

# Agents of Development or Agents of Fear?

The Link Between Migration, Development, and Security in EU's Mobility Partnerships

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# Abstract

Since the end of the Cold War, EU migration policy has been subjected to securitization, and migrants have been viewed as potential threats to European security and homogeneity. However, in recent years the migration-development nexus has experienced a renaissance. The benefits of migration have increasingly come to influence the policy agenda.

In this setting, the Global Approach to Migration developed as the new EU strategy for migration and asylum. In 2007, the European Commission proposed a new instrument for cooperation with third countries on migration - Mobility Partnerships. These partnerships are concluded with neighboring countries willing to cooperate on migration-related issues specifically aimed at labor mobility. The EU has, with the implementation of this new framework for migration, made an effort to move away from a security-oriented agenda towards a more comprehensive migration policy.

This study investigates current literature on the migration-development nexus on one hand, and the migration-security nexus on the other. This discussion is then combined with a discourse analysis of two documents investigating the approach towards Mobility Partnerships. The study finds that the Mobility Partnerships addresses a security discourse more than a “global approach”. The analysis show that an underlying bias remains towards third countries and that a security discourse still exists in EU’s approach to migration.

*Key words:* migration, securitization, development, EU, Mobility Partnerships  
Words: 9215

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# List of Abbreviations

EC - European Commission

EU - European Union

FDI - Foreign Direct Investment

GAM - Global Approach to Migration

ILO - International Labour Organization

IOM - International Organization for Migration

MP - Mobility Partnership

ODA - Official Development Assistance

TCN - Third Country National

# 1 Introduction

A majority of the world's 214 million migrants migrate for economic reasons, which make 90 % of all global migrants into economic migrants (International Labour Office 2010:1-2). In 2009, 1.6 million non-EU citizens emigrated to the European Union (EU). This makes the EU the destination for 0.7 % of all international migrants (Eurostat 2011).

Both the EU and other actors have expressed concerns about migration being a social, cultural, political, and economic "problem". As a part of this, migration policies have become more securitized (Huysmans 2000:752). Migrants have been depicted as "threats", and something that need to be "managed", "controlled" and "restricted".

The EU has been adopting a two-sided approach towards migration; an internal and external dimension. The internal dimension refers to a policy field that includes border control, asylum law, refugee policies, and visa policies, i.e. aspects of migration that are relevant for the receiving country. The external dimension is concerned with the migrant sending countries, transit countries and push-and-pull factors of migration (Wierich 2011:225).

Since 2005, the Global Approach to Migration (GAM) is EU's framework for dialogue and cooperation with non-EU countries on migration related issues. The idea that migration policy and development are connected to one another has gained momentum over the last several years. The positive effects of migration on both the countries of origin and destination, have contributed to a more optimistic outlook on labor migration (International Labour Office 2010:40). Remittances have come to play an especially important role in the perception of migrants as positive agents for development. The EU has been eager to promote a non-security approach to migration, particularly through the implementation of the GAM (Lavenex & Kunz 2008:446). At the same time, there is a general consensus among scholars that a security discourse has permeated international policy-making since the end of the Cold War (e.g. Huysmans 2000, Karyotis 2007). A majority of migrant receiving states have increasingly introduced more restrictive migration policies. Europe has come to be compared to a "fortress"; a consequence of restrictive migration policies that in turn are an effect of a discourse of fear (Geddes 2000, Huysmans 2006).

In the light of this paradoxical debate: on one hand a security discourse and on the other the idea that development may in due course lead to less immigration, the Mobility Partnerships (MP's) were developed by the European Commission. In regard to labor migration, the Mobility Partnerships agrees to greater mobility towards the EU of TCN's (third country nationals), including facilitated access to

labor markets, more favorable conditions for admission and actions to reduce the impact of “brain drain” (European Migration Network 2011:105). In turn, the third country has to fulfill a series of conditions, e.g. signing readmission agreements<sup>1</sup> or improving border controls (European Commission COM 2007:4-5).

The overarching aim of the Mobility Partnerships is to move away from the security paradigm and facilitate legal mobility of TCN’s, especially labor migrants, through the implementation of circular migration<sup>2</sup>. Circular migration is supposed to benefit all involved actors: the migrant sending country, the receiving country and the migrants themselves.

## 1.1 Research Problem and Aim of Thesis

This bachelor’s thesis is an analysis of EU’s external dimension, illustrated through the Mobility Partnerships. The assumption which forms the basis of the thesis is that EU’s external policies have been affected by greater security logic, while at the same time labor migration has to a greater extent become viewed as a positive factor for development in the migrant sending and receiving countries and communities. The paradox within EU’s external dimension is striking; the internal security and free mobility of EU citizens rely on the strengthening of the external borders at the expense of more stringent security rhetoric and measures to hinder immigrants from entering the EU. Since 2005, EU’s policy framework for migration is the Global Approach to Migration. One major component of this new agenda is Mobility Partnerships. However, while the positive impact of migration on developing communities has been recognized in an EU external dimension, the question remains whether a security discourse still can be detected in EU’s Mobility Partnerships.

The aim of this thesis is thus, firstly to investigate the relationship between migration, development and security in an EU framing, and secondly to investigate whether a security logic can be traced, in regard to migrants, in the European Commission’s discourse on Mobility Partnerships.

The research question this thesis aims to answer is:

*Can a securitization of migration be identified in EU’s Mobility Partnerships?*

- If so, how has migration been securitized?
- How does this affect the idea of migrants as agents for development?

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<sup>1</sup> Readmission agreements are bilateral agreements between the EU and third countries, issuing the return of the third country’s own nationals and non-nationals who transited through the third country on the way to EU (Boswell & Geddes 2011:166).

<sup>2</sup> Circular migration can be defined as “a form of migration that is managed in a way allowing some degree of legal mobility back and forth between two countries” (COM 2007:8).

