

RESEARCH PAPER 3

Mobility Support Schemes Between Egypt and the European Union

Prepared by **Dr. Michaella Vanore**



UCD CLINTON
INSTITUTE

October 2020

ABSTRACT: The third and final research paper related to labour markets explores the cooperation frameworks between Egypt, the European Union and select European countries that shape mobility support schemes for migrant workers. Legal migration and mobility support schemes can be generally understood as policies, programmes or interventions that facilitate the movement of workers from one country to another. Such schemes are often created to support better managed migration flows. Despite increased cooperation between Egypt and the European Union on migration management, relatively few mobility support schemes enable Egyptian labour migrants to enter and work in member states. This paper therefore provides an overview of policy frameworks and specific schemes that do enable migration between Egypt and the EU for work purposes. The paper focuses on schemes across the skills spectrum. It reviews support schemes both for lower-skilled Egyptian labour migrants as well as for students and researchers who may be considered high-skilled (future) workers.

List of Acronyms

BLMA	Bilateral Labour Migration Agreement
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ERMCE	Enhancing the Response to Migration Challenges in Egypt
EU	European Union
EUTF for Africa	European Union Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa
IMIS	Integrated Migration Information System
JAES	Joint Africa-EU Strategy
JVAP	Joint Valletta Action Plan
MMD	Africa-EU Migration and Mobility Dialogue
RCPs	Regional Consultative Processes on Migration
TCNs	Third-Country Nationals
VET	Vocational Education and Training

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Executive Summary

Legal labour migration and mobility between Egypt and the European Union (EU) has become an increasingly important area of cooperation between the two bodies, yet the creation of labour migration schemes that support the migration and work for Egyptians of varying skill levels in EU countries has not yet been widely realised. Since the early 2000s, growing cooperation and collaboration between Egypt and the EU on migration has generally focused on curtailing irregular migration, identifying and addressing smuggling and trafficking in human beings, and supporting local development initiatives to address the “root causes” of migration (African Union & European Union, 2019). Legal labour migration and mobility have been important elements of the strategic partnership between Egypt, the EU at large, and specific EU member states. Yet despite the emphasis on this area of collaboration, few recent initiatives have emerged to facilitate the labour migration of Egyptians to EU member states.

This paper explores how frameworks for cooperation between Egypt, the EU and EU member states have and will shape mobility facilitation from Egypt to Europe. This paper is the third in a series of research papers within the project *Research on the Means to Improve Human Mobility Channels*. The wider project focuses on how Egyptian youth at risk of migrating irregularly to the EU can be better protected, including through the promotion of regular, high-quality labour channels. To support this objective, this paper examines migration cooperation frameworks and specific examples of past and planned policies, programmes, and interventions that aim to support the legal movement of Egyptians to the EU. The paper explores cooperation agreements and labour mobility support programmes that are included in frameworks on different levels: 1) between Africa and the EU; 2) between Egypt and the EU, and; 3) between Egypt and specific EU member states.

AFRICA-EU COOPERATION ON LABOUR MIGRATION

Cooperation between Africa and Europe, including on migration, has been defined through a number of instruments and frameworks. One particularly important framework is the **2007 Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES)**, a political vision and roadmap for future cooperation between Africa and the EU. The Joint Strategy provides a long-term framework for the Africa-EU relationship on joint challenges, of which migration is just one. The JAES contains four main objectives, two of which explicitly identify the need to deepen cooperation on migration management. Within this action area, the JAES notes that combating irregular migration, including through increasing cooperation on return and readmission, is a prime area for cooperation. Mutual efforts on border control and trafficking and human beings are also identified under this objective (Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, 2007). Under the JAES, different sets of priorities have been defined over time. The most-recent set of priorities were agreed in 2017 and collated in the so-called **Abidjan Declaration**, which identified migration and mobility as one of four joint priorities (African Union & European Union, 2017).

The expansion of Africa-EU cooperation on migration through the JAES has been accompanied by complementary initiatives that have opened up substantial funding and support for joint dialogues and projects related to migration. For example, instruments such as the **Africa-EU Migration and Mobility Dialogue (MMD)** have been used to increase African-EU cooperation on migration. The MMD framework contains three strategic dialogues: the Rabat Process, the Khartoum Process and the Continental Dialogue. It also includes a fund for flagship initiatives and technical assistance (the MMD Facility) and consolidated the Africa-EU Development platform to further enhance the role of the diaspora as development actors (African Union & European Union, 2019). The MMD was created to further foster partnerships on joint migration issues, and its creation of the two regional consultative processes on migration (RCPs) was a significant step to institutionalising regional cooperation on migration issues.

Following the MMD, other migration-specific agreements and frameworks have also been adopted between Africa and the EU that shape the policies and programmes governing labour mobility. One of the most important in this regard is the **Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP)**. The JVAP was agreed in November 2015 at the Valletta Summit on Migration and has become the regional framework within which migration policy should be constructed (Valletta Summit on Migration, 2015). The action plan identifies five action areas to support better migration governance between Africa and Europe relating to: 1) the development benefits of migration and addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement; 2) legal migration and mobility; 3) protection and asylum; 4) prevention of and fight against irregular migration, migrant smuggling, and trafficking in human beings; 5) return, readmission and reintegration. The JVAP brought with it substantial financial contributions from the EU and its member states for initiatives related to one of the priority areas, although there is limited publicly-available data on the projects or initiatives that have been funded specifically for Egypt under JVAP financing.

The 2015 Valetta Summit also resulted in the establishment of the **EU Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa** (hereafter: EUTF for Africa). The EUTF for Africa complements the Africa-EU partnership by supporting political dialogue between countries and pooling funding and expertise from different agencies. Over €4.7 billion of financing has been placed in the EUTF for Africa. As of January 2020, €807 million had been disbursed from the EUTF for Africa to countries in the North of Africa region, which includes Egypt (EU Trust Fund for Africa, 2020).

As of October 2019, 7 projects and €60 million in financing had been committed by the EUTF for Africa specifically to Egypt through one single initiative, “enhancing the response to migration challenges in Egypt” (ERMCE). The initiative encompasses seven projects that are implemented by EG NEAR in partnership with Egyptian authorities, international aid agencies (e.g., AICS, GIZ) and international NGOs (e.g., Plan International, the German Red Cross). None of the envisioned projects would directly support the creation of mobility schemes or labour migration channels to the EU, yet funding under the EUTF for Africa for cross-country initiatives, which involve multiple recipient countries, would directly focus on mobility support

schemes. One cross-country initiative is of particular importance: the project **“towards a holistic approach to labour migration governance and labour mobility in North Africa (THAMM).”** The project envisions a €15 million budget paid from the trust fund and an additional €5 million to be paid by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. As a regional flagship initiative, THAMM would represent a significant investment in supporting legal labour migration and mobility facilitation. The project envisioned should complement and enhance regional dialogues and wider cooperation frameworks between North Africa and the EU. It also seeks to pilot or expand mobility schemes from Egypt to interested EU member states. The project will first involve implementation of a mobility scheme with Germany, with Belgium expressing interest to implement a mobility scheme later.

The various frameworks and funds to support cooperation on migration between Africa and the EU have so far not focused extensively on legal labour migration and mobility. Labour migration schemes specifically for Egyptians to the EU have not yet emerged from wider cooperation between Africa and the EU. The EUTF for Africa may support the development of migration schemes in the future, particularly through the multi-country THAMM project, however.

Egypt-EU Mobility Cooperation

Cooperation between Egypt and the EU on labour migration fits within the wider context of Egypt-EU relations. The **2001 Association Agreement between the EU and Egypt** provides the general framework for cooperation between the two bodies on multiple policy issues. Cooperation between the EU and Egypt specifically on migration is defined within the context of the 2015 Joint Valletta Action Plan. Specific priorities for cooperation between Egypt and the EU have been further defined through the **European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)** and through the partnership priorities for 2017–2020, which address migration as a challenge related to security and terrorism and as an issue to be managed for mutual benefit (European Union Association Council, 2017).

The possibilities for (legal) labour migration between Egypt and a member state of the EU is shaped not only by Africa-EU and Egypt-EU agreements but also by policy frameworks within the EU. The EU itself may adopt legislative acts that establish rules of entry and stay for third-country nationals (TCNs). These acts essentially provide guidance to member states on the conditions under which TCNs may be admitted, yet member states have the right to determine the number of TCNs who may be admitted (Alcidi, Laurentsyeve, & A., 2019). These directives, while not targeted explicitly at Egyptians, naturally also affect the entry and stay of Egyptian labour migrants.

The EU has elaborated several Directives since 2018 that establish rules of entry and stay for different groups of labour migrants. Among others, these include:

- **The EU Single Permit Directive (2011/98/EU):** The Directive merged residence and work permits for labour immigrants. It also sought to ensure equal treatment of TCNs related to labour rights, which could entail equal access to vocational education and training (VET), frameworks for diploma recognition and equal working conditions.
- **EU Seasonal Workers Directive (2014/36/EU):** This Directive establishes the conditions of entry and stay for seasonal workers and defines their rights within the EU. The Directive does not replace bilateral seasonal worker agreements between member states and third countries but instead operates as an additional admission scheme. The number of work permits issued is directly tied to economic conditions in the EU, with relatively small numbers of permits issued annually.
- **The EU Blue Card Directive (2009/05/EC):** Similar to the Seasonal Workers Directive, the Blue Card Directive establishes rules for the entry and stay of highly-skilled workers and their immediate family members. The Directive supports mobility of highly-skilled workers across EU member states, in doing so offering migrant workers and their accompanying family members much more extensive rights than assured to other categories of labour migrants. The Directive does not eliminate bilateral schemes to support highly-skilled migration but offers an admission channel on supranational level.
- **The Students and Researchers Directive ((EU) 2016/801):** This Directive was transposed into EU law in May of 2018 and essentially harmonised rules of entry and stay for different categories of migrants: students, researchers, trainees, pupils, au pairs and volunteers. While member states were allowed to place conditions on the different categories of migrants covered in the Directive, the Directive nevertheless established important common conditions. One of those conditions was the creation of a grace period for post-graduation employment searches, which could support the school-to-work transition for international students.

