

NO, THERE IS NO COMPREHENSIVE GLOBAL RESPONSE TO MIGRATION

"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me"

Emma LAZARUS, lines inscribed on the pedestal
of the Statue of Liberty in New York.

Just three figures to bring us back to the subject in hand:

- The world population has reached 7.3 billion inhabitants and will rise to 9.5 billion by 2050,
- One billion humans are now on the move, 220 million of these are internationally mobile, compared to 77 million in 1975; the number has tripled in four decades,
- By 2050, there could be between 200 million and one billion "environmental" migrants that will need to be accounted for.

The problem of migration is therefore at the very heart of current events and our immediate future. To deal with this problem rationally, we must first recognise its complexity. The determinants of migration are numerous: geopolitical reasons first and foremost, followed by economic and social reasons and finally environmental reasons. All these determinants create very differentiated populations (both figuratively and literally).

To properly gauge this phenomenon and the resulting challenges we are faced with, we must first begin by distinguishing three inter-related phenomena: emigration, migration in the strict sense and lastly immigration. At each of these levels, it is important to make clear distinctions between myths (many), certainties (rare but increasing in number), questions (matrix of future certainties) and finally solutions (more or less global, more or less effective, more or less expensive).

Let's start by addressing the subject of emigration. In terms of the most damaging myths, there is the belief that the problem can be solved definitively using voluntarist co-development policies. Without mentioning the budgetary cost of such policies and their current effectiveness (something which is quite often contested), the reality of certain migrations is largely misunderstood if it is believed that this is the miracle solution. There are many migratory flows that can be channelled and, in some cases, reduced but there is no global solution that can be imposed. Let's give up on such wild dreams once and for all.

In terms of certainty concerning economic migration, the solution for most countries is the diversification of productive activities. Too many countries rely on too few raw materials, giving rise to a rentier economy which in turn becomes corruptible and inefficient. This

economic diversification, which is easier to diagnose than to implement, is not adequately encouraged by those international organisations charged with development.

In terms of questions, "brain drain" is the first thing to spring to mind. How do we find the right balance between, on the one hand, the demand of ageing national populations in the North for skills from the South plus the desire of graduates from the latter to enrich their careers and, on the other hand, the paucity of qualifications in the South where they are needed most? The answer to this question, which is inevitably multifaceted, is difficult to find but the need for an answer is nonetheless compelling.

As for the solutions; as we have already said, they won't appear miraculously. They must be numerous, targeted and implemented using less onerous conditionality than at present. Let's put the climate issue - perhaps the most important subject of all for the future - to one side for now, as it is a subject in its own right. Generally speaking, the most obvious solution is education. By a quantitative effort certainly, but not just that. In most emigration countries, a complete overhaul of the education system is needed, as well as a comprehensive review of return assistance mechanisms. What is most disturbing is that academic research on this subject has been considerably refined over the past few decades and in many cases has identified "best practices" just waiting to be implemented. However, the financial means and, more particularly, the political will, are still missing.

At a more targeted level, it seems crucial to fundamentally review the financing of SMEs and in particular very small companies in emigration countries. It is these companies which can be the driving force behind job creation and thus population stabilisation. Emigration countries generally have underdeveloped and archaic banking systems and international funding is predominantly focussed on large projects (which are also needed) and poorly equipped to deal effectively with this problem. If we are to enable the retention and financial support of all economically viable initiatives, then "bridging funds" need to be multiplied between North and South. This can, at least in part, be achieved by better organising the savings of migrants already settled in host countries, some of which will have been there for a considerable amount of time.

Regarding migration itself, myth number 1 stems from the assertion that the solution lies mainly or exclusively in the hands of the repressors and amounts to the closing of borders. This ridiculous assumption is unfortunately gaining ground, particularly in Europe, but also further afield. This policy, in addition to being undignified on a human level, is impossible to carry out in practice unless we turn our backs on democracy.

With this in mind, there is at least one certainty that completes this mythical statement: the fight against the excesses of migration must incorporate a security aspect and, in this regard, willing the ends entails an obligation to will the means too. To take just one symbolic example, the entire Frontex system in Europe needs to be reformed, not only but in particular, by strengthening the resources of this "border patrol" at the very time their budgets have been significantly cut.

In terms of questions, these are numerous but, for me, one of the most pertinent seems to be that of the "duty to intervene". To what extent can we encroach on the politics of a

country playing a strategic role in migration routes? Of course, in Europe, everyone immediately thinks of Libya, but unfortunately the list of countries concerned is much longer.

Among the solutions - and the two subjects are closely linked - is the need to rethink cooperation with those countries that play a key role in political migration. And, focussing again on Europe, Turkey (whatever we think of its regime), is an example of a "partner" with whom we need to envisage a policy of closer cooperation, one that is less simplistic than currently employed by Europe. The chance of us going very far down the "Receiving migrants versus membership of the European Union" avenue is unlikely.....

Let's now turn to the problem of immigration. The most popular myth, in Europe at least, is what some call the "tidal wave" effect. Two statistics in this area should help put the most heated minds at rest, especially if conveyed regularly and intelligently: the immigration rate in Europe is twice as low - no less - than in the United States and it is not Donald Trump's rantings that will succeed in destroying the proven integrating capacity of the country; furthermore, Europe, because of its ageing population, needs 30 million more immigrants in the next 20 years solely to maintain its active population in the current state. Even though it may seem politically incorrect, this "detail" did not escape Angela Merkel when implementing her courageous - and difficult - policy of welcoming migrants.

When it comes to certainties, it is clear that the cases for political and economic refugees are radically different. For the former, it is only a matter of applying the international treaties we have signed. For the latter, the policy already implemented is hampered by the local capacity to integrate migrants and thus raises the same discussions about "family entry and settlement" and "selective immigration". Second certainty: the Dublin II regulation, which makes a migrant's country of arrival responsible for them, must be reviewed because it is totally unsuited to the current situation which has changed radically since it was first designed. Case closed.

At the questions level, the most important factor relates to the reception and integration of immigrants, a subject that is too vast and complex to discuss here other than by emphasising its importance and urgency. There is only one certainty, "simplistic solutions" are a thing of the past.

In view of what has just been said about questioning, one solution at least seems obvious: that of pedagogy. If we do not want to see a global rise in extreme radical populism, then we must convince our fellow citizens on all these subjects. And if our elite want to continue to earn their "title", they have a major role to play in this. The task is simple: a little conscientious work will highlight the positive impact immigration can have on an economy. Yet it still needs to be put across in a way that is easy to understand and, as any good pedagogue knows, repeated at every opportunity.

At the end of this far too brief overview of an important question relating to the future of our democracies, there are two quasi-philosophical issues that deserve mentioning:

1. How do we distinguish between economic and political migration?

2. Where is the balance (at the three levels we have identified) between the preventive and the repressive?

These are vast and complex questions, upon which our elite should reflect, answer and convince. Once again: this, to be worthy of their status, which, in my eyes, is unjustified in this area...