## 1.2 Limitations

The EU is a complex institution and the EU policy framework even more so. To answer my research questions in the most extensively way as possible, and also due to the thesis' word limit, many compromises have been done. This especially when describing former policies and framework in the area of migration, which merely touches upon the surface of some major milestones leading up to the implementation of Mobility Partnerships (see section 5.2.3 and 5.3).

The migration-development link is investigated primarily in terms of economically motivated migration, viewing the migrant as an economical actor filling a labor gap in the EU. However, there are other dimensions such as political, social and cultural aspects to be considered. Due to limitation of words in the thesis, the focus lies on migrants as economical actors in the development process. The focus on economic perspectives is due to that Mobility Partnerships centers around labor migration. Also, one of the most positive impacts of migration on development is economic remittances (International Labour Office 2010:4).

Another limitation is that no distinction between female and male migrants is done. This is also a reflection of the comprehensiveness of the subject, as well as limitation of words. It should be noted that both men and women form an important part of EU's current and future labor force and migrant population.

## 1.3 Definition of Concepts and Terms

To avoid confusion about certain recurring concepts and terms, some definitions are required.

### 1.3.1 Migration and migrants

I use the term migration and migrant when referring to non-EU nationals entering, or attempt entering, the EU. An international migrant is a person living outside their country of origin for 12 months or longer either regularly or irregularly (Boswell & Geddes 2011:2). With a migrant, I imply labor migrants, family migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees, which are often used as synonyms in the thesis. However, a majority of migrants are economic migrants, meaning that they come to the EU for work. The groups of people in mind are migrants from developing countries, since they are for the most part the addressees of EU's external dimension.

Immigration holds almost the same meaning as migration, but migration is a more general term of referring to mobility of people. Since this thesis to a major part rests upon secondary sources, and the literature does not make any distinc-



tions between immigration and migration, I will not do such a distinction either. I do not, however, refer to migrants as “legal” or “illegal” as several authors do. I believe that referring to any human in terms of being “illegal” is not only dehumanizing, but it also compares migration to a criminal activity. I use the term *irregular migration*, in agreement with e.g. Boswell and Geddes who states that irregular migration reflects a dynamism and diversity to the phenomena of migration, which “illegal” does not (Boswell & Geddes 2011:129).

### 1.3.2 The EU

When using the term EU I refer to the collective European Union, consisting of all 27 States. The EU should be understood as a political entity.

### 1.3.3 The European Commission

The European Commission (EC) is the executive body of the EU and represents the common interests of all member states. The Commission is responsible for initiating policy and for the management and implementation of EU decisions (Boswell & Geddes 2011:55). The EC is divided into 33 departments (called Directorates-General or DGs), each responsible for different issues. Immigration lies under the jurisdiction of Home Affairs, headed by Commissioner Cecilia Malmström (European Union website).

### 1.3.4 The European Council

The European Council is an EU institution which defines political priorities and direction of the European Union. The Council has no legislative powers and consists of the Heads of State or Government of the Member States, the Councils President, and the President of the European Commission (European Council website).

### 1.3.5 Third States

A third country, or a non-EU-state, is a term applied in official EU discourse and should be understood as countries that are not members of the EU and seek to cooperate on migration-related issues through Mobility Partnerships. Persons from third countries are often referred to as third-country nationals (TCN's) and often incorrectly interpreted as persons from developing countries (Eurofound 2007). Since Mobility Partnerships, which are the analytic focus of

the thesis, only have been concluded with countries which can be referred to as developing countries, then third states should be understood in this thesis as developing countries<sup>3</sup>.

### 1.3.6 Migration Policy

When addressing migration policies, it entails the EU legislations and agreements which are implemented in the area of migration. Since 2005 the link between migration and development has been manifested in EU policy through the Global Approach (Lavenex & Kunz 2008:446). The Global Approach is the EU framework for cooperation with third countries on migration. When referring to the Global Approach, it should be understood as the EU's comprehensive approach towards external migration. The Mobility Partnerships are bilateral agreements on projects between the EU, interested member states, and a third partner country. Mobility Partnerships are not lawfully binding documents but outlines project proposals. Many policies have preceded the Global Approach and Mobility Partnerships, which is briefly discussed under section 5.2.3 and 5.3.

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<sup>3</sup> Mobility partnerships have to date been concluded with four countries: Moldova and Cape Verde (2008), Georgia (2009) and Armenia in 2011 (European Commission, press release 2011).

## 2 Theoretical Approach

By the end of the Cold War, a security vacuum generated a need for a new approach regarding security. And so, in the early 1990's, security studies moved away from the traditional concept of national security fears such as arms control, military alliances or nuclear deterrence, and introduced new stakeholders that formed and widened the concept of security (de Haas 2002:8-9, Huysmans 2006:15). This new security approach developed alongside with a social constructivist framing within international relations and was developed by the Copenhagen School in the early 1990's (Watson 2012:293). The Copenhagen School draws upon a multidisciplinary field, though centering its attention on the concept of national and international security (Watson 2012:282). This broad conceptualization of the security approach refers to a social dimension of security; a potential external threat to a society which can be justified with extraordinary actions (Watson 2012:282). The recent years' war on terror and the question of how political discourse is shaped around security rhetoric, fueled the idea of security being a central theme within political and social discourse and thus became known as the "securitization theory" (Watson 2012:289).

### 2.1 Securitization according to Huysmans

The theoretical approach draws upon the securitization theory, stemming from the Copenhagen School. The conceptualization of securitization used for this thesis is Jef Huysmans' advancement of the theory in his book "The Politics of Insecurity: Fear, Migration and Asylum in the EU" (2006). Huysmans emphasizes how the construction of security definitions are used in political policy solutions, by evoking an imagined unity that is threatened by external forces. Huysmans combines the theory which he underpins with empirical evidences from the European Union. The analytical concept of social security, comments on security situations, where social developments – in this case migration to the EU – threatens the identity of a people, instead of traditionally the sovereign state (Huysmans 2006:64). Within an EU context, the first securitization of the region came in connection with the development of a common internal market (see section 5.2.3).

