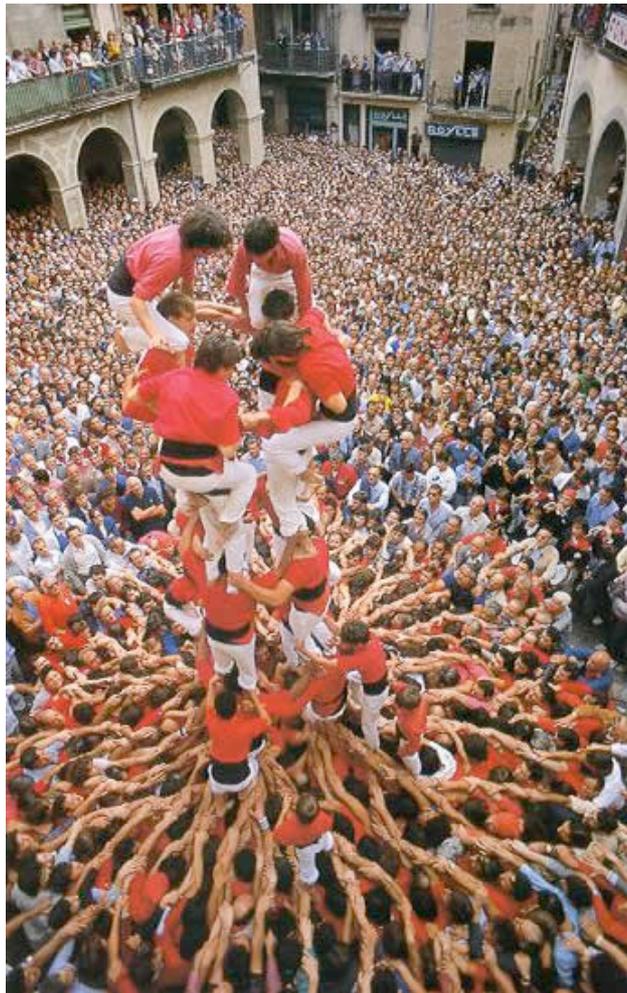


**Young Leaders Study Group on the Future of Europe:
Demographic Trends, Migration, and Social Cohesion**



Report

First Conference

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Introduction

Demographic Change and Migration are two of the most current topics in any discourse about global issues in general and the future of the transatlantic societies in particular. Both are politically undercut by the question of social cohesion. For this reason, the American Council on Germany and the Dräger Foundation chose to convene a third Young Leaders Study Group on the Future of Europe. The first of a series of three conferences took place in Berlin, where the 40 participants from eleven different countries gathered for a first and fundamental discussion of the topic. The group will meet again in Washington D.C. and Brussels over the upcoming twelve months.

While demographic change and migration are seen as factual phenomena, social cohesion can be viewed as a desirable condition. And whereas demographic change is still mostly viewed through national lenses – because it is nations that shrink (e.g. in many European countries, Russia, or Japan) or grow (e.g. many African countries, but also the United States) – migration has become a truly global trend. Gone are the days where immigration was conceived as a life-changing event for the individual that required the integration into a presumably static society. Today, migration means global mobility: People migrate on a temporary basis or across countries, keeping a foot in more than one community – thus, developing more than one single social identity: a so-called shared identity.

Beyond the questions of why people migrate or why societies change their demographic structure, this new phenomenon points to a more fundamental question of our modern era: What is it that holds a liberal society together? While the diversity that comes with migration may lead to less social cohesion in the short run; it may create new forms of solidarity in the long run.

How to go from the present – rather defensive – debate to this more positive view of the inherent societal transformations, is the major challenge our societies are confronted with. This report summarises the group’s discussion of around three days by first presenting some basic facts and figure, then outlining the resulting challenges and, thirdly, describing some policy responses. It will conclude with some open questions that remain for discussion in the upcoming two workshops.

1 Facts, Figures and Fiction

Migration, unlike demographic change, is not a new phenomenon. Only the migration debate is. Historically, humans have migrated for aeons, because they hoped for – and, in the long run, most often achieved – a better condition of life in a different place.

1.1 Migration

Migration is one of the three issues that will impact most the future development of our societies, *Peter Altmaier*, Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of the Interior in Berlin, started out his presentation. The others are climate change that endangers the planet and the current economic crisis that is eating up our capacity to act. The number of migrants worldwide, defined as people living outside their place of

birth for at least one year, is estimated at 200 million, or about three per cent of the world’s population. Interestingly, while the absolute number of migrants has risen from 82 million in 1970 through 175 million in 2000 to the present figure, their overall share has remained the same (i.e. 3%). *Tanja El-Cherkeh*, Head of the Migration Research Group at the Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWI), reported that Europe has increasingly become a host region, while the majority of migrants originate from countries like China, India, and the Philippines.

Irregular migration, a topic that often makes the headlines, accounts for only 2,5 to 4 million people per year, of which again 600,000 to 800,000 people are victims of trafficking. While this does not sound much in overall terms, the picture changes when one looks at individual places (let alone individual fates): Every year, some 2,800 illegal migrants arrive at the island of Malta in the Mediterranean, a country with an estimated population of only 400,000, *Peter Altmaier* said.