While these Directives aim to support mobility of different skill cohorts of migrant workers across the EU, it is unclear how impactful these schemes have been in supporting mobility from North Africa more generally and Egypt specifically. Legal migration of Egyptians into the EU has increasingly occurred within the family reunification channel, not labour migration channels. Between 2015 and 2017, the share of Egyptians entering the EU on family reunification grounds rose by 25%. The increase corresponds to a rapid decline in the number of work permits issued to Egyptian migrants in the EU. Whereas almost 17,000 work permits were issued to Egyptian nationals in 2010, the number had declined by three-quarters, to less than 4,000, in 2017 (Alcidi, Laurentsyeve, & A., 2019).

Schemes on EU level, such as the Seasonal Workers Directive, facilitate a limited amount of migration, largely because the number of permits issued is directly tied to economic conditions in the EU. In 2017 less than 7,000 seasonal worker permits were issued, over 90% of which were issued to nationals of Morocco. While the number of permits issued for seasonal work have declined markedly over recent years, the number of permits issued to researchers and highly-skilled migrants rose, from 1.8% of all work permits issued in 2008 to 23% of all permits issued in 2017. The Blue Card Directive to support highly-skilled worker mobility has been an important contributor, with 1,094 Egyptians issued with a Blue Card in its first five years of operation (Alcidi, Laurentsyeve, & A., 2019). While some EU-level schemes may indeed open legal movement channels for migrant labourers at different skill levels, the number of workers who can benefit from them appears small.

Labour Mobility between Egypt and Specific EU Member States

The limited emphasis on facilitating legal labour migration through EU cooperation is echoed in the small number of formal agreements Egypt has with EU member states on labour migration. Labour migration is often addressed in **bilateral labour migration agreements (BLMAs)**, which are agreements between two countries that regulate labour migration schemes. **Egypt currently has BLMAs with Bulgaria (1972), Greece (1981), and Italy (2005).** The BLMA concluded with Bulgaria in 1972 details the needed forms of cooperation between Egypt and Bulgaria to ensure adequate matching of demand and supply across countries. It also addresses the rights of Egyptian migrant workers and specifies that both states should aim to ensure equal standards of living for Egyptian labourers as for Bulgarian workers. The BLMA with Greece details the type of information exchange needed between Egyptian and Greek authorities, and it assures equal rights related to employment conditions for Egyptian migrant workers. The BLMA with Italy is the most recent (2005) and the most extensive in terms of implementation guidance. The Egypt-Italy BLMA is accompanied by both an MoU outlining cooperation between state parties and a protocol on implementation. The implementation protocol provides guidance on the requirements Egyptian migrants should meet to be eligible for recruitment into an Italian job posting. It further specifies how information on available jobs should be advertised. A management information system, called the Integrated Migration Information System (IMIS), is an important supporting initiative to the Egypt-Italy BLMA, which includes the provision of a technical system to support exchange and information sharing between Italian and Egyptian authorities. The 2005 Egypt-Italy agreement is notable for its strong emphasis on matching labour supply in Egypt with labour demand in Italy (ILO, 2017).

The BLMA between Egypt and Italy is just one of the agreements the two countries have made on labour facilitation. In addition to the 2005 Egypt-Italy BLMA, the two countries signed a **readmission agreement in 2006**. The readmission agreement was accompanied by a separate **agreement on legal admissions of set quotas** of Egyptian labour migrants to Italy. Under this agreement, annual quotas for Egyptian labourers were agreed based on the needs of different Italian regions. The Egypt-Italy agreement on migration cooperation has been

credited as a model for labour migration facilitation across the EU. The agreement has supported the implementation of several initiatives that have provided concrete structures to support the placement of Egyptian workers in Italian employment opportunities. One such initiative was the creation of the Integrated Migration Information System (IMIS) in 2001 and its extension (IMIS PLUS) in 2008 (Silka, 2011). A complementary initiative, the Information Dissemination on Migration (IDOM) project, followed the creation of the IMIS. Whereas the IMIS initiative focused on creating the technical infrastructure for managing labour supply/demand matching, the IDOM project focused on supporting matching of Egyptian labour supply (through the IMIS system) with Italian demand, developing human capital through financial support of selected Egyptian training institutions, and providing media and social awareness campaigns to inform prospective migrants of the dangers of irregular migration and the legal migration possibilities provided by the Egyptian government.

In addition to agreements or schemes that support mobility for general migrant labourers, many EU member states also have specific schemes to support the migration of students and researchers. Given growing emphasis on the attraction and retention of highly-skilled workers in specific sectors across many EU countries, the student and researcher migration channel may become an even more significant mechanism for labour mobility. As of 2015, ten EU countries had specific schemes available to support the mobility of students and researchers from Egypt, although there is limited available information on how many Egyptian students migrate to the supporting countries through these mechanisms.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Legal labour migration and mobility between Egypt and the European Union is a key area of cooperation between the two bodies, yet the creation of labour migration schemes for Egyptians of varying skill levels has not (yet) been widely realised. Since the early 2000s cooperation between Africa and the EU on migration issues has intensified. Within Africa-EU cooperation frameworks, growing emphasis on migration management has been accompanied by substantial financial contributions from the EU, including under the EU Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF). Increasing cooperation and financial contributions has not (yet) seemed to correspond to the expansion of labour migration schemes or opportunities, as none of the contributions made under the EUTF for Egypt so far have addressed the fund's objective related to mutually-beneficial legal migration and mobility (European Union, 2019). There are nevertheless signals that EU financing can contribute to labour migration support programmes on the regional level, with the EUTF for Africa-funded project "towards a holistic approach to labour migration governance and labour mobility in North Africa" aiming to create a pilot migration scheme for labour migrants to Germany and potentially to Belgium in the future. As the project is still in its early stages, there are no specific mechanisms or outcomes that can be evaluated. Nevertheless, the design of the programme does suggest the creation of a mobility support scheme that can provide holistic guidance to migrants and employers throughout the migration cycle.

Cooperation between the EU and Egypt specifically on labour migration is limited. On the EU level, there have been a number of policy changes over the last decade that may increase legal mobility channels for migrant workers, including those from Egypt. Important Directives in this regard include the Seasonal Workers Directive and Blue Card Directive, which aim to support mobility of different skill cohorts of migrant workers across the EU. It is unclear how impactful these schemes have been in supporting mobility from North Africa more generally and Egypt specifically, however.

The limited emphasis on facilitating legal labour migration through EU cooperation is echoed in the small number of formal agreements Egypt has with EU member states on labour migration. Bilateral labour migration agreements have been established with Bulgaria (1972), Greece (1981) and Italy (2005). The agreement with Italy and the subsequent development of labour migration programmes and support facilities does provide an instructive model for how labour mobility can be facilitated, however. In addition to agreements or schemes that support mobility for general migrant labourers, many EU member states also have specific schemes to support the migration of students and researchers. As of 2015, ten EU countries had specific schemes available to support the mobility of students and researchers from Egypt.

Given the increasing cooperation between the EU and Egypt on legal migration pathways, it is important to learn from the small number of interventions and agreements that support the mobility of workers from Egypt into the EU to inform future interventions. To that end, several recommendations are given for future research, namely to:

- *Assess how family reunification or formation policies condition labour market access for status holders:* Large numbers of Egyptian migrants residing in the EU have been given the right to enter and stay through family reunification or formation channels. Such migration channels may have different provisions that encourage or discourage recipients' access to the local labour market. Future research could assess and compare how family reunification/formation policies in key EU countries shape the labour market entry and mobility of Egyptian recipients.
- *Evaluate to what extent researcher and student mobility support schemes support the entry and retention of skilled Egyptians into EU labour markets:* In many countries, student exchange and researcher support schemes may be part of labour market strategies aimed to bridge skill gaps in local labour markets by encouraging the attraction, training and retention of foreign talent with rare or demanded skill profiles. Given the diversity of student and researcher schemes that support Egyptians wishing to study or train in the EU, future research could assess the post-graduation or post-training labour market outcomes of participants.
- *Inventory complementarities between labour mobility programmes or policies and education frameworks/strategies, specifically technical and vocational education and training:* Mobility support schemes are often focused on specific categories of potential migrant workers, who may be selected on the basis of specific skill or competency profiles. The extent to which Egyptian workers are able to meet the competency profiles requested by foreign employers may depend in part on the education or training opportunities available to them domestically, which may

require detailed evaluation of how foreign labour opportunities are mainstreamed into policy frameworks that guide the design of education programmes.

- *Conduct formal impact evaluations of labour migration interventions:* Evaluation of labour migration policy frameworks, agreements and projects are notably lacking. Neither process nor impact evaluations are readily available that provide substantial insight into how different schemes function (or do not). As Africa-EU and Egypt-EU cooperation intensifies and expands to include specific mobility support schemes, it would be valuable if lessons learned from past policy frameworks, agreements and schemes could be used to inform future programme design. To this end, future research in this area could focus on how specific elements of programme design – for example, mechanisms to support supply and demand matching between Egypt and Italy through management information systems – affected the overall efficacy of the scheme.

I. Introduction

Egypt has been a long-standing country of origin for migrant labour. Prior to the 1990s, countries like Iraq, Libya and those in the Gulf region hosted large numbers of Egyptian workers. With the Gulf War and the following political and economic instability in the region in the 1990s and continuing into the 2000s, however, countries in Europe became more attractive destinations for Egyptian migrant workers, despite the presence of relatively stricter visa regimes (al-Khashef & Martin, 2019). As labour markets developed in countries such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, growing numbers of Egyptian workers – of varying skill profiles – also migrated to the Gulf Cooperation Council countries. The strong concentration of Egyptian migrant workers in countries in the Gulf region and North Africa has corresponded to a growth in bilateral labour migration agreements (BLMAs) with Arab countries. As of 2011 the Egyptian government had enacted 12 BLMAs with Arab countries, including important destinations such as Jordan, Libya and Qatar. In the context of its agreements with destination countries, the Ministry of Manpower and Migration cited the creation of 363,000 jobs for Egyptian migrant workers in 2009 alone (Silka, 2011). In contrast, few such agreements have been made with European countries despite growing numbers of both regular and irregular Egyptian migrant workers in Europe.