Huysmans expresses the theory of securitization in the following words:

[...] the restrictive immigration and asylum policy, the constructions of a security continuum, and the policy of favoring the free movement of nationals of Member States in the labor market and social policy area at the expense of third-country nationals are politically significant because they sustain the construction of a scapegoat

in a political and socio-economic struggle for the transformation and conservation of the welfare state” (2006:80).

## 2.2 Theoretical Considerations

The securitization theory added a new dimension to the concept of security, giving it a social context in which security can be re-evaluated. Nonetheless, there exist some theoretical limitations to the approach.

The theory, although acclaimed, has been criticized for being too focused on the questions of restriction and control, without considering the social, political and economical factors that lie behind migration (Boswell and Geddes 2011:42). Huysmans also points at some critical voices, meaning that the definition of migration and asylum in terms of security, has a negative impact on the multicultural society, on how the labor market functions, on welfare, and on EU’s status as a moral watchdog in the world (Huysmans 2006:146).

Here I take the negative views of the theory into consideration, and try to be as clear as possible throughout my thesis, when using concepts and when generalizing. Since securitization contains a wide range of concepts and ideas, the emphasis is put on the external context viewed as a threat, which is an integral part within the security approach and well emphasized in Huysmans’ work.

# 3 Methodology and Material

## 3.1 Initial Methodological Reflections

A major body of this thesis investigates the triangular relationship between migration, development and security. It does so as a review of current literature with the theoretical framework of securitization (see chapter 3) and within the EU context. To conceptualize the link between migration-development and migration-security, discourse analysis is used for the documents concerning the Mobility Partnerships. Discourse analysis is applied in quite broad terms in the document analysis, mostly addressing contradictions and revealing the subjective meanings in the Partnerships. By focusing on these documents, the thesis allows an in-depth study in order to understand the discourse practices in essential policy documents regarding migration, and more specifically, labor migration in the EU.

In the analysis, the research questions are investigated in the light of the theoretical approach. After the analysis a discussion is presented, to which the posed questions are linked and some main arguments highlighted.

The aim of the thesis is not to make any broad generalizations about EU policy; however, hopefully it can contribute to some part to an empirical understanding of securitization within an EU context and as well as to an enhanced understanding of the Mobility Partnerships.

## 3.2 Discourse Analysis

I conduct a discourse analysis of two documents concerning Mobility Partnerships. I have chosen discourse analysis as a method, since securitization theory is a discursive practice and the two blends together well (Watson 2012:282). The use of language reveals subjective meaning and highlights contradictions, and what is being said, or more importantly, what is *not* being said (Bergström & Boréus 2005:257). The usefulness of discourse analysis is applicable, since it allows one to study values and addresses the social function of language.

In social research, discourse analysis is viewed as both a theory and a method (Bergström & Boréus 2005:326). The use of discourse analysis in this thesis is primary applied as a method, in order to display the underlying patterns in dis-

course regarding Mobility Partnerships, but also as a theoretical framework along with the securitization theory.

There are no clear templates for how discourse analysis should be used as a method, instead it is up to each researcher to develop a framework for analysis that is best suited for the specific study (Bergström & Boréus 2005:329). According to Bergström and Boréus, the broad understanding of discourse analysis is "... a study of social phenomena where the language is at focus ..." and where the use of language helps shaping the reality rather than being a reflection of it (2005:305).

Scholars in the field of securitization, rely to a great extent on discourse analysis as a method (Watson 2012:282). Huysmans focuses on the linguistic turn in security studies, stating that "... language plays a central role in the modulation of security domains" (Huysmans 2006:8). Since Huysmans takes on a more linguistic approach, the use of quotes plays a prominent in the thesis, promoting transparency in the study (Bergström & Boréus 2005:353).

Most of all, discourse analysis can be related to different types of power structures and construction of identity (Bergström & Boréus 2005:328, Neumann 2003:15). When discourse is perceived as political practice, the relations between different groups in society are affected (Bergström & Boréus 2005:328).

The discourse analysis is applied to two documents: a Communication from the European Commission regarding Mobility Partnerships and circular migration and a Joint Declaration on a Mobility Partnerships between the European Union and Moldova. What is interesting for the analysis is how labor migration in these documents is framed, what kind of discourse is predominant, and if it reflects underlying power structures. Also, how the revealed discourse in EU's official documents relate to the development discourse promoted by the Commission. Discourse is a key element and is the critical lens through which the Mobility Partnerships are analyzed. The language used in the documents, holds a great deal of power, as it reflects upon how migration is portrayed in the official discourse of the EU.

### 3.3 Discourse Analysis and Securitization

Discourse analysis and securitization theory, have both in common that the focus lays within studying hegemonic relations. Since both theory and method are inter-linked in discourse analysis, it is important that the other theory, in this case securitization, is based on the same ontological and epistemological assumptions. Discourse, is an integral part of the securitization approach, which is why discourse analysis and securitization theory fits together well (Huysmans 2006, Watson 2012).

Language is a social activity formed in a social context, an approach also found in the social constructivist bases of securitization (Huysmans 2006:145). Both the securitization theory and discourse analysis stems from social constructivism. Therefore the epistemological foundation for the methodology is based on

the view that reality, or perceptions of reality, are socially constructed. Huysmans states that "...reality is not simply a given but is shaped by human beings in a meaningful way" (Huysmans 2006:145).

I believe that the aspect of securitization within a social constructivist approach is permeated by a discourse of an "us" and "them". The formation of an identity mainly takes place in and through a discourse, and identity is not possible unless it is opposed to something else. Therefore in discourse analysis a distinction often is made between an "us" and "them" (Bergström & Boréus 2005:327-328). The distinction of an "us" and "them" as a result of securitization of migration, should be regarded as a response to perceptions, or to reality, of migration to the EU. I also believe that such perceptions can be found in the documents I have chosen to analyze.

### 3.4 Material

The content which refers to background, methodology and theory, is based on secondary sources consisting of books, articles and reports related to the topic of migration, development and securitization. The primary sources in form of Communications have been downloaded from the European Commission's website, which provides free access to various public documents. The Mobility Partnerships with Moldova was accessed through the European Councils' website.

