



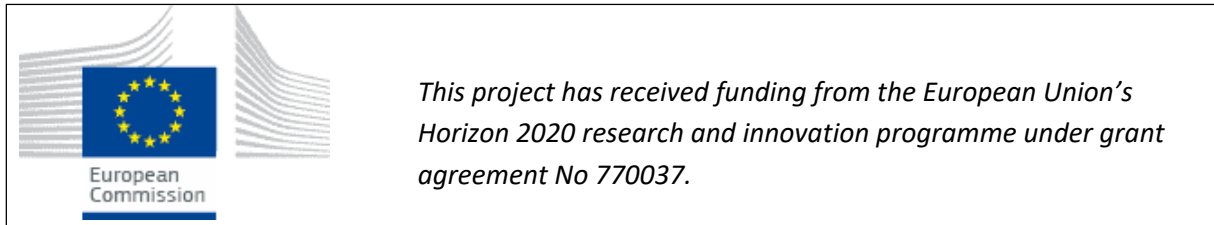
Report containing the detailed models for a sustainable CEAS

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Report containing the detailed models for a sustainable CEAS

Abstract

This report provides various scenarios for possible policy futures in the context of the CEAS. These scenarios are based on the research done by work packages 1 to 7 of the CEASEVAL project and, in particular, the stakeholder discussions convened within work package 7. All 3 sets of scenario packages include 4 scenario narratives that describe possible policy futures in the context of secondary movement, reception and responsibility-sharing in the EU. These scenario narratives were subject for discussion in the stakeholder workshops and enhanced our understanding of what the challenges in the CEAS are. As we intended to draft models that could lead to a more sustainable and equitable asylum framework in the EU, these scenario narratives helped to find solutions that might increase the sustainability and equity of the CEAS. After we discussed the scenarios, we believed that most scenarios are vulnerable when inflows of migrants reach peak levels such as in 2015 and 2016. However, to transform the CEAS into a sustainable and equitable common asylum and migration framework this deliverable points towards three possible fundamental changes that might make the CEAS more sustainable and foster equity. First, for local and regional authorities (LRAs) to follow their local logic and needs one might suggest that they could benefit from direct EU funding and more autonomy from the Member States in the field of asylum and refugee integration policies. Second, this might include discretionary powers to grant some (limited) form of citizenship based on the notion of 'jus domicili' regardless of formal legal status. Third, it might considerably increase the odds of effective inclusion of refugees and thus reduce societal costs, if the EU were to have a refugee status valid for all its member states or the right for refugees to have their protection status transferred from one Member State to the other

Keywords: scenario building, refugees, CEAS, reception, secondary movement, responsibility-sharing

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
CEAS	Common European Asylum System
CEMR	Council of European Municipalities and Regions
CJEU	Court of Justice of the European Union
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
EBCG	European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex)
EC	European Commission
ECRE	European Council on Refugees and Exiles
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
EEA	European Environmental Agency
EP	European Parliament
EPP	European People's Party
EU	European Union
EUAA	European Union Asylum Agency
EURODAC	European Dactyloscopy
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
ISF	Internal Security Fund
LRAs	Local and Regional Authorities
MEP	Member of European Parliament
MFF	Multiannual Financial Framework
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
S&D	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

Executive summary

Whilst consulting a wide range of CEAS-stakeholders it transpired that there is a general skepticism regarding further harmonization of Member State's policies and practices as pursued thus far. This skepticism was expressed after the scenario exercises, which showed the inability of nation states to cope with the fast and ever-changing features and dynamics of mixed migration flows. For the simple reason that solidarity regarding responsibility sharing between Member States, secondary movement of asylum seekers and national reception systems is insufficiently in evidence. At present, Member States seem only prepared for unanimous joint actions if their effect is to maintain low numbers of arriving asylum seekers or to reduce those further. This would notably be attempted by off-shoring responsibility to protect to third countries. Such developments would run counter to the fundamental principles underlying a properly functioning CEAS and hence informing our evaluation: unconditional respect for the principles of refugee protection shaped by solidarity between the EU's Member States. As result of our scenario workshops, policy roundtables and research done in light of work packages 1 to 6, we have come to four proposals that can be split between a status quo situation and a situation that explores different venues.

- If the CEAS remains to be shaped on the state level, we propose the following:
 - Certain Member States could build a 'coalition of the willing' of those which aim for unconditional respect for the duty to refugee protection and acting in solidarity between them.
- If the CEAS can be shaped on alternative governance levels, we propose a strengthening of local agency by the following:
 - Create a direct relationship between the European level and the local level. Municipalities receive direct EU funding outside of their Member State interventions;
 - Create a legal framework that allows for mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions creating (condition) freedom of movement for refugees;
 - Grant more formal and discretionary powers to grant some (limited) form of citizenship based on the notion of 'jus domicile'.

Alternatives on the state level

If the future of the CEAS could lie in a differentiated application of its directives and regulations it might be feasible to agree on further harmonization towards a joint set of directives or regulations between a number of Member States who are willing to pursue this. This would result in the de facto decoupling of EU-membership from unconditional participation in the CEAS. Such a coalition of willing states could then effectively address responsibility sharing between them.

Secondary movement of asylum seekers and refugees goes against CEAS' current design and is thus deemed undesirable by governments. Stakeholders tend to have a different opinion: secondary movements accommodate integration needs of asylum seekers and refugees. Not facilitating these needs increases societal costs and political concerns. Ideally, asylum seekers and refugees are distributed according to their needs and matched with (sub-)national demands for their human capital. As long as this remains outside CEAS's scope, it is recommendable to allow free movement of asylum seekers and refugees within the EU's labor market.

Alternatives elsewhere

Instead of attempting further harmonization between national governments, stakeholders recognize and commend that the CEAS overall already does produce its intended results, something from which its imperfections and sometimes large deviations should not distract. Moreover, these deviations might, at least in part, be addressed by actors presently not or insufficiently involved in CEAS's implementation.

All through Europe smaller and larger municipalities and notably cities ask for a bigger role in the reception of asylum seekers and refugees. Considerable frustration exists regarding their limited scope for tailor made policies, lack of governmental resources and political support at the national level. This offers potential room for more involvement of the EC and EP respectively in providing such resources. These would likely increase the overall societies' integration capacities and subsequently enlarge public support for refugee reception. This would furthermore be an effect resulting from more efficient allocation of the refugees' human capital by taking into account local labor market needs.

1. Introduction

The CEASEVAL project aims to make as complete an analysis as possible of the current shortcomings of the 'Common European Asylum System' [CEAS]. These shortcomings translate into discussions about the (in)formal harmonization of asylum policies, the degree of solidarity between Member States, the varying contexts' in which the reception of asylum seekers takes place, the politicization of asylum issues, and the imperfection of the Dublin system that leads to secondary migration. The ambition of the study is to bring together these various discussions and analyses, and possibly develop policy recommendations that might stimulate sustainability and equity in the asylum and migration framework in the European Union [EU]. During the period 2014 – 2016 it became clear that the EU lacked options to arrive in Europe for those fleeing war and dictatorships, as well as lacked proper reception facilities in Member States at the external borders of the EU. Many scholars and journalists have pointed to the responsibilities and failures within EU asylum policy, even going as far as to argue that the refugee crisis was not a refugee crisis, but rather a 'policy crisis' (Den Heijer et al. 2016: 607; Doornik 2018). According to Den Heijer, the policies in the EU that determine the legal framework on asylum and migration governance, the CEAS, "fosters disobedience and free-rider behaviour" (Den Heijer et al. 2016: 614). For this reason, we have seen an increased interest in forecast and scenario studies on a variety of asylum and migration issues that could better inform EU policymakers in the (near) future. The scenario building part of the CEASEVAL project aimed to do this, with a particular focus on scenarios that address the dynamics involved in the subjects of secondary movement of asylum-seekers in the EU, the national reception systems and the notion of solidarity and responsibility sharing among EU Member States.

This paper presents detailed models of possible futures described in scenario narratives that were constructed for the scenario workshops, held in April and May 2019, and were adjusted after the discussions and feedback from stakeholders at these scenario workshops. First, section 2 will elaborate on the organisation of the stakeholder workshops, which were individually organised in Amsterdam, Milan and Vienna. Some outcomes are discussed briefly. Second, section 3 to 5 will examine the different scenarios for the topics of secondary movement, reception and solidarity and responsibility sharing. Finally, section 6 will expand on various policy recommendations that could make the CEAS more sustainable and equitable.

2. Stakeholder workshops

In light of work package 7 we systematically organised three scenario workshops for stakeholders on the issues of secondary movement, national reception systems, and solidarity and responsibility sharing. We invited stakeholders along geographical lines and along lines of willingness to cooperate and share responsibilities. For this reason, we organised one scenario workshop in Amsterdam, one in Milan, and one in Vienna. To organise three scenario workshops for stakeholders in three different EU cities we tried to cover the perspectives from different EU blocs into our research. However, we are aware that even with this geographical focus some perspectives were underexposed. For instance, the perspectives that perceive the EU, in general, as negative. Besides that we parted the Member States along geographical lines we could also make a distinction on the basis of need and willingness to cooperate on an EU level. We identified three different blocs to which we could divide the Member States. The first blocs represents countries that are not willing to cooperate on an EU scale and are not stimulated to do so because they do not have the necessity

(Finland, Bulgaria and the Baltic states). The second bloc represents Member States that have to cooperate, whether they like to cooperate on a more EU scale or not (all Member States with external EU borders). The third bloc embodies a group of Member States that are placed somewhere in between. They do not have the necessity to cooperate but sometimes they will and sometimes they will not (the Netherlands, Belgium and so on). To learn more about the organization of the workshops and the selection of stakeholders we refer to deliverable 7.2.

The scenario building methodology we used “offers visions or narratives as to what possible alternative futures might look like” (Szczepanikova & Van Crieking 2018: 11). The scenario narratives on secondary movement, national reception systems, and responsibility sharing, therefore, gave us new insights and confirmed some of the trends in asylum and migration governance in the EU. This process, accordingly, does not reduce the complexity of asylum and migration governance in the EU, it rather “tends to highlight ... the complexity of policy issues” (Ibid). Moreover, during the workshops the inability to quantify the scenarios and the lack of numbers was often suggested as one of the difficulties of this methodology. However, although sometimes the scenario process is questioned because of its lack of “clear answers provided by numbers” (Ibid) it is a useful process for creating a moment of reflection “that can lead to new questions and potentially new solutions to policy problems” (Ibid). The discussions on scenarios resulted, for instance, in the understanding that almost all scenarios were vulnerable in the case of increasing numbers of refugees. The stakeholders agreed that none of the scenarios that proposed the allocation of asylum seekers on EU territory would be sustainable with a situation equal to 2015 and 2016. This partially explains the current trend of externalization in asylum and migration governance in the EU.

3. Scenario narratives on secondary movement

3.1 Timeframe

All scenarios in the CEASEVAL project, the scenarios on secondary movement, reception and responsibility sharing are constructed with a timeframe of ten years (2019-2029) in mind. We chose to focus on this period for various reasons. First of all, a longer timeframe would have been impossible to construct, as asylum and migration policy is in motion all the time, and migration patterns change. Second, a benefit of a shorter timeframe could be that the policy-makers, for which these scenarios are destined, will perceive these scenarios as more convenient. Finally, the EU organized general elections in 2019 and will do so in 2024 and 2029, hence this period will feature at least two elections that could determine the policy on asylum and migration in the EU.

3.2 Relative certainties and uncertainties

Before we elaborate on the relative critical uncertainties concerning secondary movement and extrapolate various scenarios from this, a short notice of current certainties or trends help to identify relative uncertainties with low and high impact. The relative certainties, or trends, demonstrate “[a] future direction [which] is fairly certain, and they can have a high impact on a [policy’s] future success” (Wulf et al. 2011: 6). The driving forces of these trends should be taken into account as they might directly or indirectly shape the future context of asylum issues. The social, political, economic, environmental and technological drivers “can be considered either relatively certain or relatively uncertain” (Szczepanikova & Van Criekinge 2018: 15). The developed scenarios for this project are constructed on drivers that are deemed to have the biggest impact and are considered the most uncertain regarding the EU’s future asylum governance. Skov (2016) discusses three aspects behind secondary movement. First, the legislative aspects. Second, the social aspects. And third, practical and economic aspects (Skov 2016: 15). Although these aspects can be seen as relative certainties, it is uncertain which of these aspects are more important for asylum-seekers as this could differ individually.