With regard to economic figures, *Tanja El-Cherkeh* reported that the overall payments of migrants to their state of origin (remittances) amount to 150 billion US-dollars through formal channels (e.g. money transfers like Western Union) and an estimated 300 billion US-dollars in informal channels (e.g. cash carried upon return or by trusted middlemen). This puts remittances second after global foreign direct investments (FDI), and makes them three times bigger than the overall amount of official development assistance (ODA) paid by governments and international organisations. Also, the net profit for traffickers is estimated at 10 billion US-dollars annually.

The situation in Germany is marked by a high degree of immigration, as *Peter Altmaier* elaborated. Among its 82 million inhabitants, 6,7 million are foreign nationals. These are again part of the broader group of 15,3 million (or nearly 19% of the population) that have a migration background, i.e. have either migrated themselves or have at least one parent that migrated into Germany. Around one fifth of this group (or roughly 3 million) are Muslims, as *Necla Kelek*, an author from Berlin who has published widely on this subject, informed the group. Especially in bigger cities like Berlin, Frankfurt, Cologne, or Hamburg, more than half of all newborns have this immigration background. This may serve as an indicator of how much more “normal” it will be in Germany in the future to have at least one foreign-born parent.

With regard to the different forms of migration and some of the respective “push” or “pull factors”, *Tanja El-Cherkeh* enumerated the following:

- **Labour migration** is driven by a desire for a higher income (or for an income at all) and for professional development; its extent is naturally determined by the availability of jobs in the target country and the working conditions and career prospects there.
- **Family reunification** is another form of migration that can be either voluntary or forced.
- People also migrate for the benefit of their **education** when they expect better training opportunities in a third country.

- **Refugees** are a particular group of migrants given their special political status (if acknowledged, that is). Usually, it is war, conflict, or persecution that push them into other countries.
- Whether **climate change** should be regarded as a push factor for migration, or whether there should be a special category of "climate refugees" are questions still unanswered in the current debate. While the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) proposes a narrow definition of refugee in order not to overstretch its mandate, others expect that climatic events like rising sea level, draughts, and extreme weather events will in the future be one factor in migration motivations.
- Finally, there is **irregular migration**, which is usually linked to labour. In the United States, for example, whole industries (like construction, manufacturing, or hotels and restaurants) rely on this form of migration, making it a real (for some: positive) economic factor. Research has shown that, despite claims to the contrary, there are half to one million irregular migrants in Germany alone, and between 4,5 and eight million in the whole of the EU.

In addition to their status and the kind of rights this will entail, refugees differ from other migrant groups, as they are, by definition, not meant to stay permanently. While of course all migrants can return home or continue their journey to another country (onward migration) if they so decide, refugees are expected to leave their host country once the situation in their home country has bettered.

1.2 Demographic Change

The world population will increase at least until 2050, when it will have reached about 9,2 billion people. This is, of course, only a rough estimate (with projections actually ranging from eight to twelve billion) with hidden premises and undeclared assumptions, but the overall trend is pretty clear, *Steffen Angenendt*, Member of the Research Division 'Global Issues' at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) in Berlin declared. This overall increase, however, shows some substantial variance between the developed, the less developed, and the least developed countries. While the former will mostly shrink in their population size, the latter two are likely to double their population; some countries, like Afghanistan, will even triple it.

The two main drivers of this change are fertility and mortality rates. While fertility rates are high in developing countries at the moment, by 2050 they will go down to two children per woman also in Asia, North Africa, and Latin America. Life expectancy is likely to rise from 47 years (where it stood in 1950) to 75 years by 2050. Only in some countries like Russia and South Africa, life expectancy is actually declining due to diseases (like AIDS) and social degradation (e.g. alcoholism).

In addition to these broader changes, there will also be shifts within individual societies. At the moment, Germany, Italy, and Japan are the only OECD countries with a decrease of their working-age population. This phenomenon, however, will extend to more countries in future, thus the global demand for high-skilled labour and academics will increase.

At this point (at the latest), demographic change and migration become highly inter-related. A country like Germany, for example, is indeed losing people: Despite the fairly high numbers of migrants (as given by *Peter Altmaier*), the country has only a ‘surplus’ of around 40.000 net migrants (i.e. after subtracting the number of outward migrants). However, each year there are 200.000 more deaths than newborns, making the country shrink by 160.000 people each year. China, to give another example, is expected – due to the preference of boys over girls brought about by the one-child-policy – to have, by 2020, 30 million more men than women.

In the United States, in contrast, demographic change is not manifested in declining numbers but in a changing relationship of race and ethnicity: By 2042, the present majority group of white people (that today accounts for two-thirds of Americans) will become a minority, the U.S. census bureau recently predicted. Eight years later, those groups who are now labelled minorities (i.e. those who describe themselves as Hispanics, blacks, Asians and native groups) will make up 54% of the total population.

2 Implications and Interpretations

Sound policies should be based on a correct observation of reality, but things are often not as easy. Even where undisputed numbers exist, these may lead to differing interpretations that result in different policy preferences. Moreover, if mindsets are – as is the case in the migration debates of many countries – pre-polarised, available data tend to be used for given purposes rather than interpreted in a neutral way. Thus, before policies and politics come into play, this section tries to go into the question of what certain number may imply and how they are interpreted (differently).

