

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



Report

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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. Its 35 participants from eleven different countries gathered for an extended period to discuss very practical and policy-oriented aspects of the subject. Because the final meeting took place in Brussels and Paris, it provided in fact three particular perspectives in addition to the broader transatlantic angle: The Belgian one, the French one, and the one from the European Union (EU).

This report summarises the group’s discussion over five days by first examining the effects that different forms of immigration have on the countries in Europe and the policies that the EU has devised in response. The second part looks into the issues surrounding the actual integration of migrants, presenting concrete examples from the field. It also refers to how the second (and third) generation of migrants achieves integration and which factors – such as the economic crisis or media coverage in general – may impede successful integration. The third section deals with both the debate in France and the more fundamental question whether Islam is compatible with modern liberal values. Finally, the report brings together those parts of the conference that focused less exclusively on demography and migration as such but looked at global issues such as Transatlantic security and the ongoing geopolitical shift from West to East.

The report does not venture to provide some final conclusions. Not only because the participants themselves did not formally provide these, but also because the process as such – and with it the discussion among the members of the study group – remains open and ongoing.

1 Demography, Migration, and the Policy Response

The main demographic challenges that Western societies face today are threefold. First of all and by now fairly well covered, fertility is well below replacement level in most Western countries that belong to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). This level is calculated at 2.1 children per woman between 15 and 45 years of age. France is close to this level thanks to concrete policies aimed at working women and families, such as the provision of child care facilities and tax incentives. Germany and Italy, in contrast, figure around 1.3 to 1.4 children per woman. Moreover, a woman’s average age for their first child has increased from 23 to 30 years. Secondly, life expectancy has increased by 12 years since 1950, rising from 69 to 81 years at birth. Thirdly, marital status and family formation are changing fast. The number of marriages has gone down, while divorces are increasing as well as the number of people that never marry. As a consequence, the average household size is declining over time, more and more children are growing up in single-parent households, and both elder people and divorced or single persons are more likely to rely on the social safety net, *Georges*

Lemaître from the OECD Directorate for Employment, Labor and Social Affairs in Paris summed up the statistics.

Even though demographic decline is still some years away in Europe, its most immediate effects will be on the working-age population. In most OECD countries, the working-age population increased between 2000 and 2010. With current migration levels, however, it will be in decline over the next decade, with fewer workers to finance social expenditures. Moreover, certain occupations such as in the care sector, in construction, food processing or cleaning as well as in hi-tech and engineering will soon be short of labour.

1.1 Different forms of migration and their effects

Throughout the OECD, migration, not human fertility, has become the predominant source of population growth, as *Anna D’Addio*, a colleague from the same OECD Directorate, presented. It is the net migration, i.e. the number of immigrants versus emigrants that determines whether a country’s population is growing or shrinking. For historical as well as social reasons, the share of migrants (usually referred to as “foreign-born citizens”) varies from country to country. They make up less than 2 per cent of the Polish population, while they represent more than 30 per cent of the citizens of Luxembourg. The EU average is 10 per cent and increasing.

In some aspects, the immigration population differs from the native born population, for example in age composition. The share of elderly and children is lower in the migrant population, which in return usually has a much higher concentration in the working age. This produces a mixed picture with regard to the effects on the labour market: In countries with a young migration history, the migrant employment rate is higher than that of the natives (i.e. those working in relation to the overall group). At the same time, however, the unemployment rate often is also higher for migrants than for the native population (because there are more people who want to work but cannot). Generally, also the at-risk-of-poverty rate is higher for migrants, especially for children, *Anna d’Addio* said.

In particular concerning welfare systems, one has to look at the numbers, not least because some people in Europe suspect migrants come only for generous social security. In fact, contributory transfers to migrants (such as pensions and health insurance) are 20% lower than to the native population, whereas non-contributory transfers (i.e. mainly social assistance) are some 20% higher. While it is true that “integration costs” need to be taken into account, they may thus actually be lower than many would expect. Beyond the maths, however, the real question, as one of the participants remarked, is whether a society gets the integration it wants for whichever amount of money it may be investing?

Promoting labour migration is a major element in all policies directed at managing demographic change, as *Georges Lemaître* and *Anna D’Addio* concurred. While there are no findings about a link between migrants and productivity, labour migrants can help boost economic output (the gross domestic product, or GDP) as they are mostly of working-age population and have high employment rates. In contrast, non-migration policies focus on increasing the number of working women, extending the working life or shortening university studies, and investing in education and skills

trainings. For example, in Germany and Japan, the increase in work participation helped offset these countries' low levels of migration. However, such changes in the employment rate of residents have built-in limits (the maximum level of employment is estimated at 80%), and they can only be achieved in the medium- to long-term.