The limited numbers of formal bilateral agreements on labour migration with European countries reflects a general absence of mobility facilitation from Egypt to the European Union (EU). Since the early 2000s, cooperation between Egypt and the EU on migration has strongly increased. Growing cooperation and collaboration on migration has generally focused on curtailing irregular migration, identifying and addressing smuggling and trafficking in human beings, and supporting local development initiatives to address the “root causes” of migration (African Union & European Union, 2019). Legal labour migration and mobility have been important elements of the strategic partnership between Egypt, the EU at large, and specific EU member states. Yet despite the emphasis on this area of collaboration, few recent initiatives have emerged to facilitate the labour migration of Egyptians to EU member states.

This paper explores how frameworks for cooperation between Egypt, the EU and EU member states have and will shape mobility facilitation from Egypt to Europe. This paper is the third in a series of research papers within the project *Research on the Means to Improve Human*

Mobility Channels. The wider project focuses on how Egyptian youth at risk of migrating irregularly to the European Union (EU) can be better protected, including through the promotion of regular, high-quality labour channels. To support this objective, this paper will examine migration cooperation frameworks and specific examples of past and planned policies, programmes and interventions that aim to support the legal movement of Egyptians to the EU.

This paper is limited to policy mechanisms that specifically support labour migration. Employment and labour market insertion are addressed in different types of migration policies. Policies related to the admission and stay of family reunification/formation migrants and refugees, for example, may have elements related to labour market access. Their principle concern is not with the work possibilities for such migrants, however, but the provisions of rights and responsibilities related to other reasons for entry and stay. For this reason, this paper will not include policy mechanisms that promote migration for non-labour purposes, even if they have mechanisms that can support later employment of migrants. Instead this paper focuses specifically on schemes or mechanisms to support migration for labour purposes. This includes, most importantly, labour migration schemes. It also includes some student and researcher mobility schemes that are explicitly designed to facilitate international exchange and joint research work, which could entail stays in EU member states.

Following this introduction, section two describes the methodology used to inform this research paper. Section three then provides an abbreviated review of the policy frameworks in which mobility support schemes are currently offered or may be offered in the future. These frameworks are divided according to the level of cooperation. The first sub-section reviews cooperation agreements and frameworks between Africa and the EU. The following sub-section elaborates on Egypt-EU cooperation frameworks before narrowing down on agreements between Egypt and specific EU member states. While the section primarily concentrates on the frameworks and strategies for cooperation on legal labour migration and mobility, where possible the section also explores specific mobility support schemes between Egypt and a European destination country. The final section (four) reflects on lessons from past mobility support schemes and concludes with suggested ways forward.

II. Methodology

This paper is based on desk review of available literature. Both academic and non-academic (grey) literature was consulted to compile this review. An initial literature search was first conducted on a narrow set of search terms to map broad themes within the literature. This initial search revealed limited information on both past and current mobility initiatives between Egypt and countries in the European Union. As a consequence of the few sources found describing specific mobility facilitation schemes, projects or policies, the literature search was expanded to include broader frameworks or policies on migration cooperation that addressed labour facilitation.

To support identification of relevant literature, a more elaborated list of search terms were defined (see table 1 opposite). The search terms were defined to capture different dimensions of specific themes or topics covered in the paper. The search terms related to specific topics were then combined with terms related to the region or country of focus. For region, search terms included North Africa, Egypt, European Union and Europe. Given the thematic focus of research papers one and two on specific European destination countries for Egyptian migrants, search terms were also included for specific European countries, namely Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom. Different combinations of search terms were used. For example, to collect information on migration agreements between Egypt and EU countries, search strings could have included terms like “bilateral labour migration agreement EU” or “bilateral labour migration agreement Italy/Germany/United Kingdom”.

Table 1: *Search terms used in Literature Review*

Theme/topic	Search terms
Migration cooperation frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Human) migration, mobility AND • Strategic cooperation [frameworks/policies] • Strategic action plan • Strategic partnerships
Migration agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour migration agreement • Bilateral labour migration agreement • Bilateral labour migration policies
Mobility support schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour migration [programmes/schemes/possibilities] • Legal labour migration options • Labour migration facilitation • Mobility [programmes/schemes/possibilities] AND
By skill level or migrant type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-skilled labour • Medium-skilled labour • High-skilled labour • Students • Researchers

Different academic and non-academic search engines and repositories (e.g., Google Scholar, Google, Research Gate) were used to find literature. As much of the relevant literature was not articles but policy papers, working papers, organisational reports, policies and strategies, the online repositories of specific institutions and organisations were searched. Important sources in this regard included the publications archives of the following: the **European Commission International Cooperation with Egypt**, the **European Trust Fund for Africa** project archive, the **Africa-EU Partnership** portal, the **Khartoum Process**, the **Rabat Process** and the portal of the **Joint Valletta Action Plan**. In addition to these credible regional sources, repositories of specific institutions (e.g., development cooperation organisations, ministries of foreign affairs and international cooperation) were also searched. Finally, newspaper articles and event announcements related to specific projects, events or activities were used to identify specific programmes or policies that required additional research.

The literature search faced several limitations. First, much of the literature available on mobility support schemes is very descriptive in nature. No impact or process evaluations seem to be available (in English) that describe the outcomes of mobility support programmes between Egypt and European destination countries. As a consequence, much of the information on policies or programmes that facilitate labour migration is superficial and framed in terms of potential future outcomes rather than observed outcomes. What little information was available on outcomes had limited analytical value and largely reported outputs (e.g., number of grant recipients) rather than programme-specific consequences.

Another limitation relates to the dates of information on policies and programmes. Some available information (for example, on mobility support schemes for students and researchers) was undated, which makes it difficult to determine if certain actions or programmes are contemporary and ongoing or only implemented in the past. A related issue is that a number of mobility facilitation initiatives have been introduced relatively recently. For some such recent initiatives, the best source of information was documents such as action fiches, which summarise the design and objectives of the intervention. These documents do not provide clear assessments of what *has been done* but instead just describe what *may be done* in an intervention.

A final limitation related to the absence of critical statements or appraisals on policy frameworks or specific mobility facilitation schemes. Literature on specific agreements or projects often identified when planned cooperation or projects did not continue or go through, but it is often silent on why. For example, a mobility partnership with Egypt has been sought by the European Union since around 2012, but there is very limited information on the specific aspects of the partnership negotiations and why they failed. Another example is the Abidjan Declaration. The declaration defines the most-recent set of priorities within the Africa-EU strategic partnership, and while it notes that Egypt has reserved its position on the declaration, there is no information available on what that reservation implies or why it arose. The absence of this information leaves much of the literature review superficial regarding the potential consequences of existing labour migration cooperation frameworks or policies.

Given these challenges, additional information and research is needed on legal labour migration and mobility frameworks, policies and programmes, particularly regarding impacts. As impact assessments on mobility facilitation schemes seem to be lacking for Egypt, one immediate recommendation would be to encourage implementers to routinely collect and analyse data through project implementation cycles. A further recommendation would be to collect primary data through interviews with policy/programme designers, implementers and monitoring and evaluation specialists. Such interviews could provide valuable insights as to how specific policies or schemes were decided, what factors influenced their design or negotiation, and what lessons could be pulled from them that can inform future interventions.

III. Frameworks and schemes to support labour migration and mobility facilitation

Labour mobility support schemes are policies, projects, initiatives and other mechanisms that can support the legal movement of people from one country to another for work purposes. Such schemes may be temporary in nature, restricted to specific groups of people based on strict eligibility criteria, and administered by different types of frameworks and agreements.

In the Egyptian context, there are relatively few mobility support schemes with the European Union (EU) or its individual member states. Agreements on labour migration in particular are part of a rapidly-changing policy landscape, however. Labour migration schemes from Egypt to countries in the EU fit within a larger regional policy context. Egypt is a member of the African Union, and as such its relationship with the European Union is influenced by wider Africa-EU relations. As an individual state, Egypt also has a particular relationship with the EU, which fits within both general cooperation and migration-specific frameworks. Labour migration possibilities are also shaped by agreements between Egypt and individual EU member states.

The multiple layers of cooperation – at Africa-EU, Egypt-EU and Egypt-EU member state levels – create distinct opportunities for cooperation on labour migration and other mobility support schemes. This section therefore separates out the frameworks and agreements that support labour migration from Egypt to the EU at these distinct levels. While the first section explains the general context of Africa-EU cooperation on migration, the second section provides more insight on specific agreements between Egypt and the EU on labour migration. The third section then explores specific mobility support schemes between Egypt and specific EU member states. While a distinct strand of policy, the fourth section will briefly touch upon mobility support schemes for researchers and scientific staff. An overview of schemes offered by EU member states will be provided, with some limited detail provided on schemes with more explicit mobility facilitation components.

III.1 THE AFRICA-EU MIGRATION COOPERATION CONTEXT

Cooperation between the African Union and European Union on migration and mobility has deepened over the past decades. Cooperation between Africa and Europe, including on migration, has been defined through a number of instruments and frameworks. One particularly important framework is the **2007 Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES)**, a political vision and roadmap for future cooperation between Africa and the EU. The Joint Strategy provides a long-term framework for the Africa-EU relationship on joint challenges, of which migration is just one. The long-term outcomes of the partnership are further specified and made implementable through the development of short-term action plans and multi-annual roadmaps (Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, 2007).

The JAES contains four main objectives. The first objective – reinforcing and elevating the Africa-EU political partnership – explicitly addresses migration and development as an area of mutual concern. The third objective – fostering effective multilateralism – also explicitly identifies cooperation on migration as a common challenge that Africa and the EU should jointly address. The first objective of the JAES provides a more extensive list of areas where cooperation on migration is most key. Chief among these areas is migration management. Within this action area, the JAES notes that combating irregular migration, including through increasing cooperation on return and readmission, is a prime area for cooperation. Mutual efforts on border control and trafficking and human beings are also identified under this objective (Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, 2007).