Starting with the relative certainties, we deem that these trends are most likely to happen or to continue in the future but will not always have a high impact on the future of the CEAS. Relative certainties are, therefore, defined as continuous variables that are easy to forecast regarding in which matter, they evolve in the future. Szczepanikova and Van Criekinge note that “their development and evolution can be monitored through data and accumulated knowledge that can be projected for at least 10 years ahead” (Szczepanikova & Van Criekinge 2018: 15). Demographic trends are often given as example of continuous variables that are easily to predict as there is much data available and certain aspects of these trends are already visible.

The relative certainties concerning legal, political, social, practical and economic, and technological categories are likely to affect the CEAS in the coming decade. The main certainties we identified for the scenarios on secondary movement built on the legal, social, and practical and economic aspects that are identified by the scenario project of the JRC (Szczepanikova & Van Criekinge 2018). Certainties that result from the research done in the CEASEVAL work package 4 on internal and external mobility of migrants in the EU are added. The demographic, economic, social, technological, ecological and political trends will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Table 1: Relative certain drivers of secondary movement

	Secondary movement
Demographic certainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fertility rates in the EU below the level of replacement ▪ Life expectancy continues to grow ▪ Ageing of the EU labor force
Economic certainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased employment opportunities ▪ Deterioration of reception facilities ▪ Cyclical economic crisis in the EU ▪ Shrinking labor force in many EU Member States likely to impede economic growth
Social certainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased presence of an already existing diaspora of migrants in the EU ▪ Increased discrimination ▪ Growing difficulties with integration
Technological certainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Border management will rely increasingly more on technological solutions
Ecological certainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Global mean temperature will rise ▪ More high-impact weather events ▪ Increased environmental-induced migration
Political certainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dublin Regulation ▪ Increasing leeway for differences in reception, asylum procedures etc. ▪ Security and tackling of terrorism on the political agenda ▪ Continuation of conflicts and in instability of EU neighborhood

3.3 Trend analysis of relative uncertainties

The current demographic trend in the EU is facing a phenomenon that did not occur in its recent past. The EU's statistical office noted that "[n]umerous studies have concluded that the EU's population is likely to shrink in the coming decades as a result of a prolonged period of relatively low fertility rates" (Eurostat 2015: 18). However, this demographic trend differs among the EU regions and demonstrate a growing divide between western, eastern and southern Europe. The Austrian Academy of Sciences published a factsheet with various partners in which they concluded that the "Western European population continues to grow, [but] many countries of Eastern and South-eastern Europe are shrinking at an alarming rate" (ÖAW 2018). The same publication "reveals that population growth between 1990 and 2017 ranged from 36 percent in Ireland to a decline of 22 percent in Bosnia-Herzegovina" (ÖAW 2018). Despite that this demographic trend differs among the EU regions and its neighborhood and demonstrate a growing divide between western, eastern and southern Europe, in a report published by the EC Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs it is said that "the total population in the EU is projected to increase from 511 million in 2016 to 520 million in 2070, but the working-age population (15-64) will decrease significantly from 333 million in 2016 to 292 million in 2070" (EC DG ECFIN 2018: 3). Hence, while the overall population is predicted to increase in the next decade, the decrease of the labor force is at a much faster pace. These findings are supported by a report published by the EC, called Atlas of Migration 2018. This report demonstrates that the population pyramids, which indicate the number of people by age group in all 28 Member States were characterized by large groups of people between the age of 30 and 69 (European Commission 2018). These demographic trends have put pressure on all of EU's regions in the past decade and will further do so in the coming decade. In contrast to the population decline in the EU, the asylum-seekers' countries of origin demonstrate rapid population growth. For example, the United Nations (UN) argues that the African population demonstrate a

growth rate of 2.55 per cent annually (United Nation 2019), and the World Bank indicates that the Middle East has a population growth rate of 2 per cent annually (The World Bank 2019b). The MENARA report notes that “[t]he Middle East and North Africa is one of the world’s most rapidly transforming regions, politically, economically, demographically and environmentally” (McKee et al. 2017: 2). In addition, the UN ESCAP factsheet shows that “South Asians still aim to produce relatively large families” (UN ESCAP 2013: 2). These rapid transformations of regions will most likely foster mixed-migration flows with a major influx of asylum-seekers in the EU as a result.

The economic trends demonstrate that during the period 2019 – 2029 the EU “economies will converge driven by a positive trade balance, rising exports and increased consumption associated with a moderate rise in wages” (ESPAS 2015: 51). However, this forecast made by ESPAS did not foresee a disruption of free trade, such as the trade war between the United States and China in 2018 and 2019, which will most likely negatively affect the global economies in the coming years. For instance the “uncertainty about tariffs and plummeting car sales have caused a major contractionary demand shock to capital investment in the advanced economies, hitting manufacturing-led economies such as Germany extremely hard” (Financial Times 2019). In addition, these trade tensions affect the EU Member States economies on the short term but also on the medium and long term prospects. This is mainly due to the fact that “the post-World War II process of globalisation driven by multilateral agreements that allowed ever-increasing trade openness is being challenged” (OECD 2019). “While US-China trade friction has created uncertainties and Europe will no doubt face some direct costs, the bigger threat comes from the new inward-looking approach of the US government. What will happen in the future is unclear. But what is obvious is that the rapid transformation of the global economy over past decades is demanding new, shared leadership. The EU needs to work with its Asia-Pacific partners, as well as the US, in order to update trade rules, reduce border impediments and lay the groundwork for a prosperous 21st century global marketplace” (Plummer 2019). Another conflict between the US and another country that is likely to affect the regional economy, are the tensions between the US and Iran. The prospects of war and the negative effects it has on the economies of the region makes migration to the EU more attractive for citizens from countries like Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran. In relation to the decline of population in Eastern Europe the Migration Policy Institute argued in 2008 that although EU has to cope with a graying workforce, the EU’s economies are not necessarily negatively affected by it as the population decline “could be compensated to some degree by [an increase] in human capital” (MPI 2008: 3). The MPI argues that although “the Eastern European population is expected to decline steadily, educational attainment among its working-age population will increase at the same time, which is likely to lead to higher per capita productivity” (Ibid). Furthermore, in a report published by the ESPAS it was concluded that the completion of the single market was recommended in every “strategy for improving Europe’s economic performance” (ESPAS 2015: 54). However, the EU had found difficulties in eliminating the “uneven application of European Union regulations and non-tariff barriers [while this] would help to triple the gains already achieved during the last 30 years, with a revenue gain around 15 % and a doubling of internal European Union trade” (Ibid). In addition, a report from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development noted that as result from the trade war between the United States and China the global trade system is weakening which “may further advance regional and bilateral trade integration initiatives” (UNCTAD 2018: 6). Intensified trade integration such as the EU aspires “give [often] more leverage to economically powerful countries” (Ibid).

The economic trend for the coming decade in the context of asylum governance is closely intertwined with the distribution of asylum-seekers, therefore, in order to have economic profits from the remaining influx of asylum-seekers the EU Member States need to take into account the changing structure of the labor demand.

An equitable distribution of asylum-seekers is needed as there will be differences in employment opportunities between EU Member States. The already existence of various migrant diaspora could be used to overcome the challenges with integration. However, “[d]espite hyper-diversification of urban centres, some segments of the population might continue to have much less exposure to diversity” (Szczepanikova & Van Criekinge 2018: 17). As Szczepanikova and Van Criekinge note in their report, this trend of hyper-diversification is most likely to continue in the cosmopolitan cities of wealthy European countries, “[h]owever, in some European countries and in particular in more rural areas, exposure to ethnic and cultural diversity is much lower” (Ibid). For this reason, it is evident that certain levels of xenophobia, racism, discrimination and nationalism persists and even increase. Furthermore, it is likely that the general attitude towards asylum-seekers deteriorates and fear of growing cultural and ethnic diversity increased and further fuels the increasing inequality between the urban and rural regions of the EU. In practice this means a growing inequality between Northern and Southern EU Member States and between Eastern and Western EU Member States.

Another major trend in the coming decade will be the use of technological innovations in the area of asylum and migration management. In the trend analysis of the EPSAS it is argued that “the next major innovations will occur [in the areas of] big data, nanotechnologies and bio-sciences” (EPSAS 2015: 56). For this reason, when we put all ethical and moral norms and values aside these technological innovations make it possible to create a comprehensive digital image of the asylum-seekers that are trying to claim for asylum in the EU and when they do so tag and monitor them by RFID tags that is made accessible on a large scale because of development in nanotechnologies and bio-sciences. Especially in a situation in which national asylum policies become more important; negative attitude towards asylum-seekers increase; and the general discourse regarding migration remains focused on the negative security issues of migration it is likely that technological innovations will be applied for asylum and migration management. Another irreversible trend in the context of technology is the impact it had and remains to have on how we do our jobs and radically changed the nature of employment. Szczepanikova and Van Criekinge mention that in the past technological innovations enabled us for example to transfer files and finances rapidly (Szczepanikova & Van Criekinge 2018: 23). They argue that technological innovations will affect “production and service systems [and] will be influenced by technical feasibility, costs of technology, benefits of automation and regulatory and social acceptance. Central to the relationship with migration policy will be the supply or shortage of workers, their skill levels and labour productivity. Labour-replacing automation will, therefore, be affected by interrelations between government priorities and labour migration policies” (Ibid).

A strong incentive for asylum-seekers to migrate has been conflict. In the coming decade conflicts around worsening ecological situations will occur more frequently. The European Environment Agency laid out in their trend analysis on Europe’s environmental future that “global environmental change will be significantly affected in coming decades by a variety of global megatrends — large-scale, high-impact and often interdependent social, economic, political, environmental or technological changes” (EEA 2017: 6). In addition, they said that the pressure on the ecosystems will continue to increase in the coming decade due to “population growth and associated demands for food and energy” (EEA 2017: 48). Moreover, the most vulnerable group in developing countries are “expected to be those most strongly affected by the projected degradation of ecosystems. [c]ontinuing depletion of natural capital globally would not only increase pressure on European ecosystems, but also produce significant indirect effects, such as environment-induced migration” (Ibid). Furthermore, the EEA warns that sea levels will continue and increasingly rise, extreme weather occurs more frequent and the global mean temperature is likely to increase by 1.0 to 3.7 degrees of Celsius in the coming decades, this will have a huge impact on our climate (EEA 2017: 49).

For instance, the Horn of Africa is “currently experiencing a prolonged drought, largely as a result of below average precipitation from the seasonal short rains [...] and long rains” (ACAPS 2019a). In addition, this reports assumes that the “drought conditions are likely to persist and intensify with the continuation of the dry season” (Ibid). Furthermore, the Horn of Africa “is one of the most drought-prone regions of the world and has experienced numerous below average or failed rainy seasons in recent years. Recurrent droughts had a negative long-term impact on livelihoods and coping capacities across the region and will likely aggravate the impact of the present drought” (Ibid). “Taken together, Somalia, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya and Djibouti host more than 2.7 million refugees displaced by conflict and food insecurity, mainly from South Sudan, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi. Refugees already face heightened protection needs and the drought is likely to worsen protection issues” (Ibid). Another area in Africa that copes with persistent droughts are the Southern provinces of Zambia. “The significant rainfall deficit, especially noticeable in Southern and Western provinces, has resulted in decreased agricultural production. Consequently, households are sharply depleting food stocks and are increasingly dependent on market purchases, driving up the prices of staple foods such as maize” (ACAPS 2019b). In contrast, in the most eastern part of India, in the Assam State, “heavy rainfall due to the beginning of the 2019 monsoon season triggered severe flooding in northeast India” (ACAPS 2019c). ACAPS note that “the impact on agriculture and infrastructure is likely to lead to longer-term effects on livelihoods and food security, as 80% of the population depend on agriculture for their livelihoods” (Ibid). And lastly, these changes in ecosystems and the occurrence of more frequent extreme weather events will likely “slow economic growth, erode global food security, increase global inequalities and adversely affect human health” (EEA 2017: 49).