2.1 Data and their problems

At a very basic level, *Tanja El-Cherkeh* noted that statistics and data are indeed the trickiest elements in migration research because countries have different methods in compiling their data. There are no agreed practices for counting the citizens, let alone groups that do not even have a legal status. As a politician, *Peter Altmaier* deplored that we lack the instruments to measure the degree of integration into a society, or indeed the “absorption capacity” of something like the labour market. While one could maybe use some quantitative and financial indicators like the participation of migrants in language training or their contribution to the social security systems, for real qualitative social indicators the structures are changing too rapidly, he said.

To these difficulties with migration data, *Steffen Angenendt* adds that estimates of demographic change rely on projections and therefore necessarily imply some uncertainties. While the most relevant factor is the fertility rate that, over past decades, has allowed more or less correct prognoses, there are some endogenous factors that are not easy to consider. For example, population growth in a given country might stop due to food or water shortages. Also, if consumption patterns should change profoundly, like more and more Chinese eating meat as they grow into the middle class, this can have an impact on demographics.

In a more radical interpretation, *Björn Schwentker*, a writer and freelance journalist from Hamburg, proposed to see demographic change not as a problem at all because, as he said, demographics constantly change anyway. Only when “the change in change changes”, i.e. the degree of variation becomes extraordinarily high, then there may be a need for more purposeful adaptation. While many people point to the retiring baby-boomers in the developed world and the problems this may cause to social security systems there, he opined that demographic change is in fact not the cause of such socio-economic challenges but only makes them visible. Not only is the broadly accepted pension age of 65 an artificial boundary (indeed, when Imperial Chancellor Bismarck introduced the first pension law in Germany 120 years ago, benefits went only to people older than 70 while the average lifetime expectancy amounted to no more than 45 years, thus giving only a quarter of the population the possibility to actually receive pension). But also would the so-called baby-boomers in Western societies will die after 2030, bringing a hitherto unknown societal rejuvenation.

This leads to a first set of interpretations that relate to the challenges arising from phenomena like migration and demographic change. Subsequently, the question of social cohesion is touched upon, as this is an underlying – interpretative – concept that determines politics and policies, whether explicit or not.

2.2 The challenges of migration and demographic change

The challenges that migration poses are not the same in sending and receiving countries, a simple fact that *Tanja El-Cherkeh* pointed out.

In sending countries, one important subject is the labour market, although the direction of the debate depends on whether there is a surplus or a shortage of labour. In case of the former, it is natural for job seekers to migrate. In the case of the latter, it is usually the income opportunities that attract high-skilled people who are actually in demand in their own country but cannot be adequately paid there. One famous example of this kind of “brain drain” is that, allegedly, more Malawian doctors practice in the British city of Manchester than in their home country. Once people have found jobs abroad, they usually support their families and communities back home. While the real impact of such remittances still needs to be studied, as *Tanja El-Cherkeh* cautioned, the amount of money transferred is, as was mentioned above, an essential factor for the home economies.

Especially in the current economic crisis, remittances have shown to have mixed effects, *Michelle Wucker*, Executive Director of the World Policy Institute in New York, explained. While their overall numbers are mostly going down (except in places like the Philippines), remittances are worth more due to the depreciation of many local currencies. In the end, however, reliance on such payments cannot be a long-term policy because the loss of brain weighs heavier than the gain in money, she warned. At this point, the question of a transfer of knowledge becomes pertinent, as huge investments need to be made in the educational systems and electronic infrastructure of sending countries.

Closely related is the issue of Diasporas, i.e. of closely-knit groups of nationals in a third country that maintain relatively intensive links with their home country. Again, *Tanja El-Cherkeh* warned that these Diasporas are not such homogeneous groups as they often appear. Nonetheless, some also try to have a political impact, especially in countries with an unstable or disputed government. Finally, families have evolved as a link between sending and receiving countries, with so called care chains stretching across borders: Because Polish mothers work in Germany (e.g. taking care of elderly), women from Ukraine come to Poland to take care of the children in these families.

In receiving countries, again the labour market is of importance, as a large part of migration is directed towards better job opportunities. In many cases, an underperforming labour market produces a certain share of unemployment among the host population while still leaving room for jobs to take by immigrants. The latter often take on whichever job is on offer, regardless of their own qualification. Most often, however, their professional qualification is not even recognised in the host country, which is why doctors work as nurses or teachers as cleaners. In addition, access to the labour market is often intransparent, especially when immigrants have no established networks to rely on. Also on a general level, it is difficult to anticipate future labour needs. The present crisis, for example, will soon result in a productivity slowdown just like in the late 1970s, and resources will shift to more productive areas. Still, there are little signs of social unrest in the Western world, as one participant argued.

Another important issue for receiving countries is the integration of the “second generation” (and often already third generation), i.e. of the children (or grand-children) of actual migrants. Being born in the respective country, often also with citizenship, they should – at least in principle – have the same opportunities as those without a migration background. However, surveys such as the educational “PISA study” of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) show that many of those belonging to the second generation fare below their colleagues from the same age group. One major aspect seems to be the lack of language knowledge, *Tanja El-Cherkeh* reported. In some cases, young educated second-generation migrants even return to the country of their parents, adding to the “brain waste” of academics working in low-skilled jobs mentioned above.