Under the JAES, different sets of priorities have been defined over time. The most-recent set of priorities for the African-EU strategic partnership were agreed at the 5th AU-EU Summit in 2017. The so-called **Abidjan Declaration** identified four joint priorities for cooperation: 1) investing in people; 2) strengthening resilience, peace, security and governance; 3) migration and mobility, and; 4) mobilising investments for African structural sustainable transformation. In contrast to previous documents that strongly emphasised the security dimensions of Africa-EU migration, the Abidjan Declaration notes that “we aim to promote a positive, and constructive and multidimensional approach to migration that takes place in a safe, orderly and regular manner.” (African Union & European Union, 2017; pp3). The priority area also makes reference to addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement, echoing early commitments on migration management (African Union & European Union, 2017). The use of the phrase “safe, orderly and regular”, a pivotal part of the Global Compact for Migration, nevertheless suggests growing recognition of creating regular pathways for migration in the future.

The expansion of Africa-EU cooperation on migration has been accompanied by complementary initiatives that have opened up substantial funding and support for joint dialogues and projects related to migration. For example, instruments such as the **Africa-EU Migration and Mobility Dialogue (MMD)** have been used to increase African-EU cooperation on migration. The MMD framework contains three strategic dialogues: the Rabat Process, the Khartoum Process and the Continental Dialogue. It also includes a fund for flagship initiatives and technical assistance (the MMD Facility) and consolidated

the Africa-EU Development platform to further enhance the role of the diaspora as development actors (African Union & European Union, 2019). The MMD was created to further foster partnerships on joint migration issues, and its creation of the two regional consultative processes on migration (RCPs) was a significant step to institutionalising regional cooperation on migration issues.

Following the MMD, other migration-specific agreements and frameworks have also been adopted between Africa and the EU that shape the policies and programmes governing labour mobility. Whereas the JAES and the Abidjan Declaration are broader frameworks for Africa-EU cooperation, more specific frameworks address migration management as a specific cooperation sector. One of the most important in this regard is the **Joint Valletta Action Plan (JVAP)**. The JVAP was agreed in November 2015 at an Africa-European Summit on Migration (the Valletta Summit on Migration) and has become the regional framework within which migration policy should be constructed (Valletta Summit on Migration, 2015).

The action plan identifies five domains (action areas) to support better migration governance between Africa and Europe. These relate to: 1) the development benefits of migration and addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement; 2) legal migration and mobility; 3) protection and asylum; 4) prevention of and fight against irregular migration, migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings; 5) return, readmission and reintegration. The JVAP brought with it substantial financial contributions from the EU and its member states for initiatives related to one of the priority areas. Within the JVAP, the second priority area – on *legal migration and mobility* – is particularly relevant to explore in this inventory of mobility schemes that support migration from Egypt to the EU.

The legal migration and mobility area of the JVAP contained several specific commitment areas. These importantly included *promoting regular channels for migration*, including by creating legal labour migration opportunities¹ and supporting the recognition of skills and portability of work-related benefits. Another commitment related to *promoting student, researcher and entrepreneur mobility* between Africa and Europe. This stream focused not only on promoting university exchange and qualification recognition but also addressed training programmes for African entrepreneurs in Europe-based enterprises. A further commitment area is on *supporting development and implementation of national and regional strategies* on migration and mobility. *Visa facilitation and readmission agreements* were identified as a final area for cooperation among Valletta partners in the legal migration and mobility action area (Valletta Summit on Migration, 2015). Within priority area 2, 45 policies and 39 projects had been funded by the last quarter of 2018 (ICMPD, 2018). Box 1 (opposite) addresses how JVAP funding has been used to address migration and mobility facilitation from Africa to Europe.

1. The JVAP included a list of initiatives that would be prioritised for implementation by the end of 2016. One of the initiatives listed was a pilot project to pool offers for legal migration from EU member states to a list of African partners. Information on its implementation to date is not available.

Box 1: The Joint Valletta Action Plan and its Role in Labour Mobility Facilitation

Projects and policies implemented as part of Joint Valletta Action Plan initiatives are monitored by focal points from the two regional consultative processes on migration (RCPs), the Rabat Process and the Khartoum Process. As of October 2018, the smallest amount of funding for initiatives in the JVAP framework had been released for the legal migration and mobility domain (domain 2). Over €112 million had been disbursed for initiatives in this JVAP domain from the start of the JVAP initiatives in 2016. In comparison domain 1 (development benefits of migration and addressing root causes) and domain 3 (protection and asylum) had received over €4.91 billion and €4.69 billion in funding, respectively.

The differences in funding dispersed across the JVAP action domains strongly reflects that nature of initiatives pursued in each area. Within domains 1 and 3 larger numbers of projects compared to policies were implemented. The opposite was true of domain 2, on legal migration and mobility, where 45 policies (compared to 39 projects) were created (ICMPD, 2018). Unfortunately the specific initiatives implemented under each domain of the JVAP are not published publicly. There is a monitoring database for initiatives, but at this time only Valletta partners are able to access it. As such, the policies or projects related to legal migration and mobility that have been implemented with JVAP funding for Egypt cannot be listed here.

The 2015 Valetta Summit also saw the establishment of the **EU Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa** (hereafter: EUTF for Africa). The EUTF for Africa is intended to complement the Africa-EU partnership by supporting political dialogue between countries and pooling funding and expertise from different agencies. Over €4.7 billion of financing has been placed in the EUTF for Africa. As of January 2020, €807 million had been disbursed from the EUTF for Africa to countries in the North of Africa region, which includes Egypt. Improved migration management was considered the main priority area for the North of Africa region. Activities in this domain include improving migration governance frameworks, supporting labour migration and mobility, and supporting voluntary return and reintegration efforts, among others (EU Trust Fund for Africa, 2020).

Substantial funds have been made available to Egypt through the EUTF for Africa. As of October 2019, 7 projects and €60 million in financing had been committed by the EUTF for Africa specifically to Egypt. Additional projects and financing have been given to Egypt within regional or cross-country initiatives, which are described in more depth below. In contrast to other recipients of funding under the EUTF for Africa, the number of interventions supported exclusively for Egypt is relatively small. The €60 million financing offered through the EUTF for Africa is for a single initiative, “enhancing the response to migration challenges in Egypt” (ERMCE). The project encompasses

seven projects that are implemented by EG NEAR in partnership with Egyptian authorities, international aid agencies (e.g., AICS, GIZ), and international NGOs (e.g., Plan International, the German Red Cross). None of the envisioned projects would directly support the creation of mobility schemes or labour migration channels to the EU. Within the North Africa region, the EUTF for Africa strategy focuses on EUTF objective three (“improved migration management in countries of origin, transit and destination”). This wider objective is split into five *strategic objectives*, namely: 1) foster rights-based migration governance systems; 2) increase mutually-beneficial legal migration and mobility; 3) strengthen protection and resilience of those in need; 4) foster a more inclusive social and economic environment and stability, and; 5) mitigate vulnerabilities arising from irregular migration and combat irregular migration. The €60 million mobilised for Egypt would support projects in all strategic objectives *except* for strategic objective two on legal migration and mobility (European Union, 2019). Cross-country initiatives, which involve multiple recipient countries, have a slightly wider focus, with one specific initiative directly addressing legal migration and mobility. The seven projects funded in Egypt under the EUTF for Africa are summarised in the table below.

Table 2: *Summary of Projects Funded Through the EU Trust Fund for Africa in Egypt as of October 2019²*

EUTF Strategic Objective (# of projects funded under objective)	Project name	Envisioned actions in project
1. <i>Foster rights-based migration governance systems (1)</i>	Enhancing migration management through institutional support (also part of objective 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising public awareness • Developing policy and institutional frameworks to address irregular migration and trafficking in human beings • Implementing Law 82/2016 on combating illegal migration and smuggling of migrants • Mainstreaming migration in labour and social policies • Conducting mappings and studies on demographic, labour market and migration needs and trends

2. As of the end of 2019, the seven projects had been approved for financing, but no substantial implementation has occurred due to Egyptian authorities’ delay in meeting administrative steps (European Union, 2019).

EUTF Strategic Objective (# of projects funded under objective)	Project name	Envisioned actions in project
2. <i>Strengthen protection and resilience of those in need (2)</i>	Addressing root causes of irregular migration through employability and labour intensive works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing of small-scale infrastructure works in selected governorates (e.g., rural roads, rehabilitation of water networks) • Financing local grassroots organisations to provide community services (e.g., early childhood education, solid waste collection) • Financing local stakeholders to provide training packages to youth to encourage skilling for wage employment or self employment
	Supporting communities – health for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing mobile health teams to provide services to most-vulnerable migrants, including refugees • Providing community-based health and first aid courses for community members
3. <i>Foster a more inclusive social and economic environment and stability</i>	Multi-educational programme for employment promotion in migration-affected areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for teachers/trainers on contemporary teaching methods and technical skills • Creation of Professional Training Centre • Providing short-term vocational courses, including internships and other work-based training for trainees at risk of migrating
	Tackling the root causes of irregular migration and supporting integrated communities in Upper Egypt (also part of objective 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for demand-driven employability skills trainings and job placement • Support for youth to start and sustain enterprises • Conducting awareness-raising campaigns about risks and alternatives to irregular migration

EUTF Strategic Objective (# of projects funded under objective)	Project name	Envisioned actions in project
	Capacity building through urban infrastructure development in migration-affected urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for skills trainings and on-the-job training in the construction sector for residence of urban informal settlements • Promotion of small and medium enterprises • Support for improvement of physical infrastructure in urban informal settlements • Education on dangers of irregular migration
	Addressing the economic drivers of irregular migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating clusters and value chains in high-growth, labour-intensive sectors • Encouraging women and youth to lead enterprises • Establishing knowledge and innovation incubators • Conducting campaigns discouraging irregular migration
4. <i>Mitigate vulnerabilities arising from irregular migration and combat irregular migration (2)</i>	Enhancing migration management through institutional support; Tackling the root causes of irregular migration and supporting integrated communities in Upper Egypt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above

Source: Own compilation based on European Union (2019) and EU Emergency Trust Fund (2017)

The summary of projects planned for implementation in Egypt under the EUTF for Africa suggests relatively limited prioritisation of legal migration and mobility facilitation. Most of the funded projects address prevention of irregular migration and contained some element of educating or informing potential migrants and general members of the public about the risks of and alternatives to irregular migration. Notably absent are projects that address objective two of the EUTF for Africa, to increase mutually-beneficial legal migration and mobility.