The political trends in the EU are strongly tied to the European integration project and indirectly to the development of the CEAS. In the wake of the crises concerning the Euro and the mass influxes of asylum-seekers in 2015 and 2016, the main political trend has been the rise of populist and nationalist political leaders in the EU Member States. This trend caused a shift towards the perception that the EU had to be defended against migration. For this reason, ‘Fortress Europe’ became more apparent in the EU’s policies on asylum and migration. However, Szczepanikova and Van Criekinge argue that “[e]vidence on global migration trends shows that countries with high migration restrictions do not necessarily succeed in reducing immigration” (Szczepanikova & Van Criekinge 2018: 14). The securitization of migration has only made “migration costlier and more dangerous, lowered return rates and increased settlement” (Ibid). Instead, they argue that the “liberalization of border controls will [not] expose countries to massive and uncontrolled migration flows. The EU enlargement experience challenges this assumption” (Ibid). Hence, the fears of various political leaders that they will be ‘flooded’ by asylum-seekers and for this reason will lose their homogeneous society is based on a myth that the liberalization of border controls lead to massive and uncontrolled migration flows (Ibid). However, the nationalist and populist sentiments are also fostered by the continuation of conflicts and instability in the EU neighborhood and the increased return of Islamic State terrorist to the EU. This justifies for many media and political leaders the use of a security discourse in the context of asylum and migration governance in the EU. However, the security discourse hinders the EU Member States to overcome a lack of solidarity. For this reason and due to a lack of better alternatives, the EU holds on to the Dublin Regulation, which is highly inefficient, unsustainable and inequitable. Moreover, Thielemann argues that asylum governance is characterized by ‘non-excludable’ features and, therefore, could be identified as a public good (Thielemann 2018: 69). These characteristics lead to under-provision and for this reason “contributions to public goods are [...] expected to be provided at inefficient or suboptimal levels” (Ibid). Furthermore, he adds to this that “public goods lead to actions that are rational from an individual’s perspective, but that can be suboptimal (or even disastrous) from a collective viewpoint” (Thielemann 2018: 69). Thus, when the EU Member States refuse to protect asylum-seekers or “divert

[migration] flows onto other countries [this] can be expected to lead to increased instability and heightened insecurity as a result of tensions at the border, irregular onward movements and tensions with other states [or EU Member States] (Thielemann 2018: 70). The combination of the nature of asylum governance, which is providing a public good, and the lack of solidarity among EU Member States has been continuing incentives for EU Member States to ‘free-ride’. To counteract the free-riding of others, EU Member are stimulated to minimize their services and policies on asylum. This could lead to lower reception standards, less accessible asylum procedures and so on.

Szczepanikova and Van Criekinge note that “relative certainties help to set parameters of what is possible, relative uncertainties are most interesting in framing the dynamic, contextual environment of each scenario” (Szczepanikova & Van Criekinge 2018: 15). For this reason, the development of scenarios is dependent on the identification of critical uncertainties. Castles et al. (2014) argue that the frequent failure of migration policies to meet their stated objectives is related to limited understanding of the fundamental dynamics that drive world migration (Castles 2014: 56). In addition, De Haas et al. (2010) distinguish two kinds of uncertainties. The first kind of uncertainties are model uncertainties and are characterized by the “limited theoretical understanding of how social, economic, cultural and political factors affect the volume, direction and nature” (De Haas et al. 2010: 5) of the phenomenon. The second kinds of uncertainties are contextual uncertainties and these “pertain to the constantly changing macro-contextual situation” in which the phenomenon occurs (Ibid). In addition, “relative uncertainties are variables that are hard to predict and have a greater potential for change” (Szczepanikova & Van Criekinge 2018: 15). Moreover, their development and evolution depend very much on the interaction they have with other certain and uncertain variables in the context of asylum issues (Ibid). Hence, in order to determine what the future might bring the CEAS this scenario study established the following uncertainties, which have a high potential impact to influence the future of the CEAS regarding secondary movement:

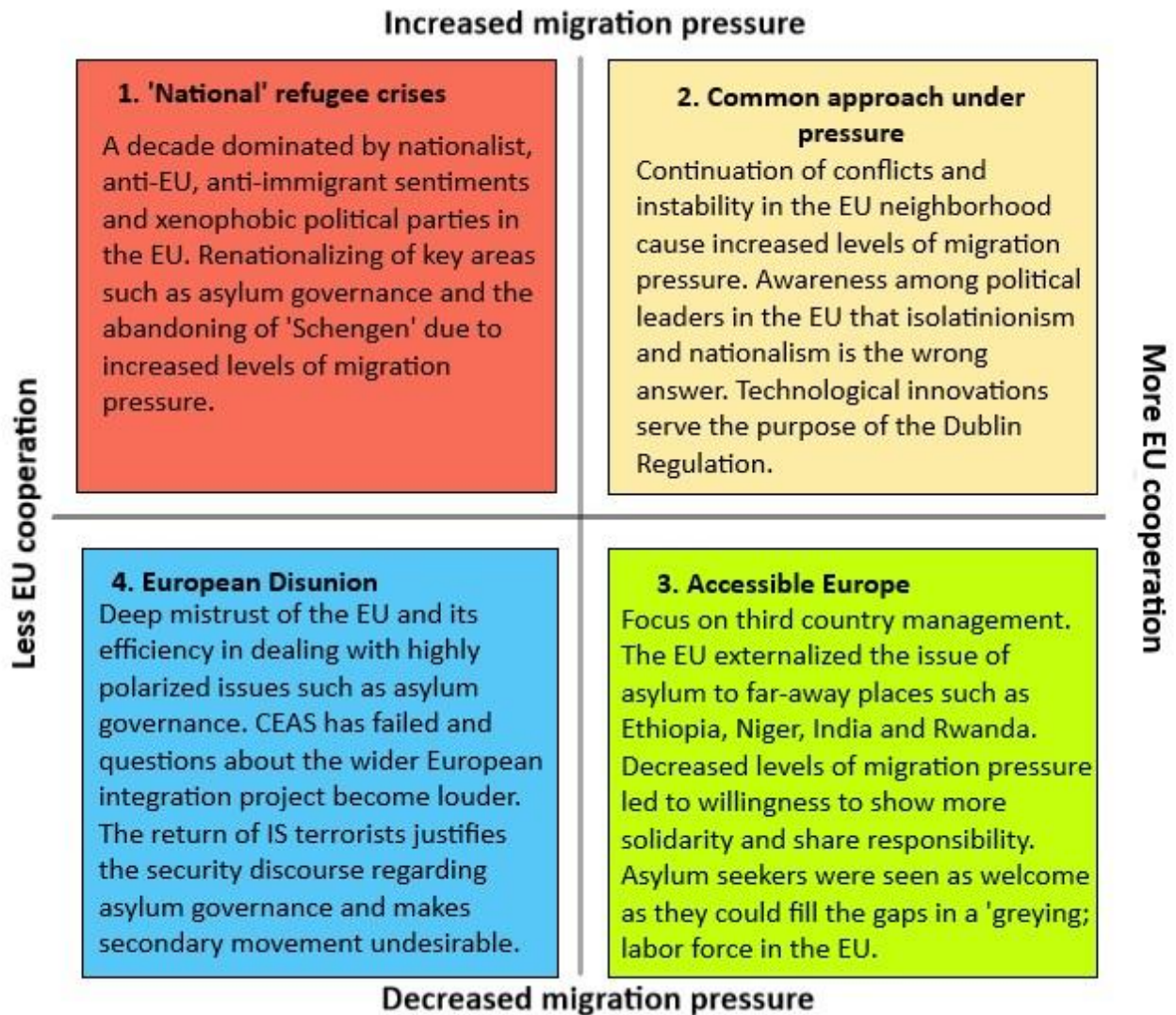
Table 2: Relative uncertain drivers of secondary movement

	Secondary movement
Demographic uncertainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The effects of and responses to population decline
Economic uncertainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Structure of the labor demand ▪ Level of economic growth ▪ Effect of trade deals with the rest of the world
Social uncertainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level of migration pressure/influx of migrants ▪ Levels of xenophobia, nationalism and racism ▪ Attitude towards growing cultural and ethnic diversity ▪ Inequality within and across EU Member States
Technological uncertainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The level of adoption of big data, biometrics and tracking technology in relation to asylum governance
Ecological uncertainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sudden and irreversible changes in the climate ▪ Sudden onset of high-impact weather events
Political uncertainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extent and form of European integration ▪ Distribution of asylum-seekers ▪ Impact of cooperation with third countries on migration management

With these critical uncertainties that have a high impact and are less predictable than the identified trends in paragraph 3.3, we are aiming to develop four scenarios that can prepare EU policymakers on possible futures for the CEAS in the context of secondary movement. We constructed four scenarios that are built around two axes that represent two of the most critical uncertainties in terms of both uncertainty and impact for the future of the CEAS. The vertical axis refers to the level of migration pressure – meant as the volume of mixed migration flows into the EU. On this vertical axis the level of migration pressure will either increase or decrease. This means that the scenarios consider the possibility that in the coming 10 years mixed migration flows to the EU either increase and reach new peak levels, or remain relatively low as at the present moment or even further diminish. The horizontal axis refers to the extent and form of EU integration – meant as the level of cooperation among EU Member States in asylum governance. On this horizontal axis the extent and form of EU integration will either intensify or weaken. This means that the scenarios consider the possibility that in the next decade the level of cooperation in the EU on asylum governance may intensify and result in a completely integrated CEAS, or become weaker and result in the resurgence of national asylum governance. Both variables are characterized by a high degree of uncertainty (the extent of European integration could both intensify, reduce or remain a status quo; similar the level of migration pressure could increase, reduce or undergo frequent fluctuations in the next decade). However, as mentioned above also the other variables should be taken into account when elaborating possible policy outcomes.

3.5 Scenario narratives

Figure 1: Scenario matrix on secondary movement



Scenario 1 – ‘National’ refugee crises: increased migration pressure and less EU cooperation on asylum governance

In 2029 the outlook of the EU was completely different than a decade earlier. Compared to the start of the decade the individual Member States blamed changing demographics, in terms of heterogeneity, to the influx of asylum-seekers. Headed by EU Member States with significant anti-EU sentiments, such as France and Italy with, respectively, Marine Le Pen as president of France and Matteo Salvini as prime minister of Italy, these changing demographics were feared to affect the cultural homogeneity of these Member States. For example, after the 2023 general elections in France Marine Le Pen was elected president and the political direction shifted to a focus on maintaining the ethnically homogeneous French society. For this reason, France decided halfway through the decade and three years after Hungary to refuse all asylum-seekers and refugees. Particularly the Eastern and Southern EU Member States that shared an external EU border perceived the increased influx of asylum-seekers as a burden and, therefore, put more pressure on asylum and migration levels. These trends further stimulated the nationalist discourse in many EU Member States. Another driving force behind the nationalist discourse has been Matteo Salvini, the former Minister of the Interior and since the collapse of the Italian government mid 2019 and the resulting general elections the elected prime minister of Italy. Salvini closed all Italian shores for NGO vessels that were in the Mediterranean for search and rescue operations. Other dynamics that fueled the nationalist discourse in the Member States have been the decreased powers of EU institutions, the increased role of social media and simultaneously the decreased role of traditional media in the public debate. Although the election of various nationalist political parties in the EU has been a reaction to many topics, i.e. economic, social and ecological uncertainties, the highly polarized and politicized issues of asylum and migration were the key drivers that affected the levels of xenophobia, racism and inequality across the EU Member States.

During the past decade a growing polarization within the traditional media was established. A United States-style media frame with one group as a proponent of more nationalization and the other group against this trend became more common in the EU Member States. Parallel to the political direction has been the move of many citizens in Eastern EU Member States to more national and international urban regions. For instance, compared to other EU Member States, i.e. Germany, France, the Netherlands etc., Hungary has a lower urbanization rate, which is more or less 70 per cent compared to 80 per cent in France and 90 per cent in the Netherlands (The World Bank 2019a). During this decade the economic growth of the EU slowed down. This was further enhanced by the global tensions mainly led by trade restrictions that affected countries that were active trade partners of either the US and/or China. Since, the EU was the biggest trade partner of China and the second largest trade partner of the US (European Commission 2019) these barriers heavily affected the economic prospects of EU Member States. In addition, the economic decline was mainly felt by the most rural regions. The abandoning of rural towns and regions in the more rural countries of Europe, therefore, highly affected the countries' economic performance. Furthermore, the general population in the EU continued to age. Already in 2018 Eurostat concluded that in the EU in general the old-age dependency ratio, which indicates the ratio of number of persons aged 65 and over and the number of persons between 15 and 64, was 30,5 (Eurostat 2019). This exacerbated the 'greying' of the labor force in the EU's Member States and resulted in a faster shrinking labor force and changed the structure of labor demand in the past decade.

