the government, and it has in recent years launched programmes, policy agendas and created the JCC to enhance employment creation. International organisations have also launched initiatives to support job creation, including the World Bank Ethiopian Employment Opportunities Programme, and the ILO ProAgro programme that aims to contribute to more and better jobs in the agribusiness sector.

The rapid pace of urbanisation is partly driven by internal migration (Research and Evidence Facility, 2019). The younger generation of Ethiopians aspire for an urban life, and development policies have led to a concentration of economic and educational opportunities in urban areas (Schewel, 2021). The expansion of education since the 1990s has further spurred rural-to-urban migration to access secondary or higher education, which creates new life aspirations that often require continued migration (ibid.; Schewel and Fransen, 2018). At the same time, the urban transition and unfulfilled life aspirations have also had impacts on international migration, as women in rural areas have been shown to use migration to the Middle East as a way to finance future internal migration within Ethiopia upon their return (Schewel, 2021). For capital-constrained rural women, a move to the Middle East can be more accessible than internal migration through advanced loans that are paid back from a couple of months of work in the destination country. International labour migration is in this way used as a mechanism to fund investments in education or small business start-ups in urban cities and towns in Ethiopia.

Interactions with migration-related policies

Ethiopia's land policy is often mentioned in relation to migration dynamics in the country, and may provide an obstacle to migration as migrants cannot

sell or transfer land. At the same time, current allocation of land has left households with small land plots with limited production output, which may trigger out-migration to sustain livelihoods.

Employment is the main driver for both internal and international emigration, and has also been identified as key for the reintegration of refugees and immigrants. National and international initiatives to create employment for refugees and the national population can thus have impacts on out-migration.

Examples of impact on migration

Empirical evidence suggests that improving land tenure may not have important impacts for internal emigration (de Brauw and Mueller, 2012). Instead, land scarcity seems to be a driver for migration among the youth in some part of the country (Bezu and Holden, 2014). Credit constraints may be another barrier to migration, as evidence also shows that more productive households are more prone to having a member who has migrated (de Brauw and Mueller, 2012).

As discussed above, a strategy to support the integration of refugees has included the lifting of regulatory restrictions for refugees, as well as investments to support job creation for refugees and the national population. However, already high unemployment rates among youth makes such initiatives challenging. The Job Compact initiative is so far only in its initial phase, but it is likely to have limited success due to the low wages offered as well as a mismatch between the jobs offered and refugee skills (Betts et al., 2019).

Any additional information related to COVID-19

Ethiopian workers abroad have been seriously affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many workers in Gulf countries have been layed off, and the government has provided shelter and other support to stranded migrants in countries of destination who have been unable to suport themselves after loosing their jobs. The pandemic has also required more efforts around the reintegration of returning migrants from destination and transit countries. For example, an estimated 32,000 migrants are stranded in dire conditions in Yemen due to COVID-19 mobility restrictions that have impeded their journeys to Saudia Arabia (IOM, 2021a). Many migrants in destination and transit countries are also struggling to access health screening and treatment, and they face increased risk of experiencing xenophobia, exploitation and detention due to the pandemic (IOM, 2021b).

Irregular migration journeys have become increasingly dangerous during the pandemic as migrants have shifted towards unmonitored crossing points with higher risks of trafficking and kidnapping. These journeys are also subject to higher fees charged by smugglers (ibid.). Furthermore, experts also mentioned that the pandemic has shifted the focus away from certain

initatives to support the integration of refugees and IDPs who struggle to raise sufficent funding.

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