The major resulting challenge is whether and how migration can be managed, i.e. the balancing of these two different (or, at least, not necessarily complementary) sets of expectations and needs. A widely discussed recent proposal focuses on “circular migration” that ought to bring about a “win-win-win situation” benefiting all parties involved, the sending and receiving country as well as the migrants themselves. When labour migrants agree to return home after a given period of time, before they may go back again to the host country, effects like brain drain should – in theory – be avoided and a “triple win” should be realised: The home country receives remittances during the migrants’ absence and a brain gain upon their return; host countries enjoy qualified labour at lower cost, without also having to heavily invest in their integration; and the migrants themselves benefit from the wage opportunities and professional experiences abroad.

However, difficulties remain not only with putting circular migration into practice but already in defining what this concept should all encompass. There is only agreement that it should include existing concepts such as temporary migration programmes and onward migration. The question of voluntary or forced return after a given time is controversial, if only because it might deter those desperately sought highly qualified migrants that prefer to stay in their country of choice. Whether it is actually a good thing that temporary migrants do not have to integrate due to their limited stay is also debated.

From an American point of view, *Michelle Wucker* argued that efforts to manage migration by way of quotas and point systems might be adequate. They, however, find their limitations in such decisive factors as the availability of jobs or the actual gap in the economic situation of sending and receiving countries. Other countries like Mexico have gone from being a sending to becoming a receiving country, not least because many migrants from Southern America get stuck there on way to the U.S. With the high number of migrants stranded south of the American border, Mexico has become an enforcement country without any experience, she said, more than doubling the number of detention centres (from 25 to 52) since 2000.

Under the present circumstances of economic malaise, also in the United States the tone of the migration debate has changed. When skilled foreigners are laid off first, countries like India are benefiting from a “reverse brain drain”. High-skilled ‘re-migrants’ often become entrepreneurs in their home countries, even though they may not always find the right environment there. This need not (yet) signal the end of American way of life welcoming the “huddled masses yearning to breathe free”. Still, with many of the high-skilled engineers now working in the Arab world, China, or Russia, a certain fear of a technology transfer has developed in the U.S. In addition, prejudices among the general public against “the immigrants” have fostered – except for the Latino gardener that many like to keep in their suburban homes.

While these challenges in individual countries and societies are real and tough to deal with, they pale in comparison to what demographic change may hold for us. *Steffen Angenendt* saw political challenges emanating from it for nearly all facets of public life. Food security is tenuous due to a constantly diminishing grain production (which has been shrinking by 0,5% annually since 1984) and a decrease in per capita cropland since 1950. The “green revolution” referring to the technological transformation of agriculture that began in 1945 has come to an end; further productivity gains could only be reached through genetically modified organisms (GMO), he argued. This, however, is an unresolved political question. In addition, while the over-fishing of the seas has led to the establishment of fish farms, the latter have produced their own problems by the widespread use of antibiotics, thus contributing to an increase of antibiotic-resistant bacterial strains that threaten human health.

Water itself will pose a problem. Irrigated areas will decrease by one fourth by the year 2050, when about one billion people will live in countries with absolute water scarcity. Already now, in many countries there is a competition whether water should be used for agriculture or industry, given that 1,000 tons of water is needed to produce one ton of grain. Trying to gain water from the sea entails enormous energy needs for desalination, while energy consumption will increase anyway given the

mere number of people around. The situation will be particularly difficult in cities, due to an explosion of the urban population especially in developing countries. In addition, the spread of diseases like HIV/AIDS entails poverty and a loss of workforce, particularly in Southern Africa. Finally, ageing is also a global phenomenon with the number of people over 60 years of age tripling by 2050. As some say, China will be old before it will be rich.

Young populations in particular, *Steffen Angenendt* argued, bear a fair degree of potential for violent conflicts. A correlation has been detected between the age of a population and its conflict potential (the so called “population-security nexus”). The age categories range from ‘very young’ (where two-thirds or more of the population are under age of 30) over ‘youthful’ (where growth among this youngest age groups has started to decline) and ‘transitional’ (where there are equal proportions of children, adolescents and young people under 30 years) to ‘mature’ (where at least 55 percent of the population are above 30 years old). 80% of all new conflicts occurred in countries with a ‘very young’ or ‘youthful’ age structure. At the same time, 87% of the countries with a ‘very young’ structure also had autocratic or weakly democratic governments.

In fact, all four countries that are often regarded as ‘failing states’ (Afghanistan, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Somalia) have the same (i.e. ‘very young’) age structure. Not surprisingly, all these countries also have a very dismal record on gender equality. Also the conflict potential in the Middle East is likely to remain high if only for demographic reasons, because the Palestinians will outnumber the Jews in about 30 years. Yet, there is the one hopeful example of Tunisia that changed its age structure from ‘very young’ in 1975 to ‘transitional’ by 2005, due to a decline in birth rates.