A direct result of the nationalist and anti-immigrant discourse that is portrayed by some traditional and social media was the negative overall attitude against the influx of immigrants and asylum-seekers, which led that various national governments took back control in various key issues, such as asylum and migration governance, in the past decade. On the one hand this led to a slow dismantling of the CEAS. On the other hand, it demonstrated even further the inability of national governments to effectively deal with and control

mixed migration flows, especially when its focus of asylum and migration governance lies at the prevention of asylum and migration. In 2029, the general idea of the Common European Asylum System and its implementation has failed, although some of its principles survived among those few Member States that did not share an external EU border. Due to economic decline, the rise of nationalist and populist political parties, the maintained high influx of asylum-seekers, and rising differences in reception and asylum procedures in the EU Member States, asylum-shopping and secondary movement became more apparent. As a last resort to reduce these numbers some EU Member States abandoned the free movement of people as laid out in the Schengen Agreement and fueled the debate on further deterioration of EU cooperation in general.

The technological developments in big data, biometrics and tracking technology were also a stimulus for renationalizing asylum governance. These innovations made it easier for individual EU Member States to enhance their border management. Although most Member States were reluctant to cooperate on asylum and migration governance in the EU in 2029, the sharing of information was seen as something positive. Therefore, huge databases such as the EURODAC remained to be updated and were even expanded. Hence, there remained some possibilities of the mutual recognition of asylum decisions, either negative or positive. This extensive database in combination with the ability of some Member States to use big data, biometrics and tracking technology made it easy to create a digital image of the asylum-seeker and eventually made it easier to control the border individually. However, these technological innovations were only possible with huge investments. As mentioned earlier, this decade was featured by an economic slowdown in most northern and western EU Member States and the Eastern and Southern Member States even had to deal with an economic decline. For this reason, these technological innovations were only applied in the most prosperous EU Member States that did not cope with economic decline. Hence, by 2029 the asylum governance landscape is characterized by major inequalities on economic, social and technological levels.

The political reluctance to find a solution for the lack of solidarity and responsibility-sharing among EU Member States in combination of rising nationalism sentiments resulted in 'national refugee crises' across the EU with a particular focus on the Member States that shared an external EU border. As a result of the recurring internal borders most new asylum seekers were trapped in Member States like Greece, Spain, Italy, Malta and Croatia. It appeared that closing of the external border was more difficult than the internal borders. However, to ease the burden the Member States with an external EU border stimulated new asylum seekers to cross the border with other EU Member States and directly contributed to peak levels of secondary movement. As the national governments couldn't be responsible for these dynamics they did not directly offered asylum seekers new tools to cross the borders, however, they did not either disturb organized crime when setting up smuggling routes. In addition, in few cases it was reported that the Croatian police expelled asylum seekers from its capital, Zagreb, to the remote and rural borders with Serbia and Bosnia Hercegovina and forced them to cross the border without letting them apply for asylum (De Groene Amsterdammer 2019). These national refugee crises were fueled by the continuation of conflict and instability at the EU neighborhood as well as in countries of origin, and to the difficulties faced by EU countries in finding durable solutions to root causes of both voluntary and forced migration, for this reason, in the next decade migration flows will increase and migration pressure on EU countries will keep growing. By the end of 2029, the Member States were more sovereign, for this reason, pro-EU politicians did an utmost effort to cooperate on asylum and migration governance focused on the total externalization of asylum reception.

Key developments that led to scenario 1:

- As a result of the trade war between China and the United States the economy continued to slow down. There were differences in the extent that EU Member States felt the economic decline, similarly to the differences that were seen in the changing demographics. The biggest economic decline was seen in the Eastern and Southern EU Member States while the Western and Northern EU Member States demonstrated low, but stable economic growth. Similarly, western and northern EU Member States had to deal with a slower transformation of their demography.
- The economic decline in various EU Member States led to changing labor demands and stimulated nationalist discourses in both media and the political domain.
- In Southern Europe, high youth unemployment, combined with further austerity measures and cuts to welfare services due to economic decline led to social tensions and fostered higher levels of xenophobia and racism.
- Technological developments further stimulated the growing inequality among EU Member States, although these innovations could better help to manage the individual Member States' borders, these innovations also need huge investments to be implemented.

The local level and secondary movement in 2029

The shape of EU politics in 2029 was completely different than it was ten years earlier. Instead of cooperating closer the events of the past decade resulted in weaker cooperation among the Member States. This has not been an advantageous development for the LRAs in the EU. Although at first it seemed that while it became impossible to cooperate on the national level, the local level could provide a solution. However, the political reluctance to find a solution for the lack of solidarity and responsibility-sharing in combination with rising anti-immigrant sentiments made it very difficult for LRAs to cooperate and work on asylum governance that featured equity and sustainability. The developments in the context of technology, economy, demography and politics caused for a trend in which the Member States were wary of cooperation. This trend, initiated by the isolationist agenda of the US and the UK, was no anomaly in global perspective. Strong nationalist sentiments were seen in countries such as France, Italy and Hungary. Hence, the prominent role the EU, as intergovernmental organization, once played was over. The only area in which the Member States were willing to collaborate was security. For this reason, the budgets for security issues such as controlling the external EU borders skyrocketed while the budgets for all other policy areas were being cut back. This was also possible due to technological developments that made it easier to control the borders with less personnel.

These trends meant that proposals from city networks such as possibilities for LRAs to receive direct EU funding for policy areas like integration disappeared from the political agenda. The national governments did not want the LRAs to receive more powers as they perceived this as the undermining of their own power and sovereignty. However, as stated in the scenario narrative this led to rising differences in all areas of asylum and migration governance and eventually resulted in increased levels of secondary movement. In reaction to this the national governments did not invest in sustainable integration policies for asylum seekers that reached the country. Instead the national governments of the Member States allowed organizations to deport asylum seekers without allowing them to claim for asylum, which was a violation of the Geneva Convention, however, this convention was heavily questioned by politicians during the decade. In addition the Member States advocated for more externalized asylum options. Hence, by denying the rights of asylum seekers and to focus on the externalization of asylum and migration governance, possible solutions such as

direct EU funding to municipalities, mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions and increased discretionary powers for the local level were neglected and fell into oblivion.

Scenario 2 – A common approach under pressure: increased migration pressure and more EU cooperation on asylum governance

Demographic trends have continued as expected in 2019, low fertility rates in combination with increasing life expectancy and the ageing of the labor force in the EU resulted by 2029 in a rapid transformation of the European population. Parallel to these demographic changes the EU witnessed various political transformations in 2019. For the first part of that year the precarious situation regarding Brexit kept the EU's political leaders in a deadlock. However, after the first postponement and the internal political struggle in Great Britain, the EU leaders decided that other issues were important too and that the remaining 27 Member States needed to cooperate on these issues. For instance, the latent economic and geopolitical tensions between the United States and China. These tensions evolved halfway 2019 in a fully fledged trade war between the United States and China and matured in a global event that affected the global economy and indirectly resulted in the slowdown of the EU Member States' economies. However, as the trade war mainly developed around import tariffs of the United States and China the biggest threat to global economic growth was that these tariffs led to lower demands for goods and put downward pressure on the prices of goods produced in the EU. Although, this event at the start of the decade only indirectly affected the EU Member States' economies, it did raise the awareness of EU Member States leaders. If the United States or China would start a trade war against the EU the perception was that the individual Member States were not able to deal with the world's economic superpowers. Hence, as a result of these fears the social tensions across the EU Member States reached a boiling point by 2022. In contrast to the global isolationist tendencies, the EU learned from its last two major crises in the first decades that the bloc was better able to cope with crises management when it intensified its cooperation.

The Influx of asylum-seekers kept rising because of more regular sudden high-impact weather events in the Middle-East, Africa and the South Asian sub-continent. The countries in the Horn of Africa are "currently experiencing a prolonged drought, largely as a result of below average precipitation from the seasonal short rains [...] and long rains" (ACAPS 2019a). In addition, ACAPS assumes that the "drought conditions are likely to persist and intensify with the continuation of the dry season" (Ibid). This could become an incentive for people of these countries to migrate to more fertile lands in Western Europe. Besides, the Horn of Africa is currently hosting "more than 2.7 million refugees displaced by conflict and food insecurity, mainly from South Sudan, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi. Refugees already face heightened protection needs and the drought is likely to worsen protection issues" (Ibid). Furthermore, Zambia also dealt with "significant rainfall deficit, especially noticeable in Southern and Western provinces, has resulted in decreased agricultural production. Consequently, households are sharply depleting food stocks and are increasingly dependent on market purchases, driving up the prices of staple foods such as maize" (ACAPS 2019b). In contrast, in the most eastern part of India, in the Assam State, "heavy rainfall due to the beginning of the 2019 monsoon season triggered severe flooding in northeast India" (ACAPS 2019c). ACAPS note that "the impact on agriculture and infrastructure is likely to lead to longer-term effects on livelihoods and food security, as 80% of the population depend on agriculture for their livelihoods" (Ibid). In addition, due to the continuation of conflict and instability in the EU neighborhood as well as in countries of origin or transit, and to the difficulties faced by EU countries to find durable solutions to root causes of both voluntary and forced migration, the past decade was characterized by increased migration flows. However, by 2023 the maintained increased influx of asylum-seekers was, in light of the changing demographics and the shrinking and ageing labor forces, seen as an opportunity for the EU to remain economically competitive in global markets. Although at first, the increased influx of asylum-seekers led to growing anti-migrant sentiments and increased discrimination, the examples found in abandoned Italian towns and regions of the revitalization of

local economies caused by the influx of asylum-seekers resulted in growing positive perspectives towards asylum-seekers. The revitalization of local and regional economies in areas that were most affected by the changing demographics and the economic decline became the best possible examples for eastern and southern EU Member States that had to deal with declining populations and lower economic growth.

In 2029 the prospects for the European Integration project in general looked positive. The internal and external political, economic and social pressures often resulted in differing preferences by EU Member States, however, in a time of turmoil the EU was able to deter isolationist and nationalist sentiments that dominated the international political domain. Besides this, the EU was able to become a more cohesive union. Although there was, by 2024, a more positive attitude towards the growing cultural and ethnic diversity in various EU Member States compared to the early 2020s, the influx of asylum-seekers was still perceived as a problem that needed to be managed. Similar to the economic approach that features cooperation instead of isolationism, the EU Member States advocated for better and deeper integration in the context of asylum governance. In this new common asylum system, started during the negotiations on a new MFF in 2026 and formalized after 2028, the system of allocation started in the EU Hotspots. This became a place of short reception for asylum-seekers where it was determined who was eligible for an EU Migration permit. After this procedure the asylum-seekers were moved according to the newly in place Dublin IV Regulation, which was less political and more pragmatic in nature. The criteria in Dublin IV are based on the needs of the Member States, and these needs are shaped by the needs and logic of local governments, and take into account the preferences of asylum-seekers to retain their human capital, however, this is not the most important dimension. As the preferences of asylum-seekers were taken into account, the appearance of secondary movement decreased. The immigrants who are not eligible for an EU Migration permit will accumulate in the EU Hotspots this could have led to human right violations at the borders, for this reason, the German example of the "Spurwechsel" was applied, which means that the EU Member States slowly worked towards regularization of these immigrants. Hence, the harmonization of reception standards caused for more equity between the reception of asylum-seekers across the EU Member States, and the asylum procedures were better coordinated among the Member States. In addition, the technological innovations of the past decade made it possible for the EU to expand its biometric database on asylum-seekers. Besides the digitalization of fingerprints, by 2029, border controls were able to collect iris scans and images that were used for facial recognition software. The advantages of these technological developments were that Member States became quicker in processing the applicant's asylum claim in the EU Hotspots and whether the asylum-seeker already claimed for asylum in another EU Member State or safe third country. These technological innovations served the purpose of improving the Dublin IV Regulation. Furthermore, since the EU was not able to reduce the migration pressure and it intensified its cooperation on asylum governance, the EU Member States were willing to look for best practice and, therefore, better used existing migrant diaspora to overcome difficulties with integration.

While greater cooperative efforts were widely accepted in 2028, the increased migration pressure could not prevent that the EU Member States were still somewhat reluctant to show solidarity and share responsibilities. This was especially recognized in the distribution of asylum-seekers according to the Dublin IV Regulation. Hence, the examples of asylum-seekers revitalizing local economies of deserted towns and regions in Italy could hardly be applied on an EU-wide level, as the Member States were reluctant to create a scheme in which asylum-seekers could fill the gaps where the demand for labor was most in need.