In addition to the projects funded singularly for Egypt, the EUTF for Africa has also mobilised support for cross-country initiatives. One cross-country initiative is of particular importance: the project “**towards a holistic approach to labour migration governance and labour mobility in North Africa** (THAMM)” The project, the agreement for which was signed in November 2019 but is awaiting security clearance before implementation begins, would entail a €15 million budget paid from the trust fund and an additional €5 million to be paid by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. The project would be jointly implemented by the ILO, IOM and GIZ. When implemented, the regional flagship initiative would represent a significant investment in supporting legal labour migration and mobility facilitation.

Box 2: Towards a holistic approach to labour migration governance and labour mobility in North Africa (THAMM)

The project “towards a holistic approach to labour migration governance and labour mobility in North Africa” (THAMM) is envisioned as a flagship regional programme to support legal migration and mobility from North Africa. The project is envisioned as a complement and enhancer of regional dialogues and wider cooperation frameworks between North Africa and the EU. It also seeks to pilot or expand mobility schemes from Egypt to interested EU member states. The project will first involve implementation of a mobility scheme with *Germany*, with *Belgium*¹ expressing interest to implement a mobility scheme later.

The project directly addresses objective 2 of the EU Trust for Africa, namely to foster mutually-beneficial migration and mobility. The project would involve the range of activities needed to enable a mobility support scheme to operate, including:

- Capacity-building for partner countries in the area of migration governance;
- Improvement of mechanisms for skill and qualification assessment, certification, and validation;
- Strengthening capacity for provision of labour market analysis;
- Strengthening capacity for the provision of pre-departure orientation for prospective migrants, including job matching and career counselling;
- Creation of mobility schemes with relevant member states;
- Support for reintegration needs of returning migrant workers, and;
- Supporting dialogue and cooperation among stakeholders involved in legal migration and mobility.

Note:

1. *Belgium is currently implementing another programme (called PALIM) with Morocco that aims to support capacity building among Moroccan authorities and to create a mobility scheme with Morocco. The scheme may be scaled up under the EUTF for Africa project, with the scheme likely limited to migrants from Morocco.*

The various frameworks and funds to support cooperation on migration between Africa and the EU have so far not focused extensively on legal labour migration and mobility. Labour migration schemes specifically for Egyptians to the EU have not yet emerged from wider cooperation between Africa and the EU. The EUTF for Africa may support the development of migration schemes in the future, particularly through the multi-country project “towards a holistic approach to labour migration governance and labour mobility in North Africa”, however. Understanding the frameworks on Africa-EU level that shape cooperation on migration is helpful to understand, as it is the wider cooperation context that also shapes Egypt-EU relations specifically. The focus of Africa-EU cooperation frameworks on combating irregular migration is echoed in Egypt-EU cooperation frameworks, which are reviewed in the next section.

III.2 EGYPT-EU MIGRATION COOPERATION

The cooperation between Egypt and the EU on labour migration should be understood within the wider context of Egypt-EU relations. The **2001 Association Agreement between the EU and Egypt** provides the general framework for cooperation between the two bodies on multiple policy issues. Cooperation between the EU and Egypt specifically on migration is defined within the context of the 2015 Joint Valletta Action Plan. Specific priorities for cooperation between Egypt and the EU have been further defined through the **European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)** and through the partnership priorities for 2017-2020³ (European Union Association Council, 2017).

One of the overarching partnership priorities identified for the 2017-2020 period relates to enhancing stability. Migration is addressed under this priority area and framed in two ways: 1) as a challenge related to security and terrorism and; 2) an issue to be managed for mutual benefit. Within the sub-priority area of security and terrorism, the priority area encourages cooperation between the EU and Egypt to prevent and combat migrant smuggling and human trafficking and to expand assistance to victims of trafficking. Within the sub-priority area of managing migration for mutual benefit, a number of action areas between the EU and Egypt are identified. These include strengthening of Egypt’s migration governance framework, which could entail legislative reforms and migration management strategies. Other priority areas include the EU support for Egypt’s efforts to prevent and address smuggling and trafficking in persons and irregular migration. A related element is the expansion of EU-Egypt cooperation on the voluntary return of irregular migrants. In line with the wider JVAP, the priority areas also include cooperation to address the “root causes” of migration, namely poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment. The priority cooperation document also makes ambiguous reference to the importance of *supporting mobility for skilled migrants*, who could assist in the further development of Egypt. No specific

3. In addition to the EU-Egypt Association Agreement, which reduces barriers to trade between the two partners, Egypt and the EU have also been negotiating a deep and comprehensive free trade agreement (DCFTA) since 2013. As of July 2019, discussions on the DCFTA had stalled given negotiations on trade in services (European Commission, 2019). As trade in services may entail movement for the providers of such services, such provisions can constitute an important mechanism to support labour mobility.

actions are identified in this area, however, as the document simply notes that “the EU and Egypt are committed to the full protection of the rights of migrants.” (European Union Association Council, 2017; pp8). The ambiguous support for legal labour migration channels again reflects the absence of support for labour migration in Africa-EU frameworks. For example, the MMD and its accompanying funding facility do not seem to have yet effectively supported envisioned legislative reforms (e.g., mobility facilitation schemes for Egyptians into the EU) or projects that were marked for implementation in Egypt (al-Khashef & Martin, 2019).

III.3 EGYPT-EU MEMBER STATE LABOUR MIGRATION FACILITATION

The possibilities for (legal) labour migration between Egypt and a member state of the EU is shaped not only by Africa-EU and Egypt-EU agreements but also by policy frameworks within the EU. While the latter part of this section specifically addresses agreements and policies between Egypt and EU member states that support labour mobility, it first describes how labour migration is regulated on EU level.

EU-Level Labour Migration Regulations

Mobility schemes between EU member states and origin countries are negotiated within specific EU-level frameworks. The EU itself may adopt legislative acts that establish rules of entry and stay for third-country nationals (TCNs). These acts essentially provide guidance to member states on the conditions under which TCNs may be admitted. Member states have the right to determine the number of TCNs who may be admitted (Alcidi, Laurentsyeve, & A., 2019).

The EU has elaborated several Directives since 2018 that establish rules of entry and stay for different groups of labour migrants. Among others, these include:

- **The EU Single Permit Directive (2011/98/EU):** The Directive merged residence and work permits for labour immigrants. It also sought to ensure equal treatment of TCNs related to labour rights, which could entail equal access to vocational education and training (VET), frameworks for diploma recognition and equal working conditions. While the Directive does support harmonisation in some elements of treatment of TCN workers, member states are nevertheless still able to set specific admission criteria and establish conditions of stay for TCN migrant workers. In addition to specific programmes or schemes established on member state level, there are also EU-wide schemes to facilitate migration of highly-skilled workers (see the Blue Card Directive overleaf) and for seasonal workers (see the Seasonal Workers Directive overleaf).
- **EU Seasonal Workers Directive (2014/36/EU):** This directive establishes the conditions of entry and stay for seasonal workers and defines their rights within the EU. The directive does not replace bilateral seasonal worker agreements between member states and third countries but instead operates as an additional admission scheme. The number of work permits issued is directly tied to economic conditions in the EU, with relatively small numbers of permits issued annually.

- **The EU Blue Card Directive (2009/05/EC):** Similar to the Seasonal Workers Directive, the Blue Card Directive establishes rules for the entry and stay of specific groups of workers – namely highly-skilled workers and their immediate family members. The Directive supports mobility of highly-skilled workers across EU member states, in doing so offering migrant workers and their accompanying family members much more extensive rights than assured to other categories of labour migrants. The Directive does not eliminate bilateral schemes to support highly-skilled migration but offers an admission channel on supranational level.
- **The Students and Researchers Directive ((EU)2016/801):** This Directive was transposed into EU law in May of 2018 and essentially harmonised rules of entry and stay for different categories of migrants: students, researchers, trainees, pupils, au pairs and volunteers. While member states were allowed to place conditions on the different categories of migrants covered in the Directive, the Directive nevertheless established important common conditions. One of those conditions was the creation of a grace period for post-graduation employment searches, which could support the school-to-work transition for international students.

In addition to specific Directives on EU level that address labour migration, the EU has also developed non-binding policy frameworks with specific partners to structure cooperation on migration. One of those frameworks – which has yet to be realised for Egypt – is the *Mobility Partnership*. Mobility Partnerships are essentially non-binding political declarations between interested member states, a third country, and the EU. The Partnerships focus on commitments related to irregular migration, legal/labour migration, international protection and migration and development. Visa facilitation agreements and readmission agreements are also addressed under Partnerships. Specific programmes that facilitate labour migration may be funded in the framework of a Mobility Partnership. For example, the Partnership with Morocco resulted in a special scheme to support Egyptian youth to train in the hotel industry in Germany. Despite attempts by the EU to encourage Egypt to negotiate a Mobility Partnership since 2011, there has not been significant progress toward a Mobility Partnership (Alcidi, Laurentsyeve, & A., 2019).

The EU Directives on labour migration and instruments like mobility partnerships can shape individual member state's approaches to labour migration. Nevertheless, labour migration policies are set on the national level of each individual member state. Member states typically calibrate their labour migration policies to real or anticipated needs for labour. Different countries use different mechanisms to determine: 1) the quantity of migrants that can/should be admitted; 2) the duration for which they can be admitted, and; 3) the profile of required workers. To determine the number of migrants who can be admitted, countries typically use information from companies/sectors on shortages in specific occupational categories and on the number of jobs left unfilled after implementing a labour market test. Quotas or ceilings on admission are typically set, which limits the number of people who can be admitted. Profiles of admitted workers are often derived from the needs of industry and are assessed according to applicant's education levels of occupational certifications. The European

model of labour migration, which is formalised through instruments like the EU Single Permit Directive (see page 27) strongly relies on admission on the basis of a “qualifying” job offer. A qualifying job offer is essentially a position that clearly specifies the conditions of an employment contract, including salary, duration and work function. While migrants are issued admission permission, it is in effect the job and not the individual that is approved. An individual should fulfill certain criteria (related to education or occupation) in order to fill an offered job position, but the job has to be approved first (Chaloff, 2016). It is within this structure the individual EU countries can offer structural job opportunities to TCNs. This context is important to keep in mind when considering individual agreements between countries related to labour migration, which is addressed in the next section.