The “ideal” labour migrants, as *Georges Lemaître* described them, would have a job upon or soon after their arrival. They would have continued employability, preferably starting from a young age, lest they draw on social systems after the peak of the native population. In fact, there is no shortage of the right people willing to come, but it is doubtful whether employers in Europe are ready to hire non-native speakers for permanent assignments. Moreover, a differentiation has to be made when speaking of a shortage of migrant labour, because for lesser-skilled jobs there is no such shortage. EU enlargement has satisfied the short- to medium-term needs of member states for low-skill jobs that require only minimal language skills for safety reasons. For the highly skilled jobs, however, language proficiency is a major issue. Here, shortages develop, especially if countries have no post-colonial basin to draw on. Even in a globalised economy, the use of English as a transition language is only a second best solution.

The dependency ratio of people paying into the social system to those living off it, is where demographic change has its greatest impact. Pension expenditures are already high in OECD countries, and they are set to rise further based on increasing longevity rather than the smaller numbers of children. Calculations show a rise in these expenditures of 20% in France and 35% in Germany by the year 2030, *Georges Lemaître* reported. The resulting pressures on public budgets are likely to compromise financial stability and to crowd out other expenditure programmes. In addition, there are direct economic consequences such as a loss of reproductive potential, because the size and structure of a population affect its economic growth.

In contrast to the politically desired and economically desirable legal migration of labour, illegal migration presents a real problem to the state and society alike. *Paul Van Thienen*, a Director General of the Federal Judicial Police in Brussels, estimated the number of illegal migrants entering Belgium each year to up to 200,000. Most of them hail from the Maghreb and the Balkans. In contrast, the majority of the roughly 90,000 legal migrants originates from EU states. The trend shows that the number of illegal migrants is growing from regions like the Maghreb, Brazil, and Africa, whereas it is on the decline for Eastern Europe. Illegal migration from Asia, especially from India and Pakistan, is also increasing, although such migrants often merely transit through Belgium on their way to the United Kingdom. A different phenomenon still is that of (illegal) mobility, not migration. In this case, itinerant groups, often coming from Eastern Europe, live in clandestinity and focus on theft and pilferage.

A number of security issues are closely linked to illegal migration. As concerns the status of an illegal migrant, the police differentiate between ‘trafficking’, i.e. the transportation of illegal migrants, and ‘trading’, i.e. their exploitation for sexual services, slave work, or mendicancy. While more border personnel would help to deal with these two aspects, the real problem starts much earlier in the sending countries and needs to be tackled there. When such migrants do arrive, it is again not only police tools that one should employ but also broader programmes to support the victims, provide witness protection and the like.

1.2 Policies at the EU level

When it comes to how the European Union responds to the challenges of migration, one can look at policies at three different levels: first, how the EU aims to attract labour migrants; second, how it aims to control overall migration; and third, its efforts to strengthen the economic base so that the labour market can absorb both newcomers and residents.

Thomas Huddleston, a policy analyst with the Migration Policy Group in Brussels, set out to explain the general framework of EU policy-making in the field of migration. To achieve policy coherence among member states, the EU can harmonise existing legislation in areas where it has the competence to do so. The EU has for example passed binding legislation on the common status of non-EU workers, the free movement of EU workers, and non-discrimination. In areas where the member states have primary competence (such as employment, social inclusion, and education), the EU can merely encourage the latter to coordinate their policies. This open method of coordination, as it is called, is a way of voluntary cooperation based on commonly defined priorities and targets, and supported by peer pressure, regular reporting, and mutual learning.

As an example of how the EU coordinates member state activities, *Thomas Huddleston* referred to the European Employment Strategy and to its policies on social inclusion. The strategy acknowledged the need for more labour migrants, while also prioritising immigrants as a disadvantaged group. The EU, due to the lack of competence for legislation in this field, provides financial support to promote policy cooperation, good governance, and transnational exchanges of learning and good practices. The aim is to share national approaches to common challenges, to build a knowledge base, to develop evidence-based politics, and to promote stakeholder involvement. However, national targets for migrants or the reporting on them are rare, plus the definitions used are too flexible to compare. In addition, there are only few accompanying EU activities, e.g. for training.