Key developments that led to scenario 2:

- Continuation of conflict and instability in the EU neighborhood as well as in countries of origin, in combination with the occurrence of more frequent high-impact weather events in the Middle East and the entire African continent led to increased migration pressure in the EU.
- Economic cool-down as a result of the United States – China trade war created awareness among EU leaders that nationalism and isolationism was not the right answer and only enhanced cooperation could defend the EU economies against a new economic recession.
- Rather than that the technological innovations improved the distribution of asylum-seekers in an equitable way, these innovations served the purpose of improving the Dublin Regulation.
- By 2025, the overall numbers of secondary movement decreased due to the enhanced harmonization of asylum governance in the EU. As a result of taking into account the preferences of both the Member States and the asylum-seekers, secondary movement is no longer an issue.

The local level and secondary movement in 2029

In 2029 the prospects for the European Integration project in general looked positive. The internal and external political, economic and social pressures often resulted in differing preferences by EU Member States, however, in a time of turmoil the EU was able to deter isolationist and nationalist sentiments that dominated the international political domain. Besides this, the EU was able to become a more cohesive union. Nonetheless, the levels of migration pressure remained high throughout the decade, which stimulated the Member States to think of nonconventional solutions. During the past decades there has been a certain discrepancy between what the national governments imagined as sustainable solutions for asylum and migration governance and what the LRAs perceived to be sustainable and equitable, the Member States felt that might was easier to come to an understanding on the local level. For this reason, and in the context of enhanced EU cooperation various policy transformations were suggested and implemented.

First of all, the EU concluded that the LRAs needed a direct link with EU resources as this would make the process of reception and integration of asylum seekers quicker and better. Due to the fact that the EU overcame the nationalist tendencies but remained somewhat reluctant to show solidarity on the national level an increased role for the local level such as city networks was inevitable. These city networks further stimulated policymakers to set up direct EU funding and assistance possibilities and simultaneously increased the discretionary powers for the local level. Hence, incrementally the local level received more policy- and decision-making power in asylum and migration governance. Although, there were various positive developments that might have caused for a more sustainable and equitable CEAS, the topic of admission remained an issue. The LRAs also proposed a framework for the mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions, which would have made it possible for asylum seekers to transfer their protection status to other Member States and move within the borders of the EU, however, the Member States were not supporting this proposal as it would affect their sovereignty. Hence, in 2029 we see in many important areas that the Member States were willing to cooperate more and become a more comprehensive union, nonetheless, there remained some policy areas in which some Member States were reluctant to transfer power to other levels of government.

Scenario 3 – Accessible Europe: reduced migration pressure and more EU cooperation on asylum governance

At the start of the decade the EU faced its ninth European election, while at the same time Brexit was dominating the traditional and social media and the political discourse. In this period a couple of EU-minded political leaders recognized that if nothing was done about the anti-EU and nationalist sentiment of certain political leaders, such as Viktor Orban from Hungary and Matteo Salvini in Italy, it would have resulted in the disobedience of those EU Member States, and the entire EU integration project was doomed to fail. Therefore, by 2019 these political leaders saw that they had only two options. Either the EU would comply with Hungary and Poland and would slowly become irrelevant in international politics on the European continent; or the EU should focus on honest solutions for the economic inequality and cool-down among EU Member States, offer feasible solutions for the deterioration of welfare services in various Member States, and provide the EU leadership with a new vision on issues such as asylum, migration, EU citizenship, internal and external security, changing labor demands, climate change, the economic transition and so on.

In 2020 it did not look like the migration flows towards the EU would reduce, however, since the EU – Turkey Statement the EU was desperately looking to externalize the problem of the influx of asylum-seekers. Despite the fact that after the EU – Turkey Statement there were still asylum-seekers reaching Greek shores, the number of people who did arrive fell dramatically. As the EU in this period was unable to find solutions for the lack of solidarity, the sharing of responsibilities and the equitable distribution of asylum-seekers, these third country deals seemed to offer a convenient solution. By 2024, the EU's asylum governance was for a large part focused on third country management. This trend was supported by certain technological developments, made available around 2022, which made it easier for the EU and its partners to reduce migration flows and track asylum-seekers. With the focus on third country management, the technological developments were mainly used in external reception facilities in Eastern, Western and Northern Africa and Turkey. In 2023 even further east, in Iran and India, EU reception facilities were set up. These migration deals were often part of larger development and trade agreements and in the case with Iran this migration deal was tied to Iran's promise not to follow up on their nuclear ambition. Since 2021, when the US China trade war and the erosion of the global trade system, as we knew from the end of the 20th century, developed the EU decided to start free trade agreements with their most important trade partners. Often included were agreements with a less economic character. For example, in the Indian case, although it was already difficult to cross the Indian – Pakistan border in the late 2010s, the development funds and trade agreements made it impossible for Bangladeshi's to cross India by 2025. Every border station took biometrical data from Bangladeshi's who wanted to enter India. This gave India a better insight in the number of Bangladeshi asylum-seekers and at the same time created a database that was accessible by EU agencies and EU Member States so that data could be used when the EU had to assess an asylum claim. In practice this meant that the EU Member States were able to see whether an asylum-seeker already had crossed a safe third country, like India. These technological innovations were spurred by the developments in information and communication technologies. The underlying idea of the use of these technological innovations was that the social and societal challenges that occurred during the mass influx of asylum-seekers in 2015 and 2016 could be better managed with the emerge of "more intelligent, accessible and large-scale networks" (ESPAS 2015: 58) that were developed in this decade. The reduced migration pressure caused lower levels of xenophobia, nationalism, racism and discrimination and a more positive attitude towards the increasing cultural and ethnic diversity of the EU's society. This was further stimulated by the presence of an already existing diaspora of migrants in various EU Member States which helped the new asylum-seekers with overcoming the difficulties of integration. All these developments made the EU Member States more willing to cooperate

within the CEAS. As the EU for most parts externalized the problems of asylum to other regions in the world, the EU Member States were more willing to show more solidarity and make compromises on the distribution of asylum-seekers, therefore, a sustainable and equitable distribution of asylum-seekers became feasible by 2027.

By 2021, in the wake of the economic disruption caused by lower demands for goods and downward pressure on the prices of goods produced in the EU due to the trade war between the United States and China. The economic downturn it resulted into, raised the awareness of EU Member States leaders and established the common feeling that the individual Member States were not able to deal with the whims of the world's economic superpowers. This fueled the urge of further economic harmonization and stimulated the pursuit of harmonization in different policy fields. The changing sentiment, concerning asylum and migration, also fostered the tendency towards more harmonization. However, the Member States acknowledged that the form of harmonization that was pursued earlier was not desirable. Therefore, the Member States agreed to design a form of harmonization that was more based on best practices. Hence, instead of universal rules and legislation the CEAS pursued harmonization that focused on best practices led by local governments. Moreover, the individual Member States acknowledged that some EU regions were hit harder by shrinking populations. For these reasons, the EU implemented new policies on residence permits and EU citizenship. As part of the EU's new vision and in order to counteract the shrinking labor force in the EU and the ageing of the overall EU population, the EU made it easier to grant asylum-seekers with a residence permit or citizenship. The intensification of EU cooperation was perceived as an opportunity for economic growth and encouraged the EU to compete with other economic powers in the world. In relation to asylum governance, the secondary movement of asylum-seekers that did occur was often seen in the context of asylum-seekers that were looking for better integration and employment opportunities, therefore, the EU Member States did not see secondary movement as a threat or challenge that needed to be reduced. On the contrary, the perspective on secondary movement of new asylum-seekers changed and was, in the second half of the past decade, seen as a better chance to integrate fully and fulfil the changing and increasing demand for labor in different EU Member States. This was mainly due to the fact that it was almost impossible for asylum-seekers to get in to the EU. Furthermore, the intensified cooperation on asylum governance included the forming of the European Border and Coast Guard [EBCG], which was assigned to prevent immigrants from illegal entry. In addition, they offered financial and technological support to border and coast guards from third countries. Another agency that was established was the European Union Asylum Agency [EUAA]. The EUAA was assigned to support with financial and technological means the care for the reception of asylum-seekers in third countries.

Key developments that led to scenario 3:

- The EU reached an important crossroad during the early 2020s that altered the direction in which it was heading. Instead of increased power to nationalist and isolationist political parties, the EU Member States were able to reinvent the EU and start with a new vision on many crucial topics.
- The changing sentiment, concerning asylum and migration, also fostered the tendency towards more harmonization. Moreover, the individual Member States acknowledged that some EU regions were hit harder by shrinking populations. For this reason, the EU implemented new policies on residence permits and EU citizenship.
- Asylum-seekers filled the gaps of a graying European society. This stimulated their integration process.
- By 2025 there were still issues with solidarity, responsibility-sharing and the distribution of asylum-seekers. For this reason, the EU focused more on externalizing the asylum issues with third country

management deals. This resulted in a dramatic decline of incoming asylum-seekers that, eventually, made the EU Member States by 2029 more willing to show solidarity and make compromises on responsibility-sharing and the distribution of asylum-seekers.

The local level and secondary movement in 2029

In 2029, the EU made major progress in making the EU accessible for asylum seekers, outside the EU. The EU Member States perceived that narrower cooperation was necessary to cope with the numbers of asylum seekers. However, since 2019 the number of asylum seekers reaching the EU and applying for asylum gradually decreased. When president Von Der Leyen was chosen to become the successor of Juncker as president of the European Commission, she created a commission that dealt with migration and security and was called "Protecting the European way of life". This title implied that although numbers of asylum seekers decreased asylum and migration and the possible affect this could have on the EU remained high on the political agenda. For this reason, the focus on the externalization of asylum and migration governance became more apparent. While real migration towards the EU became almost inexistent the national governments did not see any benefit in transforming the asylum and migration governance structure, which could increase the discretionary powers of the local level and establish a direct EU funding for LRAs. This was mainly caused by the fact that the admission and asylum procedures for those who were eligible for asylum in the EU occurred in reception facilities outside the EU. These facilities were managed centrally by EU organizations and, therefore, there was no need for national governments to transfer powers or increase discretionary powers for the local level. In addition, the lack of a framework for mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions was until 2019 an incentive for asylum seekers to try their luck in another EU Member States, hence, indirectly invoked secondary movements. However, since all asylum and migration issues were taken care externally the call for such a framework disappeared.

Scenario 4 – European Disunion on asylum governance: decreased migration pressure and less EU cooperation on asylum governance

Collaborative efforts to harmonize the asylum governance of EU Member States in 2020 and 2021 were the last attempts to overcome the lack of solidarity among the EU Member States. Although the EU Member States tried to hold on to the idea of a common framework for asylum governance, many policies initiatives stranded in the European Parliament before they were implemented. The inefficient nature of the EU was widely seen as a major problem to ever deal with difficult and highly polarized issues such as asylum. Albeit a period of relative low levels of migration pressure could have been the best time to enhance the CEAS and the cooperation on asylum governance, the preceding years, 2013 – 2018, had caused a deep mistrust of the EU and its dealing with asylum governance. The mistrust stimulated the trend of renationalizing key policy areas such as asylum and migration governance. Moreover, the much-debated Dublin Regulation remained in force until 2022, however, this was a consequence of a lack of good alternatives rather than that the Member States were satisfied with the regulation. By 2023, the EU Member States decided to focus less on the level of implementation and of harmonization. Hence, although the already implemented rules remained intact, the EU Member States decided to pull the plug on a common asylum policy, for this reason, an extensive and well-functioning CEAS became a vision of the past.

With the end of the conflict in Syria and Northern Iraq, the return of Islamic State terrorists that were born on the EU continent occurred more frequently. These terrorists used the same routes as the asylum-seekers that tried to reach the EU. For this reason, migration remained a highly securitized and politicized issue on the political agenda. The media and EU's political leaders justified this securitization due to the increase of terrorist attacks in the EU that endured during the 2020s. Another incentive to curb asylum and securitize migration towards the EU had been the fears of changing demographics that were expressed in the pursuit to maintain an ethnically homogeneous society. Although in 2019 most EU Member States with external borders already closed off these borders, halfway through the 2020s many EU Member States decided to close off their internal EU borders as well and postponed the Schengen Agreement. This affected the negative attitude towards the growing cultural and ethnic diversity of the EU's society and fostered discrimination, xenophobia, islamophobia, racism and nationalist tendencies. Technological innovations such as the use of big data and nanotechnology caused for the harshening of border controls in the EU. This was of course stimulated by the anti-immigrant, anti-EU sentiment across the continent, but further enhanced by technological innovation.

