



A migration strategy for Germany:

Key findings from the June 2018 Masterplan on Migration

This overview summarises the key findings of the Masterplan on Migration presented by the German Federal Ministry of Interior on 10 June 2018. We hope that our summary provides useful information for your immigration strategy planning.

INTRODUCTION

On 10 June 2018 the German Minister of Interior Horst Seehofer (Christian Social Union, CSU), presented a masterplan on migration which contains 63 measures for the organization, the management and the limitation of immigration and is likely to shape the migration and refugee policy of the German Federal Ministry of the Interior for the next years. The masterplan considers the conclusions on migration adopted by the European Council on 28 June 2018 and the compromise that German chancellor Angela Merkel's party, the Christian Democratic Union, CDU, found with its more conservative coalition partner CSU. The two conservative coalition parties were arguing because the CSU demanded a stricter migration policy than the CDU.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE GERMAN MASTERPLAN ON MIGRATION

The masterplan is divided into four fields of action: It foresees measures in countries of origin and in transit countries, at the level of the EU (external border protection and asylum procedures) and in Germany (internal borders, asylum and immigration procedures, integration and return).



1. Measures in countries of origin of migration

Flight and migration are seen as long-term and worldwide challenges caused by crisis, war, famine, poverty and lack of perspective. The masterplan envisages measures to improve living conditions and stabilize the local security situation in the countries of origin, as necessary steps to create life perspectives for the affected people, reduce the causes of migration and allows lasting effects of return and reintegration.

Development cooperation and investment in infrastructure, education and employment are planned to be intensified.

Counselling for **voluntary return** and reintegration offered by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) shall be installed in the countries of origin. Moreover, the support centres coordinating local training and employment, which are already existing in some countries (Iraq, Kosovo, Ghana, Serbia, Albania, Tunisia, Morocco and Senegal), shall be extended. These centres inform about the dangers of illegal migration and the possibilities of legal migration to Germany and Europe.

In cooperation with the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development action plans for voluntary return and reintegration will be developed. In the meantime, readmission numbers shall be raised by supporting the countries of origin to identify their citizens in transit countries, to allow them to provide their citizens with **substitute papers** to enable the readmission in the country of origin.

International **police coordination** shall be extended and strengthened, e.g. by expanding the existing liaison officer network of the German Federal Police in countries of origin and transit countries with the goal of preventing illegal migration in cooperation with those countries.



2. Measures in the transit countries

By stabilising the political situation in transit countries, especially in northern Africa, the Sahel region, Libya, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, illegal migration shall be prevented. The masterplan foresees the establishment of “secure places” in the region close to an area of conflicts. They are intended to be created in North Africa (to secure the return of refugees saved in the Mediterranean; disembarkation platforms) and the Sahel region (as contact points for refugees in areas of conflict). In those centres refugees shall find protection and receive information about the chances of a successful journey to Europe and the possibility of repatriation and resettlement. Furthermore, financial support and support for capacity building in transit countries shall be still guaranteed, to allow the transit countries to receive and provide for refugees. International border management training facilities in the Sahel region shall be supported to foster an effective border management.



3. Measures at the level of the European Union

The master plan also proposes action at EU level. One of the objectives is to improve the border management and the European asylum system to return to a functioning Schengen area without internal border controls.

To ensure the effective control of the EU’s external borders the strengthening of Frontex, the EU Border Agency, is foreseen, by increasing personnel and by widening the geographical scope of their missions, by establishing an operative unit in the FRONTEX-headquarters, further exercises of the rapid reaction pool and the deployment of Frontex-liaison officers to third countries. The eventual aim is the transformation Frontex into a European Border Force.

The European external border shall be also strengthened by supporting reception centres in Italy and Greece by providing personnel and developing standard models for all European reception centres. Additionally, the concept of hotspots shall be extended, where the relevant European agencies work together with the authorities of the frontline member states to help them fulfil their obligations under EU law and swiftly identify and register migrants.

The full implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement, preventing new crossing of migrants from Turkey and bring the flows to halt, is envisaged.

The need for the development of a Common European Asylum System able to withstand crises, including optimisation of the Dublin-Regulation, is acknowledged.



4. Measures in Germany

Even though an effective management of migration is supported at the European level, the masterplan declares that the less the EU and the Common European Asylum System can deliver on those points, the more important national action becomes. **Secondary migration** within the EU is seen as one of the main challenges threatening the integrity of the Common European Asylum System and the Schengen acquis. Secondary migration describes all migration from asylum seekers or refugees who have already been registered or recognised in one EU member state into another member state. Therefore, the Federal Ministry of the Interior announces to take all necessary internal legislative and administrative measures to counter such movements.

Border controls at the Schengen external borders shall be improved by introducing a **European Entry-Exist System** that electronically records and saves the entry and exit of third country nationals as well as their biometric data. Furthermore, the police cooperation at national and international level shall be intensified and the competences of the German Federal Police shall be widened to hinder illegal migration and enforce the termination of residence.

To reduce secondary migration and stop persons with an entry or residence ban, temporary **internal border controls** at the German-Austrian shall take place. Transit processing centres along the Austrian border shall be established. While their status is reviewed, secondary migrants will be housed in those centres.

The asylum procedure shall be optimized by introducing so called **AnkER- Zentren** (acronym sounding like Anchor-Centres), all-in-one processing centres for asylum-seekers with all the relevant government agencies present, to ensure a fast, efficient and secure asylum procedure. While their requests are processed, asylum-seekers would have the duty of residence in the “AnkER-Zentren” (up to 18 months).

The effectiveness of the identification and of security checks of third country nationals shall be increased by extending the **Central Foreigner’s Register** (Ausländerzentralregister, AZR) and by merging all local foreigner databases of the immigration offices into the AZR. In order to improve the identification of third country nationals further, biometric data shall be stored and compared.

The eventual aim is the development of a European core data base to allow the verification of identities and exchange data with third countries.

Asylum benefit abuse shall be fought through benefit reduction and in-kind contributions in reception facilities. The burden to procure valid travel documents shall be shifted to the persons concerned, by connecting state benefits to the procurement of travel documents. Also, the masterplan foresees more sanctions if an asylum seeker violates integration measures (e. g. integration courses). The separation of third country nationals in detention from ordinary prisoners shall be suspended and state detention centres at airports shall be established to facilitate deportations.

An increase of **readmission of citizens by their respective home countries** shall be achieved by using all political fields, e.g. generous visa policies will be granted only if a country shows readmission efforts for its own nationals.

Legal migration shall be promoted by developing a **Skilled Immigration Act** (Fachkräftezuwanderungsgesetz) that aims at systemising and amending already existing rules in the German residence Act (Aufenthaltsgesetz) and the implementation of accompanying measures concerning the recognition of qualification, the administrative process, language acquisition and labour immigration marketing measures abroad.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?



Promotion of legal migration by developing a Skilled Immigration Act (Fachkräftezuwanderungsgesetz)



Ongoing controls at internal Schengen borders while external borders are not fully effective



Strengthening of external EU borders in the med-term



Establishment of "secure places", in the region close to an area of conflict



Bi-lateral agreements between EU Member States aiming at avoiding secondary migration within the EU



AnKER-Zentren (anchor-centres), all-in-one processing centres for asylum-seekers with all the relevant agencies present