Still, the overall picture as *Thomas Huddleston* saw it, is one of the right general principles on inclusion, although the EU does not always know how to apply them. It has ambitious goals and programmes with corresponding proposals and priorities, but only minimal legislation. The proposed ‘blue card’ (modelled after the American green card) is a way to centralise EU immigration policy, even though it is more of a theoretical than practical response, *Georges Lemaître* from the OECD cautioned. What is needed is a more committed joint platform for all actors, the Commission, the member states as well as stakeholder networks. In addition, the EU should develop and use more common tools and indicators so as to make work on migration better comparable across the continent.

Controlling migration, the second policy field, is part of the EU’s policies on ‘freedom and security’, as *Martin Schieffer*, Acting Head of Directorate for ‘Crisis management and fight against terrorism’ in the Home Affairs Directorate-General of the European Commission, explained. Its main rationale is based on the fact that the EU is not a law enforcement agency, and that it shares competence with member states. At the same time, he underlined the point that migration ought not to be perceived as a security threat per se. Yet, sometimes it turns into one, as with organised crime or

human trafficking. Here, it would be important to differentiate between specific migration policies and particular anti-crime measures.

When it comes to regional migration, the EU negotiates visa-free travel with most neighbouring countries. While visa liberalisation is generally desirable for the citizens of third countries, it is also clearly linked to illegal migration. Most illegal residents originally came with a visa and then overstayed; only 10-15% of them already entered the EU illegally. In addition to working directly with the countries of origin, the EU implements its own technical solutions, such as the Schengen Information System, an EU-wide database for suspects, fugitives, and missing persons, or the passenger name records deal struck with the United States. It should be added that the European Commission itself does not have any intelligence, but relies on the threat assessments made and shared by member states through a joint Situation Centre.

Thirdly, as for the economic base of social cohesion, the EU passed in June a 10-year strategy for competitiveness called “Europe 2020”. The overall goal of this integrated strategy is to achieve smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth. It sets concrete targets in five headline areas, as *Thomas Huddleston* explained:

- EU member states should spend 3 per cent of their GDP on research and development;
- The EU as a whole reconfirms its climate and energy targets set previously for the year 2020, i.e. to reduce CO2 emissions by 20 per cent, to increase energy efficiency by 20 per cent, and to increase the share of renewables to 20 per cent (the “20/20/20 goal”);
- In the field of education, more than 40 per cent of the population should have a tertiary degree and school dropouts should account for less than 10%;
- The number of Europeans living below the respective national poverty line should be reduced by 25%; and
- The employment rate should be increased to 75%, including through the (unspecified) better integration of migrants.

However, the strategy got off to a bad start, not only because its predecessor (the so-called Lisbon Strategy of 2000) failed to make the EU the ‘most competitive economy of the world’ by this year. Also, as one participant suggested, the EU should have rather increased its efforts to reach the goals as they stood instead of lowering the latter.

2 Integration, Social Cohesion and the Second Generation

Whereas the first part of this report summarised some of the policies arising from the demographic needs and migratory realities in Europe, this second part looks into how integration works in practice. It presents the views from a city mayor, from the police, from business, and from a university. In addition, it tackles the question of the second generation in particular as well as the effects of the current economic crisis. But first, it outlines various definitions of and criteria for integration.

2.1 Definitions of integration

In a working group session at the beginning of the conference, the participants came up with a range of definitions of integration. One group saw integration as a dynamic process by which individuals of different backgrounds achieve a common understanding about ‘le vivre ensemble’. To another, it was about a critical mass of shared values among social groups, surrounded by a general acceptance of diversity. A third group contemplated equal opportunity of participation in social key factors as the defining element. Finally, one group simply said integration is about multiple groups becoming one.

When looking at the criteria of integration, participants distinguished between the subjective and the objective level. At the former, integration means a feeling of belonging to and trust in a welcoming society. Regarding the latter, they felt that language is an enabler of the common sphere, as it promotes social inclusion and active citizenship. Moreover, minimum (equal) access to education, employment, housing, and government needs to be guaranteed. At the very basic level, of course, peaceful coexistence under the rule of law is a pre-condition for any type of integration.

If one wanted to measure the degree of integration of a society, the group proposed metrics such as the inter-marriage rate, diversity in politics and business, the physical segregation (e.g. in cities), and crime and naturalisation rates.

2.2 Examples from the field

Looking at how integration works at a very practical level, participants could hear a variety of views. *Thierry Mandon*, the Mayor of Ris-Orangis, a commune in the Essonne department south of Paris, praised diversity for how it actually strengthens French society. To him, the full Islamic veil (the burqa or niqab) does not pose a problem, in stark contrast to the vivid debate going on at the national level about its ban. While his town may be only 25 kilometers away from Paris, the political distance is rather 1000 kilometers, he joked. More seriously again, he listed a number of measures that his community has applied to facilitate integration, like school priority teaching, urban planning, local police training, and community engagement.