Although the demographic trends showed us rapid population growth on the African continent and also in various parts of the Middle East and South Asia, around 2026 most asylum-seekers chose not to go to the EU. The rapid transformations of regions fostered mixed-migration flows. This was further increased by sudden and irreversible changes in the climate of African, Middle Eastern and South Asian regions. Land degradation made it impossible in some places to grow enough crops to feed the rapidly growing population. Water scarcity increased in the already most arid regions of the world, and high-impact weather events such as hurricanes that led to flooding's and crop failure became more frequent. However, the increased migration flows did not increase the level of migration pressure in the EU. Since the so-called 'refugee' crises in 2015 and 2016 in the EU, the EU worked towards sealing of their external borders. Some Member States built high fences along their land borders, while other Member States closed their ports and picked up immigrant in international waters to return them to the country of origin or transit. Hence, by 2027 the new asylum-seekers were shifting their focus on migrating east instead of west. China's enormous economic project, called 'One Belt One Road' initiative, built the necessary infrastructure that led the asylum-seekers east and provided the asylum-seekers with plenty of employment opportunities along this trade road. In contrast in

the EU, despite the existence of various migrant diaspora, which could have been used to help new asylum-seekers, asylum seekers remained to have difficulties with integration in EU Member States. Furthermore, asylum-seekers had difficulties to find employment and were highly dependent on the welfare systems of EU Member States, while the EU was “turning increasingly grey” (EC DG FIN 2018: 3) in the past decade the welfare services were already in many Member States under a lot of pressure. This made the influx of asylum-seekers even more undesirable and increased the salience of strict border controls

Thus, although the level of migration pressure is at its lowest since the early 2010s, a lot of the challenges and difficulties the EU was facing were attributed to asylum-seekers. EU cooperation, particularly on asylum governance, was increasingly seen as undesirable. By 2029 a parallel and contrasting trend to asylum governance on the level of the nation-state was seen. City networks intensified their cooperation on issues such as asylum governance. Municipal authorities already demonstrated during the mass influxes of 2015 and 2016 that they were willing to cooperate and showed more solidarity than their national counterparts. With the vacuum that was left by the partially dismantling of the CEAS, city networks slowly took a more leading role in European asylum issues.

Key developments that led to scenario 4:

- Period between 2013 – 2018 had led to a great distrust in the EU’s capacity to deal with highly polarized issues such as asylum and migration. Therefore, by 2025 the EU Member States decided to pull the plug on a Common European Asylum System.
- The media and EU’s political leaders justified this securitization due to the increase of terrorist attacks in the EU that endured during the 2020s.
- Another incentive to curb asylum and securitize migration towards the EU had been the fears of changing demographics that were expressed in the pursuit to maintain an ethnically homogeneous society. For this reason, many EU Member States closed off their external and internal EU borders and postponed the Schengen Agreement.
- The increased migration flows did not increase the level of migration pressure in the EU. Since the so-called ‘refugee’ crises in 2015 and 2016 in the EU, many of the new asylum-seekers were migrating east instead of west. China’s enormous economic project, called ‘The New Silk Road’, built the necessary infrastructure that led the asylum-seekers east and provided the asylum-seekers with plenty of employment opportunities along this trade road.

The local level and secondary movement in 2029

In 2029 the overall political trend in Europe is of reducing the EU in its size and power and slowly dismantle the Union. The proposed direct EU funding for municipalities is, therefore, an utopia that probably will never be developed. Instead of finding solutions for the root causes of migration and the challenges it created, the EU Member States decided to individually tighten their borders. This resulted in high fences and extremely militarized areas at the external borders but also became increasingly common at some internal borders of EU countries. These developments demonstrated that, although migration pressure reduced, the issues of asylum and migration remained of major importance. This was most likely affected by the increased fears of terror attacks in the early 2020s. However, due to the closed of borders and the deterioration measures of EU countries the bulk of the migrating people decided to go somewhere else. In addition, almost all European countries faced a ‘greying’ of their society, therefore, possible incoming migrants could alter this trend but also transform a society what was perceived to be homogenous. To counter the fears of losing an ethnic

homogenous society the countries could have invested in integration programs that would be more effective in integrating the migrants into society. However, the scenario showed that this did not occur. Instead, the migration pressure reduced and the negative sentiments that characterized the discussions on asylum and migration matters declined.

While the EU lost gradually its importance as a political power and a place where European countries could harmonize their policies and practices, the European cities and local level governments became increasingly networked. This resulted in large and powerful city networks that cooperated together on issues such as asylum and migration. Since the national governments were wary of cooperating with other European countries these European cities used their networks to learn from best practices. Hence, in this situation cities demonstrated to be more capable to integrate migrants. As a result some national governments were willing to transfer some of their powers to the local level. But this would never implemented on an EU-wide scale. While cities became more networked and the national governments dismantled the EU, the European countries started to work on bi- and sometimes even multi-lateral agreements that could provide asylum seekers with the possibility to move from one country to the other. However, these trends were mainly seen in countries that already formed blocs in the EU, such as the Benelux and the Baltic states. Ergo, we could not really speak of a framework in which there was a mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions.

4. Scenario narratives on reception systems

4.1 Relative certainties and uncertainties

As elaborated in section 3, we too identified relative certainties and critical uncertainties in the context of reception. Although the relative certainties correspond to the earlier identified certainties, most notably, the critical uncertainties might differ slightly from the identified uncertainties in section 3. Table 3 and 4 will list the certainties and critical uncertainties for reception. Furthermore, these lists build upon two recent scenarios development exercises on migration and migration policies in the EU carried out by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development [ICMPD] and the Joint Research Centre [JRC] of the European Commission (Szczepanikova & Van Criekinge 2018), as well as upon the empirical findings of CEASEVAL Work Package 3, which investigated the multi-level governance of reception in seven EU Member States.

Table 3: Relative certainties for asylum-seekers reception

	Reception
Demographic certainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ageing of EU societies ▪ Life expectancy continues to grow ▪ Ageing of the EU labor force
Economic certainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased employment opportunities ▪ Deterioration of reception facilities ▪ Cyclical economic crisis in the EU ▪ Shrinking labor force in many EU Member States likely to impede economic growth
Social certainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased presence of an already existing diaspora of migrants in the EU ▪ Increased discrimination ▪ Growing difficulties with integration
Technological certainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Border management will rely increasingly more on technological solutions
Ecological certainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Global mean temperature will rise ▪ More high-impact weather events ▪ Increased environmental-induced migration
Political certainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing leeway for differences in reception, asylum procedures etc. ▪ Security and tackling of terrorism on the political agenda ▪ Continuation of conflicts and instability of EU neighborhood ▪ Gaps among EU Member States in terms of institutional capacity (and resources available) to accept migrants and asylum seekers and provide adequate reception, protection and integration will continue to exist

In order to determine what the future might bring the CEAS this scenario study established the following uncertainties, which have a high potential impact to influence the future of the CEAS regarding asylum-seekers reception:

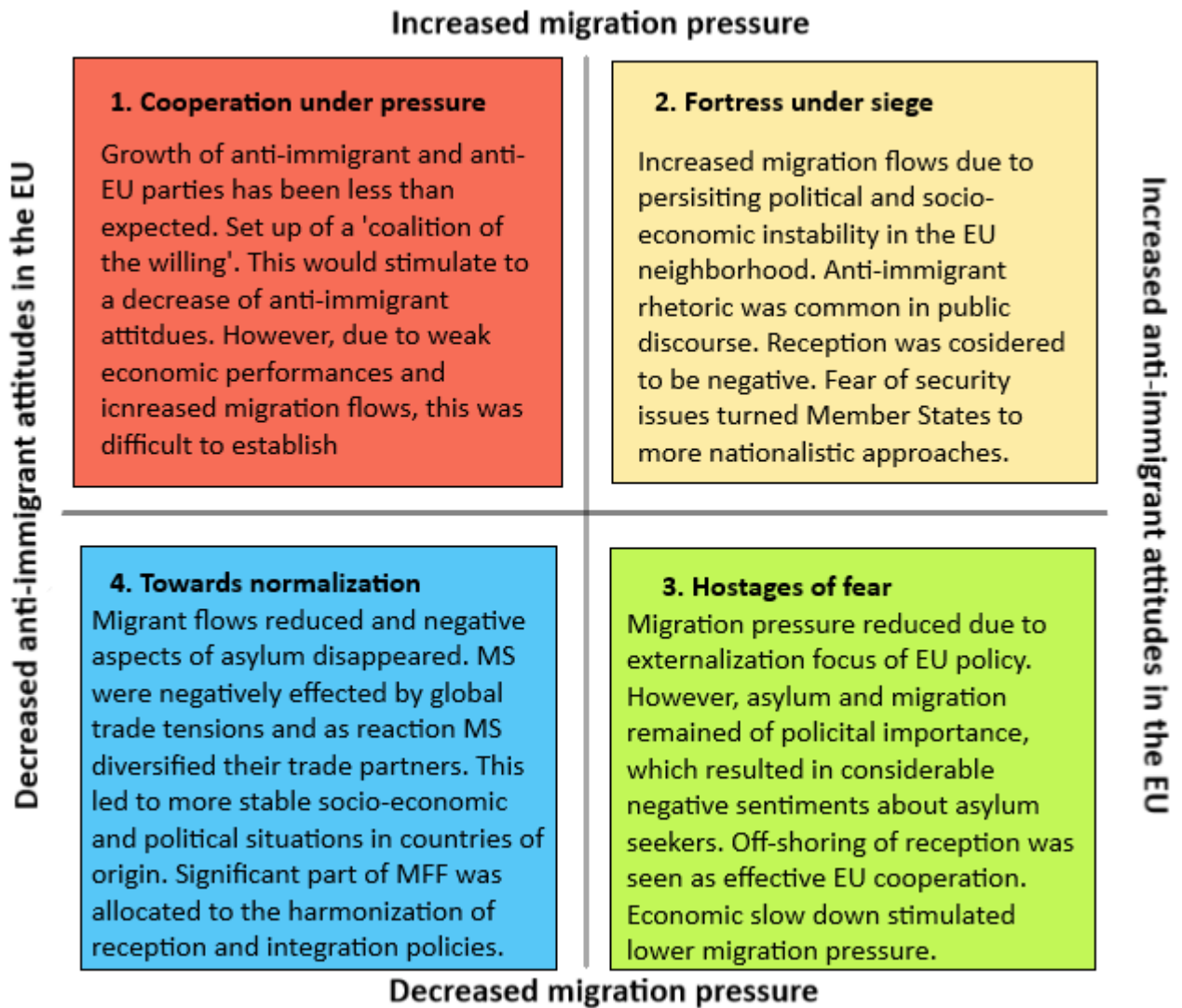
Table 4: Relative uncertain drivers of asylum-seekers reception

Demographic uncertainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The effects of and responses to population decline
Economic uncertainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Structure of the labor demand ▪ Level of economic growth
Social uncertainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Level and distribution of migration pressure/influx of migrants ▪ Levels of xenophobia, nationalism and racism ▪ Attitude towards growing cultural and ethnic diversity ▪ Extent of anti-immigrant attitudes and level of politicisation of migration
Technological uncertainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The level of adoption of big data, biometrics and tracking technology in relation to asylum governance
Ecological uncertainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sudden and irreversible changes in the climate ▪ Sudden onset of high-impact weather events
Political uncertainties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extent and form of EU integration ▪ Responses to existing gaps between Member States ▪ Role of cities and intra-national institutional dynamics ▪ Impact of cooperation with third countries on migration management

Among these variables, we have identified two relative uncertainties that we consider to be particularly relevant in shaping possible future policy developments in the field of reception. These are: the level of migration pressure – meant as the volume of mixed migration flows into the EU. On this vertical axis the level of migration pressure will either increase or decrease. This means that the scenarios consider the possibility that in the coming 10 years mixed migration flows to the EU either increase and reach new peak levels, or remain relatively low as in early 2019 or even further diminish. The horizontal axis refers to the extent of anti-immigrant attitudes – meant as the level of diffusion and intensity of anti-immigrant discourses, behaviors and acts. The extent of anti-immigrant attitudes is revealing the level of politicization of migration in the public discourse. Both variables are characterized by a high degree of uncertainty (the extent of anti-immigrant attitudes could both intensify, reduce or remain a status quo; similar the level of migration pressure could increase, reduce or undergo frequent fluctuations in the next decade). However, as mentioned above also the other variables should be taken considered when elaborating possible policy outcomes.