The idea of this study is to display the discourse reflected by the Commission in regard to Mobility Partnerships. The choice of Mobility Partnerships as a point of analysis implies some difficulties as they are new and lack a frame of reference over a longer period of time. Also, the Mobility Partnerships are a part of a new policy direction of the EU, which is also in its starting blocks.

However, it is still significant and valid to study what these partnerships entail and how they are promoted by the European Commission. It is worth pointing out, that even if the Mobility Partnership between the EU and Moldova was released by the Council of the European Union, it is the European Commission that is the institution which has developed and implemented the Partnerships.

The purpose of doing a document analysis is to investigate how official discourse relates to the migration-development nexus and the migration-security discourse. Other official documents have also been examined, but served the purpose of providing facts, and were not subjected to discourse analysis.

# 4 Examining the Link between Migration, Development, and Security

## 4.1 The Migration-development Nexus

*“International migration is an intrinsic part of the development process”.*

UN Report 2006:36

The migration-development model has come and gone in waves in international relations, balancing like a pendulum between cost and benefit aspects (Faist & Fauser 2011:5-8). Since the 1990's, international migration has become a rising concern. The migration-development nexus has gained new attention since a more positive view has developed, viewing migrants as agents for development. The debate began to center around the benefits of migration for sending, receiving and transit countries and also for the migrants themselves (UN Report 2006, International Labour Office 2010). Migration is positive for local development, but restrictive immigration policy hinders the development process (International Labour Office 2010:41;214).

Since the turn of the millennium, the migration-development nexus has been especially promoted by the international community (Lavenex & Kunz 2008:440). The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has for many years been a prominent actor and the first organization to link migration with development (Lavenex & Kunz 2008:446) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) was the first institution to show the positive impact of remittances (Lavenex & Kunz 2008:447). As a result of the changed view of migration and remittances, the perception of migrants as positive development actors, has as well (UN Report 2006:30).

### 4.1.1 Does Migration Affect Development?

During the past years, there has been a growing migration research which emphasizes the positive impact migration has on development. However, concerns in the same area has arisen, expressing that migration hinders development due to “brain drain”, most often referred to as high-skilled labor from the developing South leaving their homes to work in the global North. According to de Haas, migration cannot encourage brain drain, since all migrants are not highly skilled or educated.



Statistically, brain drain has only occurred in a handful of countries, and therefore it cannot be used as a generalizing argument. In the International Labour Offices' report from 2010, brain drain is perceived as “a real concern” for developing countries, as it reduces long-term economic growth and has negative effects on the loss of return on the migrant-sending societies (International Labour Office 2010:49).

Still, the positive contributions of migration on the migrant-sending countries are incumbent, as the positive effects of people moving, gaining new knowledge and learning new skills and sending remittances dominates the migration-development debate (Faist & Fauser 2011:3). Labor migration has in particular been perceived as an engine of growth (International Labour Office 2010:41).

#### 4.1.2 Remittances

The idea of migrants not contributing to either social or economic development in their home countries has been undervalued, according to de Haas (2005). In fact, the positive impact migrants have on their country of origin has both social and economic effect. Economic and social remittances are often viewed as the most positive outcomes of migration and their role in development processes has been recognized by many (Faist & Fauser 2011; International Labour Office 2010; Lavenex & Kunz 2008; Raghuram 2009).

*Economic remittances* are private money transfers that migrants send back to their families and relatives in the home country. Workers' remittances include household-to-household transfers in cash and in kind (Chukanska & Comini 2012:7).

*Social remittances* refer to skills, knowledge, and ideas the migrant acquires and which affects socio-political factors (de Haas 2005:1272-1273). Migrants remit socially both when emigrated and when they return to their home country. Migrant diasporas are often engaged in different transnational practices<sup>4</sup> as e.g. relief, investments or political advocacy (de Haas 2002:9-10). Social remittances are therefore often referred to as “good development” (Faist & Fauser 2011:3).

Migration and remittances reduce poverty in the migrant-sending communities as the remittances lead to different investments in the local community. Remittances help the family members that stayed behind to invest in agriculture and private projects (UN Report 2006:22). International migrant households tend to invest more than non-migrant ones (de Haas 2005:1274).

Remittances have showed to be less volatile, less pro-cyclical and therefore a much more dependent source of income than foreign direct investments (FDI) or development aid. The main receivers are lower middle income countries, which acquire almost half of all the remittances world-wide (de Haas 2005:1277).

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<sup>4</sup> For a more detailed discussion on transnational communities' impact on development, see e.g. Faist & Fauser 2011

However, remittances have been criticized for substantiating short-term consumption and unproductive investments, and for being habit-forming. Migration can also lead to loss of skilled workers and hinder delivery of indispensable services in the developing countries (World Bank 2011:vii).

The amount of remittances sent to developing countries has increased over the past several years (Faist & Fauser 2011:2). Remittances sent from the EU have generally followed the international trend and steadily increased from year to year. In 2010, the outflow of remittances from the EU to third countries amounted to 22.3 billion Euros (Chukanska & Comini 2012:1). However, it is important to keep in mind that these are the official figures of remittances and that the unofficial is expected to exceed FDI's, aid assistance, or private flows (World Bank 2011).

Remittances might be a better alternative to traditional forms of development aid as it has a direct impact on developing communities and people there gain some economic leeway (de Haas 2005:1277).

Although migration does not lead directly to development, it can *contribute* to it (de Haas 2005:1275;1278). Ultimately it is the social, political and economic conditions in both sending and receiving countries that will determine the level of impact remittances have on development.

## 4.2 The Migration-security Nexus

There has always existed suspicion and distrust directed towards immigrants – the “others” – who challenge the cultural, social, political, and economic identity, and homogeneity of a society.

Stricter controls for “managing” migration at EU’s external borders involves advanced security check points, building fences and policy directives such as re-admission agreements to send migrants back to their country of origin or to the transit country. Even though migration challenges the existence of the nation state by the disappearance of borders, migration is still visible and something which it can have control over (Boswell & Geddes 2011:13). Securing Europe’s borders means controlling the interests of the state, and maintaining its identity. Increasing xenophobia and fear of terrorism are two factors that have triggered security responses towards migrants (Ward 2012:43-44).