Community policing is also what *Paul Van Thielen* from the Belgian Police saw as a key element. The police need to accept Muslims and try to understand differences, for example via intercultural trainings. It should also consider the reality of the society when it comes to recruitment, even though ethnic policemen sometimes encounter difficulties when being pressured to give information to their community. At the same time, he pointed to the other side of immigration, i.e. the police’s fight against city gangs and no-go areas as well as radicalism and terrorism. When it comes to policies, however, he made it clear that the police are merely an instrument of the state. They can only provide statistics and make recommendations, but cannot determine policy. The burqa ban, for one, would not be proportional to the problem, he said, as it would make things worse through the symbolism such a law carries.

Pierre Fassin, a professor of sociology at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris, in contrast, lamented what he called “systemic suspicion” on the side of the police. He alleged they would arrest people who look like undocumented workers in an effort to

increase the number of those expelled. Given that the estimated number of burqa-wearing women (around 300) is a thousand times less than the number of undocumented workers (ca. 300.000), policies such as the burqa ban are not only a reaction to a given problem but also the construction of problem, he posited. When President Sarkozy now says that “the burqa is un-French”, he gives people the feeling of fighting for politics of inclusion, while he should rather feel bad about the police suspicion he raised, Professor *Fassin* argued.

In a globalised world, business has naturally become more diverse, as *Hakim El Karoui*, a director with Rothschild & Cie Banque in Paris, told the group. Given this imposed variety of views, the active promotion of corporate diversity is no longer an asset, but a necessity. His company, for example, advises clients on the diversity of their investments, including on religiously mandated businesses like Islamic finance. Yet beyond its own global operations, a company also reflects the broader society, which has more and more become a collection of individuals. Society now faces the failure of multicultural approach where people were thought to be equal but separate, with violent backlashes in countries like the Netherlands and Denmark, he reckoned.

The issue of diversity has even reached an “elitist institution” such as the Institut d’Etudes Politiques (“Sciences Po”) in Paris, as its Professor *Cyril Delhay* explained. The school started a stringent equal opportunities programme more than a decade ago in an effort to attract bright students from outside the upper and middle class, including from migrant communities. The programme’s main components are partnerships with *lycées* in difficult regions, e.g. in the countryside or in de-industrialised areas. Here, more than half of the students have a poor background, compared to an average one fifth throughout France. At such schools, white children of well-off families, for example, often represent an ultra-minority group. Yet these students can relate to both groups, the upper class and the disenfranchised. Moreover, their recruitment alongside migrant Youth underlines that the programme is targeted at geographic and social diversity in general and not at any particular ethnic criteria.

For Professor *Delhay*, the model is just and successful, despite the fact that the new recruitment procedures have produced heavy internal fighting, with students going to courts and complaining at parliament. While the adopted selection procedure is done in coordination with the partner schools (which preselect students), the final selection at Sciences Po (including an oral exam) is purely based on meritocracy. Moreover, in the end all students – regardless of whether they entered the school by normal application or through the partnership procedure – have to take the same exam. The results here, he explained, prove Sciences Po right: Both academically and when entering the labour market, there are no more differences discernable between students from different backgrounds. By not making concessions at the level of programmes and diplomas, the school avoids some of the pitfalls of affirmative action in the United States. In fact, going from an equal treatment of everybody at the abstract level to one adjusted to their origins, Sciences Po has achieved real equity, he concluded.

2.3 The second generation

Social cohesion in general should find an expression in the degree of integration of migrants in the second (or even third) generation, i.e. those that were already born into the host society. Yet, for *Paul Van Thielen* from the Belgian Police the picture is rather bleak. He reported high unemployment rates among these generations, and an over-proportionally negative impact of criminality on the quality of life. Be it the imitation of criminal icons, a lack of acceptance of public law enforcement, or gang fights and a thriving parallel economy – all these elements could be found more often with immigrant Youth than with young people from the native society. The government needs to address the issue of parallel societies, as things have been getting worse in past three years.

Also *Syed Kamall*, a Member of the European Parliament for London, spoke of the “lost second generation”. In many immigration countries, this generation goes ‘identity shopping’, feeling somewhere between the country into which they were born and the one from which their parents emigrated. Language does not pose a barrier to integration, he remarked, at least not in Britain. In fact, in some of the communities there, the extremist recruiters are the English-speaking ones, while normal prayers at the mosques are held in the respective mothertongue. Likewise, *Steven Erlanger*, the Paris Bureau Chief of the New York Times, reported of imams worried about a religious radicalisation among the second and third generation. Many in this group had a twisted notion of Islam, receiving no real instruction on it and certainly not at schools. Nonetheless, *Kamall* did not fail to mention the lost white Youth, which need just as much personal support and training as their fellow youngsters with an immigration background.