Bilateral Labour Migration Agreements between Egypt and EU Countries

Different types of agreements may facilitate labour migration between any two given countries. Labour migration is often addressed in bilateral labour migration agreements (BLMAs), which are agreements between two countries that regulate labour migration schemes. Such agreements can take different forms. For example, they may be non-binding agreements that create a general framework for cooperation on labour migration called memoranda of understanding (MoU)⁴. There are also BLMAs that are legally-binding, specifying the rights and obligations of states and participants of BLMAs under the framework of international law. Other bilateral agreements that include different aspects of labour migration may be agreed between specific ministries or agencies in countries of destination and origin. Framework agreements between countries that specify wider elements of migration management—for example, covering topics such as return and readmission—may also include labour migration provisions. Different types of BLMAs may support labour mobility between two countries (ILO/IOM, 2019). These include:

- Temporary labour migration schemes (e.g., seasonal worker agreements, contract and project-based worker agreements, working holiday-maker agreements);
- Work-based learning labour schemes (e.g., trainee agreements, programmes for short-term training);
- Potentially longer-term labour schemes (e.g., cross-border worker agreements, sector-based schemes, skill-based schemes).

Egypt has concluded a number of bilateral agreements on labour migration with partners across different regions. The majority have been with countries in the Middle East, but a small number (three) have been concluded with EU countries. The BLMAs between Egypt and EU countries vary in detail and depth. The first, concluded with Bulgaria in 1972, details the needed forms of cooperation between Egypt and Bulgaria to ensure adequate matching of demand and supply across countries. It also addresses the rights of Egyptian migrant workers and specifies that both states should aim to ensure equal standards of living for Egyptian labourers as for Bulgarian workers. The

4. MoUs generally does not require or entail domestic ratification by a domestic legislature and do not entail binding obligations for the agreeing parties, including related to commitments from a public budget.

second BLMA was agreed between Egypt and Greece in 1981. Similar to the BLMA with Bulgaria, the agreement with Greece details the type of information exchange needed between Egyptian and Greek authorities, and it assures equal rights related to employment conditions for Egyptian migrant workers (ILO, 2017).

Table 3: *Summary of BLMAs between Egypt and select EU member states*

Partner Country	Name of Agreement	Brief Description
Bulgaria	Egypt-Bulgaria Agreement of 1972	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 Articles • Focuses on ensuring equal standards of living for labour migrants • Emphasises the regulation of labour migration through information exchange between country authorities
Italy	Agreement of Cooperation in the Field of Labour Migration of 28 November 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 Articles • Emphasises the regulation of labour migration through information exchange between country authorities; emphasises matching of Italian labour demand with supply of workers from Egypt • Emphasises Egypt's responsibility to ensure that labour migrants don't constitute a threat to security or public order
	Protocol on the Implementation of the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Labour Migration of 12 May 2009 ⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifies executive procedures of implementation for the Agreement • Emphasises requirements Egyptian migrants should meet to be employed in Italy • Emphasises consistent and transparent exchange of information between countries regarding the migrant labour supply in Egypt and labour demand in Italy • Identifies that migrant workers should enjoy the same rights and protections as Italian workers, including related to social security provisions

5. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Employment of Italy and the Ministry of Manpower in Egypt on Cooperation in the Field of Labour Migration further specifies cooperation between Egyptian and Italian authorities on labour migration.

Partner Country	Name of Agreement	Brief Description
Italy (continued)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires authorities of Egypt and Italy to compile a list of available job opportunities and their requirements plus the potential supply of workers and their qualifications, which should be publicly shared
Greece	Agreement on Strengthening the Cooperation in Relation to Employment of 18 April 1981	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasises the regulation of labour migration through information exchange between country authorities Focuses on employment rights

Source: Own compilation from ILO (2017)

The BLMA with Italy is the most recent (2005) but also the most extensive in terms of implementation guidance. The Egypt-Italy BLMA is accompanied by both an MoU outlining cooperation between state parties and a protocol on implementation. The implementation protocol provides guidance on the requirements Egyptian migrants should meet to be eligible for recruitment into an Italian job posting. It further specifies how information on available jobs should be advertised (ILO, 2017), which is related to another important element of Egyptian-Italian cooperation on labour migration – namely the technical infrastructure needed to support supply and demand matching. A management information system, called the Integrated Migration Information System (IMIS), is an important supporting initiative to the Egypt-Italy BLMA. The IMIS is detailed in more depth below.

The agreements between Egypt and Bulgaria, Greece and Italy as destination partners emphasises the rights and protections Egyptian labour migrants should be guaranteed under both national and international law. While the agreements refer specifically to upholding of migrants' rights under international law, they also explicitly refer to equal treatment of migrant workers in national frameworks. All three agreements note that Egyptian labour migrants should have the same rights and privileges as national workers, but specific elements of equality are covered more explicitly in certain agreements. The agreement with Bulgaria, for example, discusses equal standards of living, whereas the agreement with Greece refers more extensively to employment rights. The agreement with Italy addresses equal rights for social security provisions. While the agreements stand apart for their explicit references to the rights of migrants under international law, which could entail greater protection from exploitative practices, the agreements vary in explicit worker protection provisions (ILO, 2017). Table 4 overleaf provides information on specific provisions related to the protection of migrant worker's rights that are included in each of the BLMAs.

Table 4: Specific provisions for protection of migrant workers' rights under different BLMAs

	Equal treatment	Fair recruitment	Social dialogue	Wage guarantees ⁶	Specific contract provision	Training Provisions	Transfer of savings and remittances	Framework for skill and qualification recognition	Mechanism for complaint / dispute resolution
Bulgaria	Living standards	Entry visas and travel costs paid by hosts	None	None	Provides suggested contents of contract between migrants and employers	None	Detailed clauses on transfer of wages, savings and insurance entitlements	None	None
Greece	Employment rights	Entry visas and travel costs paid by hosts	None	None	None	None	Detailed clauses on transfer of wages, savings and insurance entitlements	None	None
Italy	Social Security	No cost for candidates during selection phase or for training courses	Encouragement of dialogue among states, employers, trade unions and other institutions related to selection and training of migrant workers	None	None	Pre-departure	Contains provisions on transfer of earnings and savings to Egypt	None	None

Source: Own compilation from ILO (2017)

6. Wage guarantees may relate to elements such as minimum wages, compensation for overtime work and payment schedules, among others

The 2005 Egypt-Italy agreement is notable for its strong emphasis on matching labour supply in Egypt with labour demand in Italy. The agreement tries to foster better linkages between migrant labour supply and demand through different mechanisms. One mechanism relates to encouraging social dialogue among stakeholders in both countries. The agreement encourages consultation among state representatives, private sector representative, trade unions and organisations involved in the recruitment and training of migrant workers. Ideally such dialogue would also entail discussion with civil society organisations, including those representing migrants themselves (ILO, 2017).

An important element of BLMAs relates to capacity development of migrant workers. The 2005 Egypt-Italy agreement allows for both technical/vocational and language training for migrant workers who are selected into eventual contracts. Within the agreement, training should be offered at no costs prior to departure for selected workers. Despite emphasis on skilling for the destination country labour market, none of the BLMAs between Egypt and Bulgaria, Greece and Italy contain provisions for recognition of skills and qualifications in the country of destination (ILO, 2017). The absence of skill or qualification recognition frameworks may reflect the potentially short-term nature of migrant worker deployments. The 2005 Egypt-Italy agreement, for example, relies on a specific list of job openings and the specific qualification requirements that accompany them. Workers are recruited for these specific positions. Once the contract for the position is expired, the worker should return to Egypt. Skill/qualification recognition is perhaps most meaningful for workers wishing to switch employers or find other employment. Given the emphasis on short-term, job-specific employment, it is perhaps unsurprising the recognition frameworks are not explicit elements of the BLMAs Egypt has with the partner countries in the EU.

Egypt-Italy Cooperation on Labour Migration

The BLMA between Egypt and Italy is just one of the agreements the two countries have made on labour facilitation. In addition to the 2005 Egypt-Italy BLMA, the two countries signed a readmission agreement in 2006. The readmission agreement was accompanied by a separate agreement on legal admissions of set quotas of Egyptian labour migrants to Italy. Under this agreement, annual quotas for Egyptian labourers were agreed based on the needs of different Italian regions. While the agreement did support the mobility of Egyptian workers, eligibility for movement under the agreement proved challenging. The initial quota of 7,000 set in 2007 was difficult to fulfil because applicants did not fulfill the conditions set by Italian authorities. As part of the readmission and labour quota agreements, the government of Egypt was also able to negotiate for the legalisation of around 5,000 irregular Egyptians residing in Italy in 2007 (Ghoneim, 2010). The readmission agreement between Egypt and Italy, while certainly supporting the strengthening of labour migration channels, primarily addresses the reduction of irregular migration.

The Egypt-Italy agreement on migration cooperation has been credited as a model for labour migration facilitation across the EU. The agreement has supported the implementation of several initiatives that have provided concrete structures to support

the placement of Egyptian workers in Italian employment opportunities. One such initiative was the creation of the Integrated Migration Information System (IMIS) in 2001 and its extension (IMIS PLUS) in 2008. The IMIS was funded by the Italian government and jointly implemented by the Egyptian Ministry of Manpower and Migration and IOM. The IMIS and IMIS PLUS initiatives aimed to support the Ministry of Manpower and Migration in Egypt in facilitating regular migration from Egypt. The main feature of the IMIS was a web-accessible database to match prospective labour migrants with employers (Silka, 2011).

A complementary initiative, the Information Dissemination on Migration (IDOM) project, followed the creation of the IMIS. The IDOM project was also financed by the Italian government (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Cooperation for Development) and jointly implemented by the Ministry of Manpower and Migration and the IOM. Whereas the IMIS initiative focused on creating the technical infrastructure for managing labour supply/demand matching, the IDOM project focused more on disseminating information to different stakeholders involved in labour migration processes. The project had three pillars:

- **Supporting matching** of Egyptian labour supply (through the IMIS system) with Italian demand (moderated through the Italian Data Collection System Borsa Lavoro);
- **Developing human capital** through financial support of selected Egyptian training institutions, encouraging curriculum development in line with international standards, providing certified language course, and analysis of the legal and regulatory framework affecting labour migration;
- Providing **media and social awareness campaigns** to inform prospective migrants of the dangers of irregular migration and the legal migration possibilities provided by the Egyptian government.