In contrast to this more bleak view, *Björn Schwentker* argued that demographic change is not a major problem. On the one hand, wealth (measured as GDP per capita) will continue to rise in countries like Germany as well as in the EU in general (estimated at a 10-55% increase until 2025). On the other, shrinking societies (like Germany, Poland, or Japan) naturally will have less unemployment. One participant, however, argued that it is not possible to decouple economic growth from the underlying demographics. Instead, in the long run, countries need population growth for their GDP to grow, because the number of ideas cannot grow independently and indefinitely. Plus, for some areas, a society simply needs people between the ages of 25 to 40 years to innovate. In his reply, *Björn Schwentker* maintained that there is no clear evidence that productivity drops with age, he said, proposing life-long learning instead of schools only. In fact, we would need to rewrite the economic textbooks because the young and old together are the most productive.

With regard to how to preserve a society’s welfare in globalisation, one participant argued that there are only three options: One can either have more babies, though their numbers are in decline in the developed world, not least because they cost the parents more money than they bring (for example due to education fees). Alternatively, people could work longer, i.e. beyond the Bismarckian age of 65; however, this would require meaningful jobs for elderly people at a time where unemployment is soaring among the general public. The most realistic option is therefore the third one: Migration. *John Hulsman*, a Berlin-based American

consultant, added a fourth point, i.e. to grow your way out economically. Especially because the latter is not very likely even in the long term given Europe’s sluggish economies, he called for a free and frank discussion about which of these ways (or a combination thereof) should be the one to follow.

Instead of focusing on old-fashioned concepts of growth, *Björn Schwentker* argued that demographic change demands new concepts of life, and how we want to achieve these. What should, for example, be the ratio between those in work and those not (like the children, elderly, sick, or unemployed)? He proposed to expand the workforce, primarily by building on the huge potential in women as well as on broader education. Above all, we should enable elder citizens to work. This requires a complete rethinking of the concept of ageing, e.g. by inventing flexible pension systems. Some participants argued that today’s jobs seldom suit the elderly (or indeed working parents), plus they saw a need to get industry workers back into work.

The bottom line of *Björn Schwentker’s* argument was that we should abandon what he called “normative demographics”: We cannot control fertility or migration, least of all life expectancy. The ‘standard demographic pyramid’ is sign for bad education, high mortality, and low life expectancy, thus should not be taken as a model. Instead, we should define a new way of living well with a population ‘pyramid’ that looks more like a tree or even a barrel.

Others put the more fundamental question of whether we can actually afford the kind of growth we had until now without wasting resources and killing the planet. Were China to be as rich as the United States, one participant contended, we would need three planets to live on. World population growth alone will put pressure on any public good imaginable. While some said that there is a necessity for economic growth in order to live longer and better, others felt that growth is only needed to go from poverty to wealth. Once you are wealthy, more growth does not necessarily do you any good. Even in Africa, one participant reported, growth has not advanced social stability or well-being but mainly fuelled conflict.

2.3 Social Cohesion

Both migration and demographic change put into question the societal fabric as it had existed for a long time. In the hierarchical societies of the past, all people had their place, first defined by an ethnic approach, then by someone’s socio-economic status, *Rita Süßmuth* reminded the group. Cohesion in today’s context of diversity has to be defined anew: Going way beyond migration, it should include closing the gap between rich and poor, between men and women, or between the generations, she said. In this sense, cohesion is about finding talent in everyone and investing in people so that they can take the place in society that they themselves strive for.

Contrary to this ideal view, an individual’s role in society is still an issue of power, *Mekkonen Mesghena*, Head of Section “Migration and Diversity” at the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation in Berlin, complained, and in positions of power, there are only few immigrants. *Nevim Çil*, a research associate at the Humboldt University zu Berlin working on Turkish migrants’ views of Europe, concurred by saying that someone’s role is still largely defined by the majority society. Due to the asymmetric situation in

society, Muslims are assigned role of “bad guys”. She pleaded that one should not divide immigrants into good and bad, into integrated and not integrated. Likewise, *Mekkonen Mesghena* maintained that immigration is creative and energetic, and it should be seen positively rather than negatively.

When working well, integration should pave the way to strengthen this kind of fabric. In this sense, formal and informal integration processes reveal a lot about how societies function at the core: Do people in a host country put the stress on assimilation into existing structures or do they welcome multicultural diversity? The old mantra of “assimilation” is a personal and intellectual reduction, *Rita Süßmuth* felt. Others argued for a differentiation between “cultural diversity” (which builds on a value community) and multiculturalism (which is indifferent towards society). In the end, integration becomes a degree of a society’s strength, of its openness to change and the new that migration has always brought.

In a *group discussion*, participants tried to come closer to what this fabric that holds a society together is or should be. They asked, where the (perceived) present social disequilibrium would come from, i.e. whether it is the number of newcomers, their individual background, or the way the host society either welcomes or ignores them. Although there is no agreed definition of social cohesion, its actual meaning seems to imply the broader question of how a society can address diversity issues that stem, among other things, from migration, but also include inter-generational aspects. Learning to deal with such differences is what democracy is about, *Rita Süßmuth* declared.