Hakim El Karoui from the Rothschild bank illustrated this inner conflict by providing the example of French Youth of Algerian ancestry. Many people perceive a conflict of loyalty in them, for example when they boo or hiss the Marseillaise, their national anthem, in the stadium. For him, these youngsters are in a transition phase where they search for their own (and possibly new) identity, as they are rejected both by the country they were born in and by their parents’ home country. Not least because they could never be Algerians, he was however optimistic that they would become French at some point. Still, it might well take 30 to 50 years (i.e. at least two generations) to finally integrate a cohort of migrants.

2.4 Worsening effects? The economic crisis and the media

The majority societies in many European countries (with France being the notable exception) are already anxious due to negative demographic trends. Add to this the Euro and banking crisis as well as continuing de-industrialisation, and Europe is about to have a nervous breakdown about its future that tends to produce racism in some quarters, *Steven Erlanger* declared.

Some feared that social cohesion would decline in EU countries, as governments have to raise taxes in the “new age of austerity”, as someone called it. One participant warned of the danger of raising the wrong taxes, i.e. value-added and labour tax instead of real estate or income tax. This would push both the poor and the migrants down and further increase unemployment (which in Spain, for example,

already stands at a staggering 20 per cent). Social mobility is likely to decline due to spending cuts in education even in countries like Sweden, Denmark or Belgium, which have a higher mobility than the United States. Also the solidarity between countries could be affected, and enlargement is likely to slow.

Others felt that the Euro crisis had come at the right time to fight ever-increasing debt piles. From this point of view, the troubles of Greece are a small crisis acting as a healthy reform shock. The EU should now strengthen its internal rules and develop a fiscal federalism, including transfers from richer to poorer countries, one participant argued. Drawing a parallel to the previous U.S. financial crisis, he argued that Greece was a 'Bear Sterns moment' giving EU leaders six months or less to prevent another Lehman Brothers-type of bankruptcy.

Like other parts of Europe, France has some tough economic decisions to take, stemming from long before the current crisis, as *Erlanger* explained. Overall, the French economy is not very competitive, with France's share of world exports dropping for the past 50 years. Unemployment has risen throughout the crisis, now affecting around 40 per cent of immigrant Youth. The country currently deals with an 8 per cent annual deficit; its public debt has increased to over 80 per cent of GDP. Ultimately, with existing trends to continue, France would have to ask itself whether it is ready to give up its protective social model. The French enjoy the longest average pension age of 24 years. If the systems is not reformed and thus saved, six out of ten pensions would be unfunded by 2050, with the pension debt alone rising to around 3 per cent of GDP, *Steven Erlanger* warned.

The way media present the issues of immigration and integration plays a major role in whether social cohesion can foster. Some lamented the high degree of sensationalism prevailing in the media. There is too much focus on negative but small instances, and too little attention to the good things happening everyday. While this is a general problem of reporting not confined to the integration debate, one participant made particular reference to the recent surge of 'diverse anchors' on different TV channels. To him, this was more of a business decision to reach the migrant community than a change in the attitude of the broader population.

When asked whether the press should not be more objective, *Steven Erlanger* defended his profession by saying that it was no better than society as a whole. Unfortunately, there are lots of sluttly journalists, and the press as such is not immune to bias or anxiety. Still, only a minority understands Islam as militant. Nonetheless, he deplored a lack of responsible journalism, which he regards as a craft not a career. To redress the sometimes distorted view of the media, he recommended to broaden the staff and editors to include people from all backgrounds of society. This would go beyond the token ethnic figurehead that actually does not write the stories he or she presents.

3 Polarisation and the Divide between Islam and the West

The case of France deserves particular attention, which is also why the group extended its conference from Brussels to Paris in the first place. In addition, the debate about a potential divide between Islam as a religion and ‘the West’ as a value-based community figured prominently in the discussions of the study group.

3.1 The French example: Polarisation and politicisation of the public debate

The secular French polity accepts everyone as a *citoyen* and thus does not collect any official statistics about Muslims or blacks or any other minority, as *Steven Erlanger* explained. Still, some estimates are available according to which France has the largest Muslim population in Europe (9 per cent, or around 5 to 6 of its 65 million inhabitants). They by far outnumber Protestants (between 1 and 2 million) or Jews (around 500,000). 8 per cent of the French are foreign-born, with another 10 per cent of foreign origin.