The design of the IMIS and IDOM initiatives emphasise the ties between educational systems, skills recognition and pre-departure preparation as part of labour migration schemes. These elements are also echoed in past short-term labour migration schemes that have been offered between Egypt and Italy. While it does not seem that specific labour migration programmes or projects are running between Egypt and Italy, past schemes – such as the “education and training for Egyptian youth in Fayoum Governorate” (see box 3 opposite) – demonstrate how education, training and labour migration can be unified in a mobility scheme.

III.4 EU MOBILITY SUPPORT SCHEMES FOR STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS

As mentioned in the introduction, labour migration can be (inadvertently) supported by policies that are not explicitly about labour mobility. Certainly migration channels such as family reunification and asylum may be used to support the legal movement of job seekers into the EU, for example. While it is beyond the scope of this review to discuss different types of mobility schemes across all types of migration channels, it is worthwhile to provide an abbreviated review of mobility schemes for students and researchers.

Students and researchers are unique cohorts or categories of migrants who may be of particular interest to EU labour markets. Recent reforms at both EU and member state level to facilitate the school-to-work transition for international students reflects a wider trend of converting educational migrants into high-skilled workers. Given both their relevance for EU labour markets and the possibilities for legal movement from student migration channels to labour channels, this section will briefly inventory some of the mobility schemes that support the movement of Egyptian students and researchers into the EU.

There are a number of international and bilateral programmes that support the mobility of Egyptian researchers into the EU and vice versa. A small number of schemes are offered by the EU and offer opportunities for institutional exchange through financing offered through the European Commission. One such scheme, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions – Horizon 2020, focuses on supporting researchers at all stages of their careers through grants. The grants can be used to foster collaboration across institutions, which could include short stays of researchers from Egypt into an institution in an EU member state (Delegation of the European Union to Egypt, 2015).

Box 3: Education and training for Egyptian youth in Fayoum Governorate

Cooperation between Egypt and Italy on labour migration has resulted in specific short-term interventions and programmes focusing on regular labour migration. One such programme was the “education and training for Egyptian youth in Fayoum Governorate”. The project was implemented between 2010 and 2013 and was funded by the Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies. The project was implemented by IOM in cooperation with Egyptian authorities and focused on increasing the availability and quality of vocational education and training (VET) for young people in high-migration communities. Focusing on the tourism sector specifically, the project worked with the Italian Tourism School E. Cornaro of Jesolo as an exchange partner with the Advanced Technical School for Hotel Management and Tourism Services in Fayoum. The project supported the following activities:

- Renovation of classrooms, laboratories and equipment;
- Transformation of the school’s pedagogical model and curriculum to be better aligned with international standards and the Italian model of education;
- Development of a webportal for the school;
- Training and further development of capacities of teaching staff;
- Implementation of a management and monitoring system for the school;
- Organisation of events and short training courses for the community, and;
- Information and media campaigns on the project.

As part of the project, training curricula were revised in line with Italian, European and international standards. The European qualification framework system was used to support the reform, which was intended to ensure portability of competencies and certificates earned during training. Revised curricula also encouraged practical experiences and work-based learning.

While the project's objectives were primarily to increase the quality of local VET, the project did explicitly support mobility for training purposes. High-achieving students in the programme were supported to attend a two-week training programme at the Italian partner institute. After the course's end, students were offered a four-week workplace training position in an Italian enterprise.

The short- and medium-run impacts of the project are unclear. Nevertheless, the intervention did contain several elements that could support the development of future mobility schemes. The project emphasised **skill development and portability** through the adoption of international quality frameworks, which could help enhance the value of the VET programme. **Partnerships** among government, educational institutions and enterprises were fostered, which helped expose young people to on-the-job competency development. Finally, the project extended **short-term international learning** possibilities to programme participants, which exposed students to ways of learning and working in other labour market contexts (International Organisation for Migration, 2012).

Another important EU-level scheme is the Erasmus+ scheme, a programme that focuses on both young learners and educators. The Erasmus+ scheme has run from 2014 to 2020 and focuses on different aspects of higher educational internationalisation. While it supports education policy reform in both the EU and partner countries, including Egypt, it also supports the internationalisation and modernisation of higher education institutions in partner countries through partnerships and cooperative projects. Erasmus+ also encourages both learner and staff mobility through something called *international credit mobility* (Delegation of the European Union to Egypt, 2015).

The international credit mobility supports the movement of students or staff between institutions in the EU and partner countries. For **students**, it supports exchanges of between three and 12 months, which are open to short-cycle, bachelor, master and doctoral candidates. Traineeships are also available for students between bachelor and PhD level for periods of two to 12 months. Mobility schemes for **teachers** are also provided through Erasmus+, with staff of both academic and non-academic organisations supported to teach at a higher-education institution abroad for between five days to two months. **Staff mobility for training** is also supported through Erasmus+. Teaching and non-teaching staff of higher-education institutions can train at both higher-education institutions or non-academic organisations in a partner country for periods of between 5 days and two months. The training could entail short training events, job observation or job shadowing. Erasmus+ supports students and staff mobility across disciplines and subjects. The programme provides grants to students and staff to cover their monthly expenditures and/or employment costs as well as travel costs. The scheme also provides support for hosting organisations, including logistical and administrative costs associated with selecting and facilitating the movement of candidates (e.g., language preparation, visa costs, insurance costs) (European Commission, 2017).

In addition to schemes at EU level, different member states have schemes to support student and researcher mobility to and from Egypt. The number and specificity of such schemes varies widely by member state. The table below summarises available mobility support schemes for students and researchers between Egypt and EU member states as of 2015. Annex 1 also contains additional information on the mobility schemes for students/researchers by member states.

Table 5: *Summary of mobility support schemes for Egyptian students and researchers to the EU*

Country	Number of types of schemes	Focus areas/support mechanisms ¹
Belgium	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships for post-graduate studies or research • Scholarships for French-language study
Finland	2	Scholarships for Egyptian researchers in Finnish institutions
France	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships for Egyptian students enrolled in Master's education in France • Grants for PhD students to conduct part of their research in a French institution • Grant for post-doctoral researchers to complete additional training in France • Support for further training of medical students and researchers in a French university hospital • Support for 5-day scientific visits to a laboratory in France for conferences of project planning • Support for post-doctoral and senior Egyptian researchers to work with public-sector research labs in Paris
Germany	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for scholars to spend extended time in German institutions to work on research projects • Scholarships for youth to study in German higher-education institutions and research institutes • Grants to support cooperation between Egyptian and German researchers working in the fields of renewable energy, material sciences, medical sciences, agriculture and industry • Scholarships for Egyptian doctoral candidates to follow doctoral programmes in German institutions for up to 42 months • Scholarships for short research stays of 3-6 months for Egyptian master, doctoral and post-doctoral researchers in German institutions

Country	Number of types of schemes	Focus areas/support mechanisms ¹
Germany (continued)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for staff exchanges for German and Egyptian institutions working on collaborative science and technology-focused projects • Support for joint master programmes and research partnerships between German and Egyptian institutions • Scholarships for Egyptian students to complete post-graduate courses on development at a German institute • Scholarships for “future leaders” to complete a masters degree in a German institution related to public policy and good governance • Stipends for alumni of German institutions who completed their education with a German state-sponsored scholarship to return to a German institution to complete research or a project • Support for scientists to engage in bilateral exchange programmes to explore areas of scientific collaboration and complete joint research programmes
Hungary	1	Scholarships for partial stays for undergraduate students and research stays at graduate and post-graduate level
Italy²	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stipends to support the mobility of researchers engaged in joint research projects • Grants for joint research activities
Poland	1	Stipends for Egyptian students to complete research internships at a Polish institution
Romania	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships for students at bachelor, graduate and doctoral level to follow education in Romania • Support for exchange of professors and specialists between Romanian and Egyptian institutions
Sweden	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships for doctoral and post-doctoral education in Swedish institutions • Scholarships for African researchers who focus on social science topics in Africa • Support for exchange of teachers and students between Egyptian and Swedish institutions

Country	Number of types of schemes	Focus areas/support mechanisms ¹
United Kingdom	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships for “future leaders, decision-makers and opinion-formers” to complete a post-graduate study in a UK higher-education institution • Scholarship for high-performing students to complete specific courses at the University of Cambridge • Support for mobility of researchers between Egyptian and UK institutions to work on joint projects

NOTES:

1. Many of the programmes listed support bilateral exchanges between Egypt and the member state. As different focus areas or support mechanisms may be provided to nationals of the member state migrating to Egypt, this column only lists the focus areas and support mechanisms for Egyptians going to the member state.
2. Information updated to reflect scheme for 2019-2021; see Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (2019).

The mobility schemes available through EU member states may be offered at different administrative levels (e.g., national, regional/community, city) and may be supported by different bodies. For example, some schemes are offered by the EU member state embassy in Egypt (e.g., grants for Egyptian PhD students are offered by the French embassy in Egypt). Others are offered by foundations, such as the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Germany, which supports scholars to stay in German institutions to work on collaborative research projects (Delegation of the European Union to Egypt, 2015).

The different mobility schemes offered by EU member states also differ by the type of mechanism used to support their respective target groups. By far the most common form of support were scholarships given to students to pursue or complete education in a member state higher-education institution. While some programmes also supported students to complete research projects in a member state institution, the majority focused on providing scholarships for education purposes. A few programmes encouraged mobility and exchange of staff between Egyptian and member state institutions, often in a bilateral or reciprocal way (Delegation of the European Union to Egypt, 2015). For example, the Newton-Mosharafa fund is a £50 million fund to support British-Egyptian collaborations on science, innovation and developed-focused research. It directly funds joint research projects involving British and Egyptian scientists and encourages the production of research that can have commercial or wider societal benefit. It strongly encourages the establishment of sustainable, international scientific networks. The fund offers financial and logistical support to British and Egyptian scientists to train at a partner institution and to take

part in short- and longer-term research mobility schemes. The fund is jointly funded by the UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. Given the role of both countries in shaping the fund, the fund supports research in thematic areas that have been identified as priorities by the Egyptian government, namely: sustainable water management, renewable energy, sustainable food production, archaeology and cultural heritage, and affordable and inclusive healthcare (Newton-Mosharafa Fund, 2020).