4.2 Scenario narratives

Figure 2: Scenario matrix on reception



Scenario 1 – ‘Cooperation under pressure’: Increased migration pressure and decreased anti-immigrant attitudes in the EU

The EP elections of 2019 showed the loss of absolute majority by the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats [S&D] and the European People’s Party [EPP], the two major political fractions in the EP since its establishing. However, the growth of anti-immigrant and anti-EU parties has been less than expected. Although, the tenure 2019 – 2024 will have more anti-immigrant and anti-EU members of parliament [MEPs] compared to the last tenure, the pro-immigrant and pro-EU MEPs are still the vast majority. The renewed legitimacy of the EP and the fact that there were still more pro-immigrant attitudes in the EU than anti-immigrant attitudes inspired stakeholders in the field of asylum and migration to set up a ‘coalition of the willing’ of Member States and local governments that were on the same page. While the Dutch Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs already argued for a ‘coalition of the willing’ in 2016 (Hirsch Ballin 2016: 21), the first signs of a widely supported call were seen in June 2019 when the mayor of Palermo, Leoluca Orlando, and the chair of the Evangelical Church in Germany, Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, called for a EU-wide distribution mechanism for refugees (EKD 2019). The common assumption was that a better distribution of asylum-seekers made it possible to improve the reception facilities in the EU Member States. Improved reception conditions would go along with better integration and foster social inclusion of asylum seekers, which was a way to prevent anti-immigrant sentiment. Hence, the initiated process of improved reception conditions was assumed to give asylum seekers the opportunity to become more autonomous and create positive narratives around migration. This would stimulate the decrease of anti-immigrant attitudes. An EU-wide distribution mechanism of asylum seekers and refugees started to be implemented in 2021.

Although the EU managed to alter the narrative around migration and asylum seekers by 2022, they did not manage to obtain a significant decrease in migrant flows. Data from the IOM demonstrated that in the two years preceding this decade, 2017 and 2018, around 200.000 migrants were stranded somewhere in the EU (IOM 2019). This rough number of migrants stranded in the EU even increased throughout the period 2019 – 2029 and was mainly caused by the continuation of conflict and instability in the EU’s neighborhood. Hence, although some Member States were willing to show more solidarity and share responsibilities, to manage asylum and migration flows effectively the EU needed the cooperation of all Member States. By 2025 the major influxes were stimulated by continuing and emerging conflicts in Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Nigeria, Cameroon, Ukraine and Venezuela (International Crisis Group 2018). Data gathered by the UNHCR demonstrated that in 2018 57 percent of all refugees globally were from only three countries, South Sudan, Syria and Afghanistan (UNHCR 2019). For many asylum-seekers reaching the EU, mainly those coming from Afghanistan, Syria, Ukraine and Venezuela, the already existing diaspora in EU Member States led to better integration prospects, and thus, made migration more attractive.

In the global domain, the re-election of Donald Trump as the President of the United States in 2020 and his tensions with China decreased the trust of investors affecting the already weaker EU economies. For this reason, by 2023 many companies had to cut jobs in Southern EU Member States, like Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece. However, the immigrants who by large cost less than the native citizens, had better prospects of preserving their jobs. Although, Venezuelans speak Spanish and were likely to integrate quicker than other asylum-seekers in other EU Member States, the cyclical economic decline, ignited by the United States China trade war, led to a gradual shift of an increase in anti-immigrant attitudes in certain Member States. Hence, by 2026 cyclical economic crises in some EU

Member States resulted in a gradual shift in attitudes towards migration and immigrants, economic decline in countries of origin and transit led annual increased migration pressure. Furthermore, the existence of manifold diaspora in EU Member States contributed to the attractiveness of the EU and positively affected the increase of migration pressure.

By 2027, the combination of a continued increase of migration pressure and the economic slowdown in certain EU Member States caused for the possibility of an overall shift towards increased anti-immigrant attitudes in the EU. To prevent scenario 1 from turning into scenario 2, thus, from a more negative image around the issue of asylum and the European integration in general, the EU institutions along with the local and national governments had to set up a sustainable 'coalition of the willing' by 2028. A coalition that was willing to bear the burden and take more responsibilities than the EU Member States that were not part of it, because of economic or political reasons. However, in this framework genuine pro-migrant attitudes are not likely to emerge, but at least a majority of population in most EU Member States will not oppose asylum-seekers reception.

Key developments that led to scenario 1:

- Loss of absolute majority by the S&D and EPP in EP, this resulted in more anti-EU and anti-immigrant MEPs.
- Global trade tensions between the US and China negatively affected the Member States' economies.
- Mayor of Palermo and the chair of the Evangelical Churches in Germany called for an EU-wide distribution mechanism for asylum seekers and refugees, comes close to the idea of an 'coalition of the willing'.
- Austerity measures in the EU due to weak economic performances.
- Increase of anti-immigrant attitudes in EU Member States due to a combination of increased migrant flows and high unemployment rates of natives.

The local level and reception in 2029

By 2029, the Member States needed to come with a solution for the continued migration pressure. This continuation showed that the past asylum and migration policies of the EU were unable to cope with high levels of asylum seekers. Mainly in the area of reception in the Member States that shared an external border the facilities were overcrowded and overburdened. This precarious situation lead politicians to look at alternatives. Alternatives for reception in general but also alternatives of governance structure in reception. Therefore, some Member States discussed the possibilities to transfer more powers for reception and possible other asylum and migration issues to different levels of government. Since the EU cooperation was under pressure various alternatives were proposed in these discussions. One of the most prominent proposals was made by the Dutch Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs, which argued that the national governments of willing states should cooperate closer to find a durable solution. This proposition was quickly called the 'coalition of the willing'. Willing states had to be stimulated to cooperate closer on issues such as reception and responsibility-sharing. This closer cooperation was intended to cause a more effective governance structure than used before. Other proposals included to research to give local level authorities more discretionary powers; possibilities of direct EU funding for LRAs without the interference of national governments; and a

framework for the mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions. However, these three propositions were not likely to get the support in a context in which part of the EU Member States was reluctant to cooperate closer while other Member States were keen to cooperate. Hence, in some limited form these proposals became possible in the Member States that were aligned in the 'coalition of the willing', however, were never implemented on an EU-wide scale.

Scenario 2 – ‘Fortress under siege’: Increased migration pressure and increased anti-immigrant attitudes in the EU

After some promising results in 2018 and early 2019, the second half of 2019 was characterized by increased mixed migration flows led by the persisting political and socio-economic instability in the European neighborhood as well in the countries of origin. Tensions between India and Pakistan, Iran and the US, and internal conflicts in the Middle East and Africa led to increased migration flows in 2020. Although the EP received a new mandate after the EP elections of 2019, it remained to have difficulties with finding durable solutions to root causes of both voluntary and forced migration, therefore, the past decade showed increased migration pressure. Meanwhile, all over Europe, conservative political parties hostile to migration dominated the political arena, both at the EU, national and local level. In the national elections of 2021 in France, of 2022 in Italy, and of 2023 in Spain anti-immigrant parties became dominant in the political arena. As a result of this, anti-immigrant rhetoric was common in public discourse and political debates. The traditional media, as well as social media, contributed too to the politicization of migration. The conservative politicians and media justified their perspective by arguing that asylum and migration led to security issues and to the growing cultural and ethnic diversity in various Member States. Therefore, a majority of the public opinion in various EU Member States openly declared to be against migration and approved policies that were aimed at closing borders and restricting (or even refusing) access and stay on the territory to third country nationals. The public opinion made no difference between migrants and persons in need of protection. In a climate of increased levels of xenophobia, the reception of asylum-seekers and refugees was considered to be negative by a majority of the population in most EU Member States.

Close to the end of the EU political term in 2023, the influx of migrants reached new peaks. Although the EU Member States and the MEPs emphasized on the strengthening of the external borders between 2019 and 2024 adequate policies were never implemented. Instead of cooperating closer on asylum and migration governance, the dissatisfaction with increasing diversity, culturally and ethnically, and the fear of security issues has pushed EU Member States towards more nationalistic approaches by 2026. Already in 2019 we saw the first signs of more restrictive and nationalistic approaches in asylum and migration governance. Belgium, for instance, decided to stop playing part in resettlement schemes, introduced daily entry quota for asylum-seekers and refused to open new reception centers or increase funding for reception. This decade is, therefore, a general crisis of the rule of law in various EU Member States rather than a particular asylum crisis. Started at the end of the 2010s and continued to grow in the 2020s, there was a general tendency of EU Member States to circumvent national laws, EU laws and regulations, and international conventions. Hence, instead of cooperating closer and trying to tackle difficulties with asylum-seekers' integration, EU Member States used their budget to increase the numbers of national border and coastguard agencies and implemented more restrictive laws. This political trend became more apparent when in the EP elections of 2024 more anti-EU MEPs were chosen.

In 2028, it became clear that the restrictive and more nationalistic policies did not lead into a reduction of migratory pressure. In contrast, it had led to the deterioration of reception conditions across the EU Member States. While the general trend, since 2025, had been less EU integration and a less comprehensive CEAS, the continued migration pressure coupled with increased anti-immigrant attitudes had led to efforts to enhance a closer cooperation on the externalization of asylum

governance to third countries of origin and transit. Another incentive that further stimulated the externalization of asylum and migration governance has been the weak performances of EU economies, by 2027. Cyclical economic crises, together with continuing tensions between the United States and China, resulting in a decline of global trade made the EU Member States' economies less resistant to the increased costs of asylum issues such as reception. Furthermore, the EU Member States had to take into account the changing structure of labor demand in the EU, which differed for every Member State. However, due to the absence of an equitable distribution mechanism the EU Member States could not effectively profit from the asylum-seekers' skills, while the asylum-seekers could not retain their human capital and profit from the employment opportunities.

Key developments that led to scenario 2:

- Tensions between countries like India and Pakistan, but also between Iran and the United States and the continued internal conflicts in the Middle East and Africa led to an increase of migration pressure.
- Anti-immigrant political revolts in countries like France, Spain and Italy. These countries held general elections in the early 2020s and saw anti-immigrant political parties triumph.
- Conservative politicians and media warned and argued that asylum would only lead to more security threats.
- Dissatisfaction with increasing diversity and the fear of security issues pushed the EU Member States towards more nationalistic approaches.
- Restrictive and nationalistic policies did not lead into a reduction of migratory pressure. As a result, it led to the deterioration of reception condition across the Member States.

The local level and reception in 2029

Throughout this decade and reaching peak levels in 2029, the majority of the public opinion of the EU Member States openly declared to be against migration and approved policies that were aimed at closing borders and restricting (or even refusing) access and stay on the territory to third country nationals. A general tendency emerged in which EU Member States changed national laws, and circumvented EU laws and regulations, and international conventions to support their actions. Simultaneously, Member States became more reluctant to cooperate and try to tackle difficulties with asylum-seekers' integration, instead, they used their budgets to increase the numbers of national border and coastguard agencies and implemented more restrictive laws. These nationalistic trends deeply affected asylum and migration governance. Besides that the national governments of EU Member States neglected to invest in integration and mainly focused on the allocation of resources for the development of border control. The national governments were not interested in the best practices of lower levels of government. While during the 2010s various LRAs became increasingly networked, and played in various Member States a dominant role, in the 2020s their role obliterated. Hence, the propositions that were discussed in the 2010s, to seriously research the transfer of discretionary power to local level governments and the ability for LRAs to have access to direct EU funding diminished. Additionally, the issue of reception in the EU became extremely rare in 2029, the national governments stimulated the process of externalization and were strong supporters of

reception facilities, for instance, as far as in Rwanda and India. Therefore, the only manner in which EU Member States were willing to cooperate on asylum and migration issues was when the policies focused on externalization of asylum governance to third countries of origin and transit. For this reason, the once considered important measure to transform asylum and migration governance in a sustainable and equitable framework, the mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions, was seen as undesirable and superfluous.

Scenario 3 – ‘Hostages of fear’: Decreased migration pressure and increased anti-immigrant attitudes in the EU

By 2019 the EU Member States faced lower influxes of migrants and asylum-seekers and, therefore, had to deal with a reduction of migratory pressure. However, while migration pressure reduced the issue of asylum and migration remained a major issue on the political agenda. Although, the EP elections of 2019 did not demonstrate an overwhelming win by anti-immigrant MEPs, the anti-immigrant parties and MEPs became considerable compared to previous elections. Hence, the general sentiment around migrants and asylum-seekers was considerably negative at the start of the decade (2020) and these attitudes increased further during the period 2019 – 2029.