Following the concept of the *citoyen*, the French debate about national identity should in principle exclude the issue of race. However, the latter is coming back with a vengeance, Professor *Eric Fassin* told the group, comparing discourses of race in France and the United States. The American discourse about racial problems was based on the history of slavery, thus it was indeed an issue of race. In France, the legacy is one of colonialism rather than race. When in 1989, around the bicentennial of the French Revolution, the first public discussion about the veil took place, the French political class responded by keeping the issue private rather than politicise it. This was in accordance with the Republican rhetoric taking citizens as abstract. In addition, no one wanted US-style identity politics for fear of a fragmentation of society.

Now, race has become an issue also in France, as interrelations of race and immigration are more and more visible. In the 1990s, the far-right National Front party was the first to frame the issue as one of “foreigners”, claiming that immigration should have been stopped a long time ago. The shift in rhetoric from the abstract *citoyen* to the citizen with different ethnic backgrounds was possible based on a seemingly progressive issue, i.e. that of equal participation of men and women. The socialist government in 1997 presented its proposals for more equality, including by introducing a civil union next to marriage. As well-meaning (and universalist) as this may have been, it opened the way to a discussion about race, *Eric Fassin* argued, because until then, the French people were officially ‘colour-blind’ (even though in practice they were not). This ‘equality by decree’, however, often belies the social realities, making people rather ‘problem-blind’, he contended.

President Sarkozy, a son of immigrants himself, recently moved his party to the right by starting a debate about national identity ahead of the elections in 2012, *Steven Erlanger* recalled. This debate’s sublime question to the immigrant community is about why they are not ‘French’? Or as *Hakim El Karoui* put it jokingly, France is open-minded to diversity – as long as it’s French. The much-discussed burqa ban fits into this picture. It is one thing to ban the (normal) veil just as any other religious symbol from schools and public institutions, as France has done in expression of its fundamental principle of *laïcité*. It is quite another, however, to target only one half

(women) of a particular group (fundamental Muslims), which is what the burqa ban would do. Still, the journalist *Erlanger* defended the idea as a part of the fight against extremism, because he saw the burqa as a sign of radical salafism.

Ironically, social tensions are rising again at a time when immigrants become more and more French. They go to the same schools and to the same hospitals, so some people desperately look for differences. As Professor *Fassin* said, the talk of ‘us v them’ is particularly misleading when there are not actually two groups – *the* French and *the* immigrants (or *the* Muslims, for that matter) – opposing each other. Part of the problem is that even if the majority was sure to know who is ‘them’, then the question still remains who is ‘us’. The latter would then also be implicitly defined in racial terms, i.e. whiteness.

The ongoing debate about national identity could thus be seen as an instrument of discrimination, *Eric Fassin* persisted. National identity cannot be defined by consensus. Instead, in democracies people disagree, and politics is a constant battle about what it means to be French. “When Frenchness is about principles, then I am French,” he said. “When it is about churches, wine, or territory – then I’d rather be cosmopolitan.”

He therefore argued for changing the terms of discussion rather than just introducing new measures. For example, the anonymous CV may help a few migrants receive better jobs, but in the end it addresses only minor symptoms. More fundamentally, the French would have to decide whether they wanted to be consistent secularists or not. If yes, they would have to de-Christianise the state and for example cut funding to Catholic private schools. If not, they would at least have to extend such funding to other religions and support Muslim schools in just the same way.

3.2 Islam, Liberty, and Modernity

More often than not, immigration and integration are not only linked to the issue of race, but also to that of religion. Faced with large Muslim immigrant populations, be they from Turkey, the Maghreb, or the Indian subcontinent, many people in Europe ask very basic questions about whether Islam as a religion is a help or a hindrance to integration. Moreover, some see a broader – geopolitical – faultline between ‘the West’ and ‘the Muslim world’. All these issues also played into the discussions of the group.

For *Syed Kamali*, there is no inherent contradiction between Islam and liberty. There is not a single phrase in the Q’uran that forbids free enterprise or a free society, he claimed. What is more, with phrases like “I believe what I believe and you believe what you believe”, the Q’uran in fact preaches liberal values. Nor does he regard his religion as inherently state-oriented, as is sometimes claimed. While it is true that one of the Five Pillars of Islam is social justice, its realisation obliges rather the individual than the state. Only because groups like the Muslim Brotherhood have tried to mix Islam and socialism or because immigrants often find help from centre-left parties, has the religion as such got an anti-liberal appearance.