V. Conclusions

Legal labour migration and mobility between Egypt and the European Union is a key area of cooperation between the two bodies, yet the creation of labour migration schemes for Egyptians of varying skill levels has not (yet) been widely realised. Since the early 2000s cooperation between Africa and the EU on migration issues has intensified. Within Africa-EU cooperation frameworks growing emphasis on migration management has been accompanied by substantial financial contributions from the EU. The funding made available under different frameworks has enabled support for projects at both regional (North Africa) level and within Egypt itself. These contributions – such as the €60 million committed to projects to be implemented exclusively in Egypt under the EU Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) – are generally for interventions that aim to improve migration governance and reduce irregular migration. Increasing cooperation and financial contributions has not (yet) seemed to correspond to the expansion of labour migration schemes or opportunities, and increasing (legal) labour migration channels to the EU does not seem to be a priority under this cooperation. None of the contributions made under the EUTF for Egypt so far have addressed EUTF objective 2, to increase mutually-beneficial legal migration and mobility (European Union, 2019). There are nevertheless signals that EU financing can contribute to labour migration support programmes on the regional level, however. Under the EUTF for Africa, a regional project (“towards a holistic approach to labour migration governance and labour mobility in North Africa”) is being funded that would create a pilot migration scheme for labour migrants to Germany and potentially to Belgium in the future. As the project is still in its early stages, there are no specific mechanisms or outcomes that can be evaluated. Nevertheless, the design of the programme does suggest the creation of a mobility support scheme that can provide holistic guidance to migrants and employers throughout the migration cycle.

The limited emphasis on facilitating legal labour migration through EU cooperation is echoed in the small number of formal agreements Egypt has with EU member states on labour migration. Bilateral labour migration agreements have been established with Bulgaria (1972), Greece (1981) and Italy (2005). The agreement with Italy and the subsequent development of labour migration programmes and support facilities does provide an instructive model for how labour mobility can be facilitated, however.

In addition to agreements or schemes that support mobility for general migrant labourers, many EU member states also have specific schemes to support the migration of students and researchers. Given growing emphasis on the attraction and retention of highly-skilled workers

in specific sectors across many EU countries, the student and researcher migration channel may become an even more significant mechanism for labour mobility. As of 2015, ten EU countries had specific schemes available to support the mobility of students and researchers from Egypt.

Mobility support schemes at the level of individual member states are also complemented by schemes on EU level. Over the past decade the EU has issued several directives, such as the Seasonal Workers Directive and Blue Card Directive, that aim to support mobility of different skill cohorts of migrant workers across the EU. It is unclear how impactful these schemes have been in supporting mobility from North Africa more generally and Egypt specifically, however.

In general the share of residence permits issued in the EU for labour purposes has been small. Between 2008 and 2017, less than one-fifth of all permits issued to nationals of Southern Mediterranean countries (including Egypt) by an EU member state were for work purposes. This share includes a variety of work channels for labour migrants across the skill spectrum. In contrast, family reunification was by far the largest legal mode of entry for migrants from the Southern Mediterranean region to the EU. Between 2008 and 2017, over half of all residence permits issued in the EU were for family reunification (Alcidi, Laurentsyeve, & A., 2019).

In line with general trends from the region, legal migration of Egyptians into the EU has increasingly occurred within the family reunification channel. Between 2015 and 2017, the share of Egyptians entering the EU on family reunification grounds rose by 25%. The increase may reflect a rapid decline in the number of work permits issued to Egyptian migrants in the EU. Whereas almost 17,000 work permits were issued to Egyptian nationals in 2010, the number had declined by three-quarters, to less than 4,000, in 2017 (Alcidi, Laurentsyeve, & A., 2019).

Schemes on EU level, such as the Seasonal Workers Directive, facilitate a limited amount of migration, largely because the number of permits issued is directly tied to economic conditions in the EU. In 2017 less than 7,000 seasonal worker permits were issued, over 90% of which were issued to nationals of Morocco. Movement from Egypt into the EU does seem to be supported by EU-level schemes. Between 2008 and 2017, around 32% of residence permits issued by member states to Egyptian nationals were for work purposes, and around 12% were for education purposes. While the number of permits issued for seasonal work have declined markedly over recent years, the number of permits issued to researchers and highly-skilled migrants rose, from 1.8% of all work permits issued in 2008 to 23% of all permits issued in 2017. The Blue Card Directive to support highly-skilled worker mobility has been an important contributor, with 1,094 Egyptians issued a Blue Card in its first five years of operation (Alcidi, Laurentsyeve, & A., 2019). While some EU-level schemes may indeed open legal movement channels for migrant labourers at different skill levels, the number of workers who can benefit from them appear small.

Given the increasing cooperation between the EU and Egypt on legal migration pathways, it is important to learn from the small number of interventions and agreements that support the mobility of workers from Egypt into the EU to inform future interventions. It is also important to understand how policies and programmes that facilitate mobility between Egypt and the EU but do not have explicit labour components nevertheless shape work opportunities for Egyptians abroad. To that end, several recommendations are given for future research, namely:

- *Assess how family reunification or formation policies condition labour market access for status holders:* Large numbers of Egyptian migrants residing in the EU have been given the right to enter and stay through family reunification or formation channels. Such migration channels may have different provisions that encourage or discourage recipients' access to the local labour market. Given the numerical importance of family reunification/formation channels for Egyptian migrants, it is important to understand how the inclusion or incorporation of status holders in select EU countries with large numbers of Egyptian migrants (e.g., Italy, Germany) is supported through these policies. Future research could therefore begin by assessing and comparing how family reunification/formation policies in key EU countries shape the labour market entry and mobility of Egyptian recipients. The desk-based policy review could be complemented by later statistical modelling of the factors that are associated with employment and labour market mobility among status holders, which can provide important insight into the individual characteristics that correspond to successful labour market integration in the EU.
- *Evaluate to what extent researcher and student mobility support schemes support the entry and retention of skilled Egyptians into EU labour markets:* In many countries, student exchange and researcher support schemes may be part of labour market strategies aimed to bridge skill gaps in local labour markets by encouraging the attraction, training and retention of foreign talent with rare or demanded skill profiles. Despite this implicit objective, researcher and student mobility schemes are often not evaluated as labour migration schemes. Given the diversity of student and researcher schemes that support Egyptians wishing to study or train in the EU, future research could assess the post-graduation or post-training labour market outcomes of participants. A first part of this research could entail understanding how student/researcher mobility schemes are embedded within the wider migration policy ecosystem in specific EU host countries, which could involve, for example, inventorying the countries that have specific migration categories or policy provisions to support graduates from local educational programmes to find employment. A second component of the research could focus on assessing the post-graduation/training employment outcomes of graduates.
- *Inventory complementarities between labour mobility programmes or policies and education frameworks/strategies, specifically technical and vocational education and training:* Mobility support schemes are often focused on specific categories of potential migrant workers, who may be selected on the basis of specific skill or competency profiles. The bilateral labour migration agreement between Italy and Egypt, for example, supports labour migration of a select number of workers based on lists of demanded employees. The extent to which Egyptian workers are able to

meet the competency profiles requested by foreign employers may depend in part on the education or training opportunities available to them domestically, which may require detailed evaluation of how foreign labour opportunities are mainstreamed into policy frameworks that guide the design of education programmes.

- *Conduct formal impact evaluations of labour migration interventions:* Evaluation of labour migration policy frameworks, agreements and projects are notably lacking. Neither process nor impact evaluations are readily available that provide substantial insight into how different schemes function (or do not). As Africa-EU and Egypt-EU cooperation intensifies and expands to include specific mobility support schemes, it would be valuable if lessons learned from past policy frameworks, agreements and schemes could be used to inform future programme design. To this end, future research in this area could focus on how specific elements of programme design – for example, mechanisms to support supply and demand matching between Egypt and Italy through management information systems – affected the overall efficacy of the scheme. Current information on impacts is largely limited to numbers of workers facilitated to move through a particular scheme. Independently these numbers may not be such useful indicators of policy or programme functioning. Complementary indicators should be collected that place those numbers in context and that can draw more robust connections between programme design features and achievement of particular policy goals.

Annex 1: Student and researcher mobility schemes between Egypt & the EU

Table 6: List of selected student and researcher mobility schemes between EU member states and Egypt

Country	Name of scheme or programme
Belgium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive programme on cooperation in the fields of education, science and culture—Flemish community • Executive programme on cooperation in the fields of education, science and culture—French community
Finland	Finnish government's scholarship pool (supported by Finnish Centre for International Mobility)
France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tahtawi Scholarship • Grants for PhD students and post-doctoral researchers (supported by French Embassy in Egypt and the Science and Technology Development Fund) • Research in Paris (supported by the city of Paris)
Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • German-Egyptian Research Fund (GERF) • German-Egyptian long-term scholarship programme (GERLS Fund) • German-Egyptian Mobility Programme for Scientific Exchange and Excellence Development (GESEED) • German-Arab Transformation Partnership • Public Policy and Good Governance programme (PPGG) • Re-invitation scholarship • Bilateral exchange of academics/Wissenschaftler Austausch Programme
Hungary	Hungary International Scholarship pool
Italy	Executive Programme of Scientific and Technological Cooperation between Italy and Egypt
Poland	Cultural and scientific activities agreement (2002)
Romania	Agreement on economic, scientific and technical cooperation (2007)
Sweden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest scholarship programme for PhD and post-doctoral studies in Sweden • African Guest Researchers Scholarship Programme • Linneaus-Palme Exchange Programme
United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chevening scholarship • BP Cambridge scholarship • Scotland Saltire Scholarships • The Newton-Mosharafa Programme

Source: Delegation of the European Union to Egypt (2015)

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Author details

Dr. Michaella Vanore is a research fellow at the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, where she has worked for the past nine years as a researcher and lecturer on migration and development and social protection for children. In the course of her work at the School of Governance, Michaella has worked on projects commissioned and funded by the European Commission, IOM (Egypt, Georgia, Geneva, Iraq) ICMPD, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, OxfamNovib, UNICEF (Iran, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Viet Nam), and UNDEF.



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