In the U.S., cohesion is based on a concept of identity that has two angles, one of the participants explained. One angle is political: Everybody needs to speak English, to accept democratic principles, and to have a basic understanding of U.S. history. The other is about aspects of citizenship and culture, where the motto is ‘diversity within unity’ and where naturalised citizens receive awards for their achievements.

In Europe, in contrast, identity for many is linked to ethnicity. In many communities the harsh face of nationalism is still around, one participant said. Ironically, newly affected neighbourhoods tend to be more anti-immigrant than those that are used to it – or not affected at all. *Nevim Çil*, for example, contended that young Turks in Germany had to face a new nationalism after reunification. While in the 1980s, the German society appeared more open, this changed with calls like “We are the People” that brought about the fall of the Berlin Wall.

In a nutshell, despite some good laws, it is the migrant-welcoming attitude that is still lacking in much of Europe, whereas as this is part of what (has) made the U.S. so attractive for people all around the world.

This points to the question of the responsibility of a host society for integration. Who prepares German society for black Germans, someone asked. Also *Peter Altmaier* argued that we need new, more complex integration instruments in order to integrate the natives into a transformed, more diverse society. On this basis, the call to extend integration courses to the majority society is only half-ironic. However, criticism of the host society should not take prominence, *Necla Kelek* said. Most importantly, immigrants here do not live in a Diaspora but by their free choice. Instead of arguing

with Europeans at eye-level, the immigrants should use the opportunity to think about the their own (or their parents’) country and the situation there.

At a very principled level, some argued that indeed the premise of restricting access to one’s country is wrong, and that every human being should be free to pursue their happiness wherever they wish. The decision to delineate between legal and illegal migrants to them was entirely arbitrary. At the other end of the spectrum, also the limits of what a society can accept were made clear. Migrants need to accept the basic values and rules of the host country. While some argued that many migrants lack this loyalty, others reported from a survey in Germany that found migrants having more trust in the country’s laws than the natives. Still, at bottom a liberal society could not accept Sharia law. Or as *Rita Süßmuth* said, the limit of diversity is fundamentalism of any sort.

2.4 Focus 1: Islam and the West

Whereas the migration debate in the United States is dominated by impressions of the Latino group, in many Western European societies Islam is seen as a particular challenge. *Necla Kelek* felt that the discourse about Muslim migrants in Germany is different than about any other group. She also saw that religion has much more responsibility in the debate about migration, as well as in the actual integration of migrants, than many currently recognise. Taking the individual as starting point of her analysis, she inquired about who holds back the individual in their development. In the first place, she saw culture, religion (whichever one believes in), and family values. Society and state, for her, come only second.

With a view to Islam in particular, *Necla Kelek* derided two phenomena that she judged as being in the way of integration of Muslim migrants into Western societies. First of all, an ‘Actually Existing Islamism’ (a word play on the commonly used slogan in Communist countries of the ‘Actually Existing Socialism’ as opposed to the merely theoretical one) has not been reformed or secularised for the past 1400 years. The worldview transported by such a religion, she felt, has a tremendous impact on the individual lives of believers when it leads them – this was her second point – to form “counter societies” (*Gegengesellschaften*). Such closed groups demand freedom from the state but are illiberal towards their members, treating them – like some Muslim organisations do – as minors (*Unmündige*). As a consequence, she saw a special responsibility of secular Muslims to work against such counter societies.

In a *group discussion*, participants considered the conflict potential of migration in general and of Muslim migrants in particular. Problems seem to start when migrants, at some point in their new lives, feel refused by the host society and become angry minorities. This is when they ask themselves, who am I, as one participant reported. If at such a time so called “first recruiters” are around to (re-)introduce them to Islam (or to a particular fundamentalist version of it), they may turn away from the host society and begin to work against it. Very often, this also results in clashes with the family, leaving frustrated parents behind.

Whether such experiences should suffice to become a martyr, was hotly debated. Some argued that the Muslim Ummah is like a body, so that when one finger is cut off (metaphorically speaking), all Muslims would feel the pain. Others replied that

there is anything but unity in the Muslim world, so a ‘community of believers’ would be nonsense. Similarly, while some felt that actual conflicts in foreign countries (like in the Middle East) do play a role in the motivation of some angry migrants, other participants countered that this foreign policy awareness is only exploited, even given the (perceived and real) double standards of, for example, Western policies. Finally, one participant asked, what should the angry, frustrated native person do?

Others were not so convinced of the individual responsibility of Muslim migrants for their integration but felt that this was a task for the whole society. *Mekonnen Mesghena* argued that integration is all about access – to education (the “cornerstone of integration”), citizenship, and the labour market, which even immigrants with a university degree often have difficulties to enter. Thus, to him the problem with integration is not with a particular group of migrants that have a common belief, but it is a question of social exclusion not only of migrants but also of all citizens.