How the EU has addressed migration and to what extent it has been incorporated in EU policy, is ever-changing. Migration has been interlinked with a security approach, where the idea of an “us” and “them” has dominated EU’s identity and its discourse. Internal security has been at the expense of externalization of border management and migration control. Whilst the security framing of migration has permeated EU policy, the migration-development also has entered policy discourse. Certain events in 2005 and 2006 led up to the implementation of a more comprehensive approach towards migration and the realization of Mobility Partnerships with third countries.

## 4.2.1 Migrants as Objects of Fear

*“...groups and their identities are never just given in a security account, but they develop within the story by the definition of threats”*  
de Haas 2002:11

The construction of migration as an object of fear is linked with several debates that have had a direct impact on how the concept of identity and belonging has been regulated within an EU framework (Huysmans 2006:63).

When the Berlin Wall fell, a paradigm shift in international relations occurred. The new international order, without an Eastern and Western bloc, also meant a loss of a common enemy and consequently loss of an identity (de Haas 2002:8, Huysmans 2006:15). The European Union replaced to a certain extent this identity-loss problem, by creating a community based on common borders. Borders are socially constructed and manifest membership (Boswell & Geddes 2011:15). The member states in the EU do not share any common identity, except for joint external borders and non-borders internally (van Houtum & Pijper 2007:296).

According to Huysmans, the key to understanding the securitization of migration in Europe lies in the securitization of the internal market – the free movement of people, goods services and capital has become cornerstones in European identity (Huysmans 2006:69). The border-free Europe has come at the expense of strengthening the external borders and stricter migration policies. These concerns of security are hence manifested in security policies, thus entrenching the link between migration and security concerns.

According to Neumann, stereotypes are necessary to enable us to more easily adjust to our environment and to create order in a chaos-like world. It is not important whether we have prejudices or whether we categorize people according to our stereotypical assumptions. The important issue is rather what *kind* of stereotypes we have and whether we divide people into groups of “us” and “them” (Neumann 2003:107).

Migrants are depicted in discourses referred to as societal threats, by threatening the common identity and culture of the receiving country. They are also associated with criminality, as the “other” represents a threat to public order and might be a potential terrorist or connected to terrorist networks. Migrants may also be perceived as economic threats to the receiving society, by pressuring the welfare system and “taking our jobs”. Lastly, immigrants also are referred to in terms of political threats. The thought that immigrants threaten the political hegemony and public safety, gives the impression that governments accepting migrants are incapable to see to the interests of its own citizens, an exaggerated issue though often re-occurring during election year (Karyotis 2007:8-12).

The fear of the other is based on potentially losing economic welfare, public security and social identity (van Houtum & Pijpers 2007:292). However, some migrants are welcome, if they fulfill the criteria of securing Europe's welfare system (ibid). The differential of rights between nationals of member states and TCNs', together with more restrictive policies are indirectly a manifestation of

“welfare chauvinism and the idea of cultural homogeneity as a stabilizing factor” (Huysmans 2006:64).

In the light of increased security concerns, immigrants have been redefined into potential threats. The difference between a TCN and an EU citizen becomes an excuse for suspicion (Guild 2004:237).

#### 4.2.2 Emergence of a Common EU Migration Policy

Migration to Europe after World War II consisted mostly of labor migrants, as the European market required both an inexpensive and flexible labor force (Huysmans 2006:65). The question of who could reside in Europe was purely an economic question and not associated with the security discourse as it is today (Chou 2009:545, Karyotis 2007:3).

To regulate external migration was never part of the basic idea of the EU. Free movement of people, goods, services and capital was the very essence of the idea behind the Union. However, free movement of people has not applied to TCN's as the conditions of their entry, employment and residence has remained a national concern (Castles 2008:5).

In 1990 the Schengen Convention was introduced, which came into effect five years later. The most important element in the Schengen agreement is the removal of internal borders between the member states, which has been compensated with increased security measures at the external borders.

The removal of internal borders opened up for greater control of Europe's external borders and stricter security measures such as data-bases, information sharing or further police cooperation (Boswell & Geddes 2011:58, Huysmans 2006:69, Wierich 2011:227). A common visa system was initiated in Schengen and the European Commission issued a black and white list for visas. On the black list countries whose citizens are viewed as potential security risk are listed, most of these countries being developing countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. Citizens from countries on the black list must go through intricate visa application processes in order to be able to enter the EU “legally” (Wierich 2011:227).

The EU has been adopting two approaches towards migration. The first is externalization of migration control, i.e. implementing control mechanisms in third countries. These could be stricter border controls, measures to combat irregular migration, building asylum systems in transit countries or to facilitate the return of asylum seekers and irregular migrants through e.g. readmission agreements. The second approach refers to an internal dimension, or preventive measures and policies. This includes targeting the causes to why people were migrating, specifically the root causes of emigration, and internal border controls, visa policies or asylum law (Boswell 2003:621-624, Wierich 2011:225).

Prior to the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997, EU Member States were able to set their own migration policies. However, a key element of the Amsterdam Treaty is the establishment of “an area of freedom, justice and security”, incorporating the Schengen conditions EU's external agenda as well as transferring responsibili-

ties of migration policies by setting up a set of standards for future asylum procedures (Castles 2008:8, Chou 2009:544, Geddes 2000:110).

### 4.2.3 Linking Migration to Terrorism

The terrorist attacks in USA on 9/11 in 2001, and the subsequent attacks in Madrid in 2004, and in London 2005, highlighted the migration-security nexus (Chou 2009:547, de Haas 2002:7-8, Boswell & Geddes 2011:42). After the 9/11 events, migrants were even closer linked to terrorism and became subjects of fear, and migration re-appeared often in discussions about terrorism in the EU (Karyotis 2007:6). Terrorism and migration has never been synonyms in any official discourse, however after 9/11, terrorism and migration could be mentioned in the same sentence without anyone being surprised (Karyotis 2007:8). The act of terrorism links trust and fear with migration. Thus terrorism generates fear of “the other”. By securitizing migration, the subject of fear can be controlled (de Haas 2002:11). The post-9/11 world connected the act of terrorism to policies of migration and asylum. Consequently, the question of internal security versus migration was stressed by the EU (Huysmans 2006:87).