Moreover, the debate within Islam is dominated by those who hate the West, *Kamali* went on to explain. They regularly quote Q’uran verses out of context, or even refer to the Hadiths (i.e. the narrations concerning the words and deeds of Muhammad)

instead of the scripture itself. However, the Sharia laws are man-made, not divine, he claimed. The real problem is a lack of discourse within Islam. Small wonder, he said, as there are – according to a report by the UN Development Programme – still more books in Spain alone than in the whole Arab World. At the same time, the Islamic revolution in Iran of 1979 still shapes much of the debate within the community, not least as it brought reinforced rules such as the wearing of the veil or niqab. Especially given an urge to delineate themselves from the host country, some Muslim communities in Europe follow Saudi Wahabism, which makes them more radical than many communities in Arab countries. While the majority society is unaware of many of these trends, *Kamali* argued, the governments often are complacent about them.

Such views play into the hands of those in the West who follow Samuel Huntington and his idea of a 'clash of civilisations' (i.e. mainly between the West and Islam). *Hubert Védrine*, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs of France, avowed to be a 'moderate Huntington', as he called himself. Yes, there is an issue between the West and Islam, he stated, with atrocities committed on both sides for centuries. This history of tensions is present in today's people mindsets when they consistently report mutually negative feelings, as captured by the regular Pew polls. And even if people by far not all Westerners consider themselves Christians; from an Islamic standpoint the West equals Christendom regardless. So to *Védrine* an antagonism exists, with the real risk of leading to a major global clash.

However, he disagreed with Huntington over the question of an ideological threat emanating from Islam. The antagonism is rather of a socio-religious kind and not comparable to the Cold War polarity of communism v capitalism. Moreover, the terrain of the dispute is a different one: It's less politics, but family and economic life. Therefore, the West needs different answers than then, he argued, including others than the ones America's neo-cons give. It should support the (very few) modernists that are fighting with the (few) extremists for the middle ground in an ongoing dispute within Islam.

The struggle between a moderate and an extreme version of Islam dates back to the end of the 19th century, as *Syed Kamall* recalled. The decolonialisation of Muslim countries gave it a further boost over the past five or six decades. Right now, the transition between tradition and modernity is in full bloom. It's like a social earthquake, *Hakim El Karoui* added, where countries become urbanised, solidarity is weakened, and daughters are better educated than their fathers. Despite the fact that, in the Muslim world, 'modernity' is often seen as a Western concept undermined by the reform failures of the past decades, for him it is a societal necessity. While some may indeed take traditional Islam as the answer to (a perceived Western) modernity, many Islamic leaders come from the most modern elements of society. Being for example trained engineers, they are confronted with modern technology. What is new about the situation today is that modernity is defined locally, in the Arab world as much as in places like China.

According to *Hubert Védrine*, this struggle between tradition and modernity provides for a socio-political cocktail of radicalisation similar to the one of the 1920s and '30s that brought the rise of fascism in Europe. This cocktail is fostered by a sense of humiliation among many Muslims and a lack of ability to act on the part of their governments. The Middle East conflict is the embodiment of the Arab leader's

incapacity to act, he said. Certainly, the West’s myopic focus on Islamic terrorism did not help either, nor did the attempts to explain its roots with poverty when in fact it feeds on much broader social issues, including government incapacity and corruption.

All in all, the modernist movement from 50 to 100 years ago has led to nothing, the former foreign minister argued, except in the case of Turkey. Indeed, one participant cited the example of the reforms put forward by the current government of Prime Minister Erdogan’s Islamic ‘Justice and Development Party’ (AKP) as a way to combine modernity and Islam. His views were echoed by *Steven Erlanger* who saw the country on its way to modernity, largely symbolised by the prospect of EU membership.

When it comes to how Europe and the United States should deal with the – actual or perceived – clash between Islam and the West, *Hubert Védrine* called for risk-reducing policies: to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict, to relearn strategic (or “realist”) thinking, and to acquire more knowledge about each other. While President Obama rightfully sees today’s world as a multipolar fight in which he wants to restore (relative) Western leadership, he misses the link between vision and implementation. Europe, in contrast, needs to find common answers to the integration of its Muslim population. The hope is that, both in the immigrant communities here and among Muslims worldwide, the fundamentalists will lose out in the long run, beaten by normal people that aim for a normal life, *Syed Kamall* concluded optimistically.