Some participants also disagreed with the accusations against Islam as a particular religion. They saw integration problems not with “the Muslims” as such but with individuals or groups, and proposed that there are laws to deal with these. One participant argued that, by looking at the broader picture, one could see that the democratic defence is indeed working. In contrast, real counter or parallel societies exist rather among the Chinese in the world, or for example among the Japanese in Düsseldorf. The fact that this is not seen as a problem by the majority society revealed, in their views, the “Islam argument” as being barely concealed Islamophobia. Turning against the singling out of one religion in an exaggerated “clash of civilisations”, one participant pointed to home-grown terrorists threats in Europe like the Spanish ETA, or to the difficulties that criminal gangs or disenfranchised black communities pose to social cohesion in the United States.

Others argued that indeed each community, whether religiously defined or otherwise, would need to begin integration among its own ranks rather than blaming the host society. One participant cited the historic examples of Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi, both known as adamant fighters for social freedom. They indeed started with liberalising reforms in their own communities before they took the fight further to demand changes from the broader society.

3 Policies and Politics

Based on the facts and figures presented at the outset, and the different interpretations they produce, it is now time to turn to the tricky issue of what policies should follow. In the words of *John Hulsman* such an approach should be neither Marxist – because policy can in actual fact change the trajectory of where we go – nor Hegelian – because we cannot solve a problem by denying it. Nor should we cherish the fetish of predicting doom, like this was the case on various occasions over the past decades, but try some real-world solutions instead.

The main responsibility for devising policies in response to the double challenge of migration and demographic change is of course with the government. *Peter Altmaier* pointed to some difficulties arising simply from how governments work, not what

policies they would like to follow. Because despite all good intentions, it is often different ministries dealing with migration issues or demographic change, for example an issue like environmental migration is on the portfolio of neither the ministry for the environment nor the one for the interior, but is taken care of by the development ministry.

One main point of *Rita Süßmuth* in this regard was that the government should make policies *with* the migrants, not for them – just like it is still necessary to develop gender policies not for but with women. Plus, it is not only the government that has to be involved, but also civil society as a whole.

3.1 Responses given

Policies of migration management can start at different levels, as *Tanja El-Cherkeh* pointed out: At the national, at the European, or at the international level. Nationally, such a policy can allow for temporary or permanent migration, and it can use a point system to categorise the qualifications of a migrant e.g. for the labour market. This is usually fairly transparent, though it can be administratively slow as in Canada. However, it becomes unsuitable if the jobs available do not concur with the migrants' profiles so that nurses might end up driving cabs. The United States itself, the immigration country par excellence, is in a debate about the legalisation of the recent waves of (mostly Latino) illegal immigrants. *Michelle Wucker* told the group of rising public support for such a measure. The respective 2007 policy proposal did not fail due to concerns over an amnesty but over the proposed “guest worker programme” as a way to bring needed labour to the country.

Germany, in contrast, had long denied the fact that it is home to millions of migrants. Not least because immigrants do not vote, an active integration policy was a long-time taboo in his country, *Peter Altmaier* admitted. Particularly after an ideological and often emotional debate in the 1990s, this taboo was broken when the Red-Green coalition passed a new citizens' law in 2000, which introduced the *ius soli* (right of citizenship for those born in a given country) in addition to the existing *ius sanguinis* (where citizenship is given to those whose parent(s) hold(s) citizenship). Today, *Tanja El-Cherkeh* reported, there are even naturalisation parties being celebrated in Germany. Only halfway through this process, the country also tries to counter future workforce shortages, e.g. by passing the 2005 Immigration Act aimed at attracting highly-qualified employees, entrepreneurs and students.

This paradigm shift about integration is exemplary of how deeply societies are affected by migration. In order to come to terms with the migratory waves of the past, the current grand (i.e. right-left) coalition embarked on pragmatic measures such as holding regular integration summits and offering language and integration courses. In the past years, the federal government has spent 155 million Euro for integration courses and more than 500 million Euro for language courses. These courses would work particularly well, *Peter Altmaier* said, because spouses are also participating and childcare is offered during lessons.

One particular effort was undertaken with the convocation of a German Islam Conference, with which the conservative Minister of the Interior, Wolfgang Schäuble, tried to reach out to Muslim communities in the country, *Peter Altmaier* continued.

While this Conference that concluded its work around the time of the group’s meeting in Berlin was largely seen as an important and fairly successful first step, one participant criticised that a real discourse should also include those groups who disagree with the mainstream society, e.g. the Turkish Islamist group Millî Görüş (“The National Vision”).

The EU itself has two dimensions to deal with: Internally, there should be free movement of persons among the 27 member states, even though some countries chose to impose some restrictions during a transition period of seven years after the 2004 enlargement. Externally, the Union has started to tackle immigration questions jointly, because both the flows of migrants (especially through Northern Africa and the Mediterranean) and the ageing of societies are perceived as common problems.

The “Blue Card initiative” – modelled after the famous American Green Card scheme – is only one of the answers that the EU has given, though the ultimate competence for accepting migrants remains with member states. Other initiatives relate to the sharing of good integration practices, from offering courses for recent migrants to fundamental reforms with a view to providing equal chances in education and at the workplace. Given the interdependence between countries of origin and those of destination, Europe has started to address questions of migration together with African countries as part of their mutual development policies.