There is no connection between the free movement and terrorism, yet the global concerns over terrorism have led to more restrictive migration and asylum policies (van Houtum & Pijper 2007:295). Control mechanisms for immigration have been reinforced since 9/11 which presents the immigrants as a potential threat (de Haas 2002:12, Huysmans 2006:63). However, stricter border controls does little to combat terrorism; visa regulations will not catch a determined terrorist. Instead these harsher restrictions further deepen the cleavage between nationals and immigrants (de Haas 2002:12).

## 4.3 Towards Mobility Partnerships

The Amsterdam Treaty marked a shift in the EU policy by incorporating the Schengen agreement in the EU. The EU summit in Tampere in 1999 became the official starting point for recognizing migration policies as a part of EU’s external policy (Lavenex & Kunz 2008:444). The Tampere meeting highlighted a more comprehensive approach towards migration, declaring that the EU should enter into partnerships with third countries regarding political rights, human rights, development issues and that all Member States should fully incorporate the Geneva Convention<sup>5</sup> (Boswell & Geddes 2011:167, Chou 2009:547-548). The Tampere

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<sup>5</sup> *The 1951 Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees* sets out e.g. legal protection and social rights that refugees should receive from the signatory states. Most European states have integrated the Convention into national law (Boswell & Geddes 2011:34-35).

program was the first effort to incorporate a wider non-security perspective on migration. The security approach has focused much on control, admission, and rejection of TCNs. However, now some efforts were made to a wider understanding and implementation of migration (Lavenex & Kunz 2008:443).

Three major developments in 2005 and 2006 lead to the establishment of Mobility Partnerships. Firstly, tragic events in the latter half of 2005 in Ceuta and Melilla lead to the death of at least 13 people, and many more were injured, when trying to enter the EU (Amnesty 2006). These events, triggered policy responses from the EU, promoting more effective ways of “managing” migration and improving cooperation between members states (Chou 2009:549). Secondly, an international debate regarding the positive benefits of especially labor migration began to emerge, a consequence of the migration-development nexus. Thirdly the demographic changes in EU called for a reconsideration of migration to the EU. Lower fertility rates, higher life expectancy in EU countries and labor shortage in certain sectors (e.g. in the health sector) as well as public concerns regarding the impact of migration on welfare has lead a re-evaluation of the need for labor immigration to the EU (Boswell and Geddes 2011:80). According to certain studies, the EU could require 674 million immigrants between the years 2000 and 2050, to meet the labor need in Europe (ibid.).

In 2005, under the British EU presidency, migration and development were set as priorities on the EU agenda, declaring that cooperation with Africa and Asia were important for targeting irregular migration and promoting development. This observation was resonated in the European Commission, initiating a meeting in Rabat between European heads of state and leaders from migrant sending and transit countries, with the topic “migration and development” (Chou 2009:550). So in December 2005 the European Commission adopted the “Global Approach to Migration: Priority Actions Focusing on Africa and the Mediterranean” and requested the Commission to follow-up and evaluate the progress in a years’ time (European Commission COM 2006:2). The aim of the Global Approach is to address all aspects of migration in a balanced and comprehensive way, in partnership with non-EU countries. Yet, the role of labor migration is especially highlighted: “...a common European policy on labour migration is an important component of the Global Approach” (European Commission COM 2006:6). In the 2006-follow-up Communication on GAM’s first year, the idea of “mobility packages”<sup>6</sup> was presented. In 2007 the Commission issued a Communication named “On circular migration and Mobility Partnerships between the European Union and third countries”. Based on this Communication, the Mobility Partnerships were launched the same year. The Mobility Partnerships are policy tools with a broad thematic scope, including migration, social, economic, foreign and development policies (Parkes 2009:329). According to the European Commission, “[...] the added value of mobility partnerships lies first in the fact that they are

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<sup>6</sup> ‘Mobility Packages’ were renamed *Mobility Partnerships* in 2007 in the Communication “On Circular Migration and Mobility Partnerships between European Union and Third Countries” (European Commission COM 2007).

comprehensive and reflect the entire spectrum of the global approach to migration while the instruments used so far only focused on specific aspects of the global approach” (European Commission, SEC, 2009:6).

Essentially, the Mobility Partnerships are an agreement between the EU and a third country, which make a number of commitments to make sure to reduce irregular migration to the EU. The EU is the obliged to improve “legal” immigration, assist third countries with capacity building to manage migration, promoting circular migration, and facilitating visas for citizens of the partner countries (European Commission, SEC, 2009:6). The criterion for choosing a partner country and the content of a partnership agreement is however relatively flexible (Parkes 2009:331). According to the European Commission’s Work Staff document from 2009, “Mobility Partnerships constitute the most innovative and sophisticated tool to date of the Global Approach to Migration and contribute significantly to its operationalization” (European Commission, SEC, 2009:4). Circular migration became a top priority for the EU, and mobility partnerships between the EU and third countries would be the implementing legal instrument (Chou 2009:550). EU’s Global Approach takes a new policy direction by putting forward the idea of circular migration which is, according to the Commission, a better and more flexible way of managing migration (Boswell & Geddes 2011:96).

The first Partnerships were signed with Moldova and Cape Verde in 2008, followed by an agreement with Georgia in 2009 and most recently with Armenia in 2011 (European Commission Press release 2011).

## 5 Analysis

The analysis consists of a document analysis of the first Communication from the European Commission regarding “circular migration and mobility” and the Mobility Partnership between the EU and Moldova.