By 2022, halfway through the MEPs tenure, the EU Member States established an effective system of policies and networks with third countries of origin and transit. This system, which basically externalized asylum and migration governance, was aimed at enhancing border control, stemming migration flows, combating human smuggling and trafficking, and managing refugees closer to the region of origin. Some technological developments made substantial contributions to this system. For instance, the level of adoption of big data combined with biometrics and tracking technology made it possible to accurately monitor migrant movements and effectively close off the EU's external borders by 2023. During the EP elections of 2024 the externalization of asylum and migration governance was used as an example of efficient and sufficient cooperation. Various MEPs believed that this system proved that further EU integration on asylum and migration was not necessary to reduce migration pressure because the reception of asylum-seekers was dealt with in countries like Turkey, Libya, Ethiopia, Niger and even India and Pakistan. Furthermore, the increased anti-immigrant attitudes remained high in the first years of the decade and even increased after the European elections in 2024. This strengthened the policy focus of externalization.

By 2025 most of the EU Member States began to feel the impasse on global trade due to the continued and increased tensions between the United States and China. Economic slowdown featured in the EU Member States' economies as well in countries of origin and transit led to a decreased volume of migration flows to the EU by 2026. However, this decrease in migratory pressure did not prevent that the public opinion on migration altered but remained negative, and that politicians took the issue as an easy scapegoat diverting the general debate from the poor economic performances. In addition, the fear of terrorist attacks that posed a potential risk by migrating terrorists from conflict regions further stimulated the anti-immigrant sentiments in the Member States. This fear was demonstrated in the EU's multiannual financial framework that covered the period 2021 – 2027. In this long-term budget the EU's emphasis concerning asylum and migration governance was on the security issues it might pose. For this reason, a substantial amount of money was assigned to the European Border and Coast Guard Agency [EBCG] that created a standing corps of 10.000 border guards by the end of 2027. These fears and focus on security issues of asylum and migration remained high on the political agenda. As negotiations on the new multiannual financial framework of the EU started in 2026, the new long term budget even increased the funds for the securitization of external and internal borders.

As a result from the anti-immigrant sentiments coupled with the Member States' externalization strategy and its focus on the securitization of migration, the reception of asylum-seekers became extremely rare by 2028. Furthermore, the multiplying of the budget for externalization strategies and the EBCG was at the expense of reception and integration conditions. This led to a conflict of interests

between the different levels of government because mainly cities and local governments paid the price for the negligent of reception and integration in asylum and migration governance. The few asylum-seekers that did arrive in the EU between 2019 – 2029 had to deal increasingly with differences between EU Member States' reception facilities, integration projects and so on.

Key developments that led to scenario 3:

- Early in the decade the migration pressure reduced but the topic of asylum and migration remained an important issue on the political agenda.
- Effective system of policies and networks with third countries of origin and transit was constructed, which basically meant that the EU externalized all of its asylum and migration governance.
- Adoption of big data combined with biometrics and new tracking technology made it possible to accurately monitor migrant movements.
- Member States felt the impasse on global trade, this led to a major reduce in migration pressure.
- Completion of a standing corps of 10.000 border guards for the new EBCG, which received massive funds and resources.
- The multiplying of the budget for externalization and the EBCG was a the expense of reception and integration conditions. This led to a conflict of interest between different levels of government.

The local level and reception in 2029

Asylum and migration governance in the EU in 2029 is characterized by two features. The first is the overall externalization of asylum and migration issues. The EU Member States created a system in which they were able to accommodate asylum seekers far from the EU territory. Hence, reception was organized in third countries of origin and transit. Second, to prevent asylum seekers and migrants that managed to slip through this system to arrive in an EU Member States, the EU focused in their MFF even more on the securitization of asylum and migration. This means, that a completely developed EBCG has access to resources and personnel to control the EU borders.

Furthermore, developments in the use of big data and technology made controlling the external borders more effective. An issue such as secondary movement was, therefore, a problem of the past. For this reason, there was no need for a framework of mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions. Besides, EU cooperation on asylum and migration governance that was not focused on either externalization or securitization was perceived as undesirable. Another argument for EU politicians to oppose a framework of mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions is that it, in the contrary, could stimulate movement of asylum seekers and migrants. In the context of reception we could argue that in 2029 the migration pressure reached such low levels that it is likely that reception facilities across the EU are capable enough to deal with the numbers. For this reason, local authorities argue for increased discretionary powers so that they are able to integrate these low numbers of asylum seekers and migrants better into society. And for possibilities to have access to direct EU funding. However,

as asylum and migration is deemed unwanted, by the national governments and the public opinion, it is unlikely that the Member States are willing to transfer these powers or give access to direct EU funding without interference of the national government. In contrast, these are the reasons why the Member States established a system of policies and networks that formalize the externalization of asylum and migration governance.

Reception facilities are capable enough to deal with the incoming migrants, however, public opinion and the political context are not in favor of asylum seekers and migrants. For this reason, a strong and relatively good working system of external reception facilities has been set up. Increased discretionary powers for the local level meant that even more differences between reception facilities in Member States emerged.

Scenario 4 – ‘Towards normalization’: Decreased migration pressure and decreased anti-immigrant attitudes in the EU

The EU – Turkey Statement of 2016 established a relatively effective cooperation between the EU and a third country in the field of asylum and migration governance. As the externalization of asylum and migration governance was seen as a win-win situation for both the EU Member States and the country of origin and transit, the EU started to focus its asylum and migration governance more and more on this strategy in 2019. For this reason, the volume of migrant flows towards the EU decreased and the negative aspects of asylum and migration were highlighted less by politicians and the media as the years went by. Simultaneously on the global stage, in 2020 the re-election of Donald Trump as president of the United States caused the continuation of tensions between the economic and political global powers, the United States and China. With the remained and even increased tensions global trade started to decline due to high import barriers and reduced trust in the economies by investors. Although the EU Member States were affected negatively by these developments, by 2021 they saw it as an opportunity to become less dependent on trade with the United States and China. Gradually this shift and diversification of trade partners made the EU Member States economies less volatile and vulnerable for cyclical economic crises. On the contrary, due to the ageing of the EU’s labor force the Member States started to cope with an increase of employment opportunities.

By 2022, the combination of the level of adoption of big data, biometrics and tracking technology in relation to the externalization of reception made this policy focus more efficient. On the one hand, the EU’s external borders were better protected against illegal entries without the placing of large fences on its land borders, or the continuously patrolling at the Mediterranean. On the other hand, the use of these technological developments at the disembarkation platforms outside the EU’s territory gave the EU Member States better insights in possible future migration flows. However, by 2025 the diversification of the EU’s trade partners caused for relatively more stable socio-economic and political situations in various countries of origin and transit. In addition to the fact that asylum-seekers were forced to claim for asylum at the disembarkation platforms, the stability caused for less incentives to migrate to the EU and, therefore, migrant flows towards the EU decreased. At the same time, reduced migratory pressure created favorable conditions for a softening of anti-immigrant attitudes and rhetoric. As the focus of political debates shifted from asylum and migration to other topics, public opinion displayed less prejudiced opinions and behaviors towards migrants. The EP elections of 2024 demonstrated that anti-immigrant rhetoric was no longer in the best interest of political parties and was, therefore, less advocated by 2026. Although anti-immigrant rhetoric and attitudes were less widespread than in the elections of 2019, the EU Member States remained to focus its asylum and migration policy on the externalization of asylum and migration.

As a result of the decreased flows of asylum-seekers the politicization and mediatization of migration and asylum issues diminished around 2027. In this context, reception and integration policies targeting asylum-seekers appeared to be less problematic and harmonization of these issues became more likely. Although, by 2028, the EU Member States’ main focus was on the externalization of asylum and migration governance, a significant part of the budget was allocated to harmonize the reception and integration policies in the EU. Hence, the few asylum-seekers that did arrive in the EU between 2019 – 2029 dealt with an increasing homogeneous reception and integration system across the EU Member States’.

Key developments that led to scenario 4:

- Externalization, like the EU – Turkey Statement of 2016, was seen as a win-win situation.
- Continuation of tensions on the global market led the EU to diversify its trade partners.
- Combination of big data, biometrics and new tracking technology in relation to externalization of reception made this policy strategy more effective.
- Due to reduced migratory pressure and lower politicization of asylum and migration governance the focus of political debates shifted to other topics. Anti-immigrant rhetoric's was no longer in the best interest of political parties. However, asylum and migration towards the EU was almost none.
- Diversification of the EU's trade partners had a positive effect on the economies of third countries and led to less migration to the EU.
- The new MFF focus reserved a significant part of the budget for the harmonization of reception and integration policies.

The local level in 2029

Although at the start of the decade the EU's policies on asylum and migration were focused on externalization, at the end of the decade the resulted decrease in migration pressure and diminished politicization made it possible to discuss better and harmonized integration policies and reception facilities. So, the stability of the EU political arena in 2029 made its way for fundamental changes in how to deal with asylum and migration in the first place. This did not mean that a bulk of resources were invested in externalization and securitization of asylum and migration, however, a substantial amount of resources were available for integration and reception. Moreover, the national governments demonstrated during the 'asylum crisis' in 2015 and 2016 that they were unable to deal with these issues and were largely ineffective in its policy-making process, therefore, the local level governments, which became extremely networked over time, argued that they could find a sustainable and equitable solution. They claimed that by getting access to and assistance for direct EU funding for integration and reception of asylum seekers they could start effective local programs. By 2029 they demonstrated that the new asylum seekers were able to integrate better, which was measured by the time it took them to get a job, speak the language and actively participate in the local community.

When data and research showed that the local level governments in collaboration with CSOs found a way to sustainable and equitably deal with asylum seekers, more and more national governments were willing to transfer some of their powers to LRAs. Hence, by 2029 national governments of various EU Member States increased the discretionary powers of LRAs, which gave them the power to grant asylum seekers, for instance, a certain form of citizenship based on residency. This form of citizenship allows asylum seekers to actively participate in local elections, find employment, and if necessary move to another city or municipality if that increases the chances for employment. So, as a consequence a de facto framework for the mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions emerged between these cities and municipalities.

5. Scenario narratives on solidarity and responsibility sharing

5.1 Relative certainties and uncertainties

The relative certainties and critical certainties for responsibility sharing are identified and elaborated upon in section 3 and 4. Table 1, 2, 3 and 4 will list the certainties and critical uncertainties for the scenarios on responsibility sharing.

The problems with secondary movement and the reception of asylum seekers all originate in a lack of shared responsibility. Since the major influxes of asylum seekers in 2015 and 2016 a broad debate on the CEAS took place and questioned its functioning. As a result of these debates a number of policy options have been discussed on how to fix the CEAS. However, recent developments such as the Brexit negotiations, lower numbers of arriving asylum seekers, terrorist attacks, the EU elections and other diverted the attention from the reform process. Particularly the elections brought the reform process of the CEAS to a halt. The latter however will decide how the EU will act in the coming years to address security, migration and international protection. One of the main issues that the EU and Member States policy makers will need to determine, is in how far the responsibilities for international protection shall be shared (or not) between EU Member States. The present exercise looks into possible future scenarios of responsibility sharing to determine its potential bandwidth and to analyze what each of the options could mean in more practical terms. We have identified the governance of the CEAS and the qualification of international protection as a public good as two critical uncertainties shaping responsibility sharing of international protection in the EU.

To develop scenarios on responsibility sharing we have placed both critical uncertainties in a scenario matrix. With on the vertical axis – the understanding of the provision of international protection as a public good. According to the analysis of uncertainties, the EU and its Member States – considering international protection as a public good for which all EU Member States are equally responsible, on the basis of Art 80 TFEU and for security reasons – may engage in collective action to jointly address the challenges. Or alternatively, the EU Member States less affected by the burdens may choose to free-ride leading to a system in which the challenges associated to the provision of international protection are left to the individual Member States. In that case, responsibility sharing plays an insignificant role. The other critical uncertainties is based on how the governance of international protection in the EU will converge or diverge. Hence, we have placed on the horizontal axis – the reluctance or willingness of Member States to transfer sovereignty. With this we meant to which extent are Member States willing to cooperate on an EU level and transfer some or all of its powers to manage asylum and migration governance? This resulted in four broad scenarios.

5.2 Scenario narratives

Figure 3: Scenario matrix on responsibility-sharing



(ICMPD 2019)

Scenario 1 – ‘Sovereign Asylum Systems’: Low understanding of international protection as collective good and reluctant to transfer sovereignty

Although the EP elections in 2019 shifted the focus of the EP and the EC towards a more nationalistic perspective, no profound reforms were implemented in the CEAS. However, while the influxes of asylum seekers reduced in the early 2020s, the anti-immigrant rhetoric dominated the political arena and the public discourse. This impacted the perspective the traditional media outlets broadcasted and further politicized the