3.2 Options weighed

In addition to the existing policies presented above, there are a number of options that policymakers ponder. With regard to the integration of migrants, *Peter Altmaier* recommended to better adapt the school system. In some cities, four out of five pupils are non-German-speaking, so it would be wise to arrange pre-school language training for them. As concerns the fight against illegal migration, he came back to the idea of circular migration. Originally developed by a UN working group, the concept intends to link the benefits of migration to the labour markets both in the sending and receiving country. In return for cooperation on border control, sending countries are allowed quotas of non-renewable work permits of about five years. When the permit elapses, the migrants return to their home country, bringing their fresh expertise and thus giving back also to their own country. While the concept sounds beneficial in theory, especially by turning the unavoidable brain drain into a brain gain for all sides, some participants warned that it would merely repeat the mistakes made with the guest workers of the 1970s who simply did not want to leave the host country.

Another issue is the legalisation of those migrants that once entered the country unlawfully. *Michelle Wucker* argued that legalisation helps to strengthen the migrants’ position vis-à-vis their employers. She explained that the only reason why there has so far not been a rise in unemployment in the U.S. construction business is that most laid-off workers do not have any papers, thus they do not appear in the official statistics. Others warned that, while making sense for the receiving country, legalisation could just as well become a pull-factor, thus even spurring more illegal migration. Therefore, in the sending countries, investments in education and business opportunities are more important.

Migrants should become more visible in the political public, *Rita Süßmuth* demanded, and *Peter Altmaier* suggested including them in daily soap operas and the like. Participants proposed that governments should also recruit more staff from minorities. They should focus in particular on resilient communities and engage with them and their leaders. In order to build trust, simple things like allowing the transport of holy water on a plane during the Hajj would already help.

With regard to the extension of voting rights to migrants having lived in a given country for a certain amount of time, *Peter Altmaier* admitted that he is personally reluctant towards such a policy measure. He saw an intrinsic link between citizenship and voting rights, and would rather encourage migrants to apply for German citizenship than giving away this right too generously. In general, he called for the migration debate to be extended to Europe, so that countries could learn from the others.

3.3 Focus 2: The European Union

Another particular focus was on the European Union and whether it is a serious actor in global affairs, including migration and demography. In a discussion, *John Hulsman* and *Jan Techau*, Head of Program at the German Council on Foreign Relations in Berlin, agreed that the EU is a global player when it comes to trade and aid, but has no geopolitical power or influence. This has so far been an endemic feature and would not be changed by the new institutional structure brought about by the Lisbon reform Treaty. What is needed instead are three things, they claimed: Interests, defined and made visible by the political leadership of the Union; the money and instruments needed to implement these interests; and the necessary coherence and political will for all that.

According to former German foreign minister *Joschka Fischer*, instead of such converging interests a re-nationalisation has taken place during the current crisis. Especially Germany, a long-standing proponent of European integration, has become more “French”, as he said: The EU is not a key goal anymore but serves only as a framework for the national interest. Contrary to France, however, this is not part of a (for example, Gaullist) strategic decision, but just happened due to uncommitted politicians.

A dramatic lack of leadership, in fact, is a problem for all of Europe, *Joschka Fischer* continued. Even if the Lisbon Treaty should enter into force, the optimistic spirit is gone. Leaders would no longer, as they did in the past, put part of their interest in the process of European integration. In the end, national heads of state and government would re-elect José Manuel Barroso as Commission President not because of his integration qualities but because of his weakness, he predicted.

In response, the EU would need both new projects and institutions, just like the Euro as a project was accompanied by the European Central Bank as an institution, both promoted by the then Commission President Jacques Delors. Institutions, *Joschka Fischer* said, are not an end in themselves, but instruments to reach one’s goals. Without better and more integrated institutions, however, he predicted a failure of the Union. What ultimately kept him more optimistic in the mid-term was the fact that member states have invested too much in the EU to let it fail. A possible drift of

Poland to the U.S, of Germany to the East, and of France to South is too much of a nightmare for all parties involved to let it happen.

About the question of the EU's global ambition, *John Hulsman* and *Jan Techau* felt that the United States is mostly agnostic. It merely wants to be able to rely on ally, and for this it needs policy output.

The question of the EU's global role will thus remain even beyond the Washington conference in November. What else might be debated then and there is what the last part of this report is about.

4 Questions and Conclusions

The upcoming conference in Washington, D.C., will certainly focus more on the United States than this initial meeting, where Germany and Europe caught more attention. In addition to simply learning more about American views, however, there are some crosscutting issues that remain open and that may deserve particular discussion.

The first is in the study group's title: While migration and demographic trends were discussed widely on the basis of a common understanding, it was less clear what exactly social cohesion should come to mean. In this context, the group could debate differing concepts of (formal) citizenship and also the varying social models that exist not only on the two sides of the Atlantic but also in the non-Western parts of the world. In addition, the existence of parallel communities in general, not only those based on religion, and their effects on the majority society should be worth the debate.

With regard top migration, it might be worth to take a broader view and look more into the global issues this phenomenon entails, in addition to questions like how much immigration the Western countries want themselves. Whether migration should be restricted at all (and thus be made potentially illegal) is a very fundamental question that might benefit from a creative, forward-looking debate.

The same holds true for the demographic trends: While some of them look bleak in relation to today's policies, it may be the time to think out of the box when devising the responses to undeniable changes.