The analysis is divided into three main sections. First the Commissions Communication “On circular migration and mobility partnerships between the European Union and third countries” from 2007 is presented. The following section presents the Mobility Partnership between Moldova and the EU, concluded in 2008. This agreement embodies the implementation of Mobility Partnerships. I have chosen to look at an actual agreement as it is important to see how the priorities, e.g. circular migration, have been framed in the official discourse. The analysis cannot draw any conclusions about other Mobility Partnerships then the one with Moldova, but it can emphasize some main concerns with the specific agreement and make some broad generalizations. The third section contains the main discussion; which examines how the discourse of Mobility Partnerships relates to the migration-development and migration-security nexus.

### 5.1 Communication from the European Commission “On circular migration and mobility partnerships between the European Union and third countries”

The normative basis for the Mobility Partnerships was settled on in the 2007 Communication “Circular Migration and Mobility Partnerships between the EU and Third Countries” (COM (2007) 248). The Commission proposes ways for legal migration to be incorporated in EUs external dimension, with the primary aim to promote circular migration.

The content of the agreements is adjusted to each specific partner country and depends on the current relations EU has with the third country in question. Another aspect of the agreements is how committed the third country would be to take action “against illegal immigration and facilitating the reintegration of refugees” (COM 2007:3). The criteria for selecting partner countries are not clear and “will necessarily have a complex legal nature” (COM 2007:3). Selection of partner countries relies on their commitment to hamper irregular migration (COM 2007:2).

The EU has, at least officially, moved away from a security-oriented discourse in regard to migration and labor migration to a more comprehensive approach.



The capacity of the partnerships is expressed as quite pro-development. The aim of Mobility Partnerships is “exploiting potential positive impacts of migration on development and responding to the needs of countries of origin in terms of skill transfers and of mitigating the impact of brain drain” (COM 2007:2).

Yet, by reading the criteria set up for the third party, a security-oriented agenda can be identified. The list of commitments from the third countries side are quite extensive, while the Member States focus on committing to e.g. facilitating “economic migration [...] based on the labor needs of interested Member States” (COM 2007:5) or facilitation of visas for “specific categories of people” (COM 2007:8). Readmission agreements are also a part of the commitments of the third country, together with many other security proposals such as stricter border controls, actions against human trafficking and smuggling, security of travel documents and exchange of information on migrants (COM 2007:4). These commitments are closely linked with security measures, at least from an EU perspective, as it hinders non-EU nationals to enter the EU. Overall, when looking at the general commitments from the EU and its member states, it is easy to draw the conclusion that securing the borders of Europe against unwanted migration remains a high priority in the external relations.

Circular migration in Mobility Partnerships is promoted as an important part in the new framework for EUs external relations. The concept of circular migration has emerged as a core concept and is presented as an “alternative to illegal migration” (COM 2007:8). An integral part of the Partnerships is to facilitate legal mobility and, more specifically, certain types of temporary labor migration. It is important that circular migration is temporarily, since it is at risk to “become permanent and, thus, defeat its objective” (COM 2007:8).

The EU states clearly what kind of circular migration is most preferable:

Circular migration could create an opportunity for persons residing in a third country to come to the EU temporarily for work, study, training or a combination of these, on the condition that, at the end of the period for which they were granted entry, they must re-establish their main residence and their main activity in their country of origin.

Circularity can be enhanced by giving migrants the possibility, once they have returned, to retain some form of privileged mobility to and from the Member States where they were formerly residing, for example in the form of simplified admission/re-entry procedures (COM 2007:9).

The EU’s apparent preference towards high-skilled migration is obvious and priority is given to “the labor needs of [...] Member States” (COM 2007:5).

The priority of attracting *the right type* of migrants emphasizes a cleavage between, wanted and unwanted, accentuating an “us” and “them”.

A central condition set up by the EU is the question of return of TCN’s, and the Commission proposes that labor migrants sign a “written commitment [...] to return voluntarily to their countries of origin once their contract expires” (COM 2007:12). If they overstay, then “readmission by the country of origin

should take place” (ibid). In other words, the labor migrants are turned into “illegals” when their contract ends.

The selection of partner countries is also problematic. The lack of criteria and the decision-making process being solely in the hands of the European Commission seems to depend on the member states’ own economic and political preferences. The choice of partner countries depends therefore on a person’s nationality and level of education, highlighting the question of belonging and identity. Since only those who are the “right” type of migrant will be able to gain from the partnerships, that is highly-skilled labor temporarily residing in the EU, the question of identity re-emerges; in order to belong, a partner country should agree to secure the border next to the EU and at the same time be able to provide the EU with high-skilled labor.

## 5.2 Mobility Partnership Between the European Union and Moldova

Mobility Partnerships are one of the latest policy tools for migration mobility in the framework of the Global Approach to Migration. The Partnerships are joint declarations between a third country, the EU, and the willing Member States. These are project-based, non-legally binding agreements and the Member States’ participation is on a voluntary basis. Each signatory representative proposes projects to be undertaken within the agreement. The Commission operates as the coordinating actor in the negotiations and follows up the agreed projects.

In 2008 the EU signed a Mobility Partnership with Moldova and 15 member countries participated. The Partnership states that:

[t]he Mobility Partnership will have the purpose of facilitating legal migration including circular and temporary migration, in particular for development purposes [...] and taking into account their labour market and socio-economic situation, establishing co-operation on migration and development [...] (Council of the European Union 2008:2).

The analysis of the content in the partnership with Moldova reveals very few projects concerning circular migration. Out of 34 proposed projects, four projects concern plans for circular migration<sup>7</sup>. Since circular migration is supposed to be the main element of these partnerships, it is surprising that a majority of the projects proposed in first hand promote capacity-building in migration management

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<sup>7</sup> The four projects regarding labor mobility are *Horizontal support* (proposal by Romania and the Veneto Region), *Circular migration schemes* (proposal by the Czech Republic and Cyprus), *Signing Bilateral agreements on the regulation of labor migration* (proposed by Bulgaria) and *Access to the labour market* (proposal by Italy). General Secretariat of the Council (*Joint Declaration on a Mobility Partnerships between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova*, 2008:11–12)

and less attention is given to circular migration. There is also a strong commitment from Moldova's part to provide stricter border controls and implement re-admission agreements. This is in strong contrast to the aim of Mobility Partnerships, which promote *de facto* mobility.