4 Demography and Migration in Global Affairs

A redefinition of security marked the onset of the remarks by *Bill Drozdiak*, the President of the American Council on Germany in New York. Diplomacy, development, and defence are the ‘3 D’s’ of this new concept, which is also the starting point for the NATO 2020 report published recently. Much more than old-fashioned military security, it is about rebuilding societies, training police forces, reconstructing economies, and also managing migration. It requires a new way of thinking in and across ministries: especially in the face of decreasing resources, governments need to think creatively, he argued. The U.S. Foreign Service should recruit more ‘hyphenated Americans’, i.e. Farsi-speaking Iranian-Americans as well as Asian-Americans and Latinos. The Pentagon should return ‘development money’ to State because the latter can deal with these challenges better. And more staff from the Agricultural Ministry should be posted abroad, just as their work has become more international.

In this sense, a more far-sighted development policy could easily serve our security interests. By opening its markets to agricultural goods from developing countries, the West would not only promote their economic development but also eliminate potential recruiting grounds for Al-Qaeda, *Bill Drozdiak* argued. As to hard security issues, he felt there is no sense in keeping NATO’s long-standing goal of 2% of GDP of defence spending. Instead, countries should pool their resources.

It is thus high time to tear down the ‘Brussels wall’ between the EU and NATO, as the ACG’s president put it. With France returning to the military alliance, the two

organisations have 21 nations in common. Moreover, with the EU's increased engagement in crisis management, the operational overlap has also become greater. As *Alan Seatter*, a Director at the Directorate-General for External Relations of the European Commission in Brussels, reported, the EU has deployed over 70.000 troops in civil-military missions over the past seven years. At times this was done with the formal support from NATO (the so called 'Berlin plus arrangement'), at other times without it, but certainly always with transatlantic cooperation. As a concrete step towards more cohesion between the two organisations, the U.S. should merge its two respective missions in Brussels, *Bill Drozdiak* proposed.

Such transatlantic cooperation is all the more necessary because, at the global level, the world is going *back* into an Asian-Pacific century, *Alan Seatter* predicted. About 200 years ago, China and India together accounted for more than half of the world's trade. They may do so again in a number of years, reducing the role and weight of the West on the world stage.

Yet, worse than this shift in the global power balance per se is that governments in the West fail to communicate the need for change in their countries. At first glance, this might be pardonable given the good shape of transatlantic economic relations. Together, the EU and the U.S. produce half the world's economic output, trading between them goods and services worth 2 billion US-dollars per day. But if one looks at the working age population, the picture becomes less bright: In the Middle East and North Africa, it will increase by 30 million; in Sub-Saharan Africa by as much as 300 million. The combined reduction of 260 million people of working age in China, Japan (the two aging Asian countries) and the transatlantic area will be completely offset by a corresponding rise in all other Asian countries.

The West's problem is that its strength used to build on the number of people and the quality of their ideas. When people will soon be elsewhere, could ideas alone make it, *Alan Seatter* asked the group rhetorically? Already, school education in Asia is better than in many parts of Europe. The latter continent is also falling behind Brazil, China, or India when it comes to academic papers. Beyond this 'idea problem', the 'people problem' can only be solved through immigration. This, however, is difficult given the often hostile attitude towards immigration in many Western countries.

The good thing about these geopolitical changes is that Western countries should tackle these problems anyhow, so that the prospect of an Asian-Pacific century should be just another impulse to reform. The challenges to address globally are all well known, ranging from free trade to climate change and energy supply to regional conflicts and transnational crime. Still, without falling into a 'us vs them' attitude, we should be mindful of the transatlantic community of values, built on individual freedoms rather than the societal stability preferred in Asia, as *Drozdiak* argued.

The transatlantic economy faces some particular challenges, as the EU's *Alan Seatter* highlighted. To reap the full benefits of their relationship, the EU and the U.S. should harmonise their standards, whether for car making or accounting. If they abolished only half of all non-tariff barriers, the two sides would save 160 billion euros per year, he argued. However, instead of aiming at a regional free trade agreement as some propose, the two should work for a multilateral deal under the Doha framework. Making the transatlantic economies more dynamic would include

health and education reforms in the U.S. as well as reforming the financing of social security in Europe, e.g. by linking a settlement on pension to more investment in research and development.

Ultimately, this is a question of political will, and *Alan Seatter* remained doubtful whether there is sufficient will to implement these reforms. Explaining to citizens both the need for (even more) immigration and the rise of emerging countries to the global scene is a tough job for any politician to do. It hasn't become any easier, though more urgent in the wake of the financial and economic crisis. We should use this crisis in order to rethink our societies, *Bill Drozdiak* insisted.