The key point of the Partnerships is to facilitate labor mobility. However, looking at the actual proposed projects in the Moldavian partnership, the focal point is rather on security measures as border controls, controlling irregular migration through readmission and capacity building for managing migration. The question about labor mobility is secondary in the partnership agreement with Moldova. Moreover, the partnership seems to be primarily designed to fit with member countries economic objectives and to fulfill EU's labor gaps with high-skilled labor.

Since the partnerships are non-legally binding documents, it means that there is no guarantee that the signatories will meet the agreed projects. This makes the proposed projects quite uncertain and toothless. There is also no time limit for following up on the agreed projects, since it says that "[w]henver appropriate, the Signatories will conduct an evaluation of the current partnership" (Council of the European Union 2008:6).

The migration policy presented by the EU is driven only by the Member States' own demand for labor, which in turn only promotes migration of TCN's that are labeled as useful. This suggests that the so called "partnership" consist of implementing migration policies to *hinder* mobility from Moldova. "Partnership" assumes a relationship among equals, while the agreement between the EU and Moldova reveals bias towards EU's internal security through enhanced border and migration control.

### 5.3 Moving Away from a Security Discourse?

In the 2007 Communication from the European Commission, examples of EC-funded projects that facilitate legal and circular migration, shows how important such projects are for the EC (European Commission COM 2007, Annex II). Development was a significant element in EU's Global Approach, and the Mobility Partnerships emphasizes the benefits of migration. The promotion of development as a part of migration policy thus links TCN's mobility with EU migration policy. However, when Mobility Partnerships are implemented, as the actual project proposals with Moldova, the security concerns take precedence over developmental issues. Hence I draw the conclusion that the development projects are subordinated in the Mobility Partnerships, which means that the GAM is moving away from its initial goal, to be comprehensive and less security-oriented.

The partnership is consequently a display of remaining security logic. Even though not clearly stated, the subtext of the agreements points at a remnant of securitization of migration and not, as promoted by the EU, a comprehensive approach.

Also, the criteria for being a partner country seems to be willing to tackle irregular migration, therefore accessing Mobility Partnerships relies on the commitment in cooperating in the security domain.

Due to the fact that the Partnerships rest upon selection by the EU states and that they focus upon circular and temporary migration, they can be interpreted as just another step of securing the EU from unwanted migration, solely based on its own wants and needs.

The definition of securitization rests upon the shaping and inflection of fear as a factor in a debate which is characterized by social and political relations depending on processes of exclusion and inclusion and establishment of the idea that some migrants are outsiders (Huysmans 2006:61). The negative depiction of migrants as subjects of fear is easily translated into a more general arena. The understanding of Mobility Partnerships as a continuation of security logic, ties together with politics of migration, revealed through Mobility Partnerships.

That the EU applies agreements that foremost benefit their own economic interests could also be understood as an outcome of the predominance of fear associated with migration. Xenophobic political parties have been on the rise in Europe the last years (Ward 2012:47-48). The idea of migrants as the “others” therefore remains and influences both the public debate and the official discourse of the EU. Restrictive migration policies can be viewed as an outcome of such discourse.

I have also argued that the type of migrant as a high-skilled person prevails the bias against migrants as a group, since only those who are truly useful for the EU are allowed to reside in a member country. This distinction contributes to further cleavages between an “us” and “them”. The EU’s ambiguous relation to migrants creates the idea that some migrants are “better” than others.

The Mobility Partnerships can be considered as counter-productive to the EU’s Global Approach. The broad spectrum of proposed projects in these partnerships jeopardizes the coherent policy the EU tries to implement in their external dimension. The voluntary participation of member states puts the EU’s common approach toward third countries into question.

## 6 Conclusions

The priorities stated in the Communication as well as in the joint agreement clearly demonstrates a security-oriented approach by the EU.

Using Huysmans explanation of securitization of migration, it can be argued that the change of migration policies are a result of securitization. The EU has clearly been affected by the ongoing migration-development debate and has, theoretically, applied it as a new policy tool. However, when analyzing the Mobility Partnerships, a security discourse in favor of the EU Member States is visible. I have argued that portraying migration in negative terms is both a cause and effect of securitization. I also draw the conclusion, from the document analysis, that the mobility approach is dominated by security logic, even though it is framed as a “global approach to migration”. The EU seems to continue on the path of securitization, despite the implementation that on paper seems to be more development-oriented than before.

This study of EU’s external dimension in the light of greater securitization logic as well as a more developmental approach has showcased some of the ambiguity in EU’s migration policy and commitments to third countries. It has also showed that the European Commission has not fully followed through on their commitment to create a broader approach towards migration and labor mobility. Moreover, it has been pointed out that the Mobility Partnerships may not be all that they seem to be, at a first glance.

Freer labor mobility has positive impacts on the migrant-sending community and should be encouraged. This is acknowledged by the EU as well as the international community. The role of migrants as positive forces for development in migrant sending and migrant receiving countries, and the impact on their own lives is encouraging. Facilitating labor migration, through circular migration, can in the long run lead to less migration as the positive impacts of the migrated diaspora will lead to development in the migrant-sending communities and thus, in the long run, less irregular migration to the EU. The Mobility Partnerships aim at facilitating labor migration, but are framed in a security-oriented discourse. Instead of meeting its policy objective, which is facilitating labor movement, this study has found that they reflect a continued security discourse from the EU’s part. A security agenda does not hinder irregular migration, as migrants find other, often more dangerous routes to enter the EU. It also reinforces the image of migrants as something dangerous and problematic, fomenting a cleavage between an “us” and “them”. The Mobility Partnerships have the possibility to facilitate labor mobility as well as cultural, political, and economic exchange. However, they are framed in a pro-security way instead of pro-developmental, framing migrants as agents of fear, instead of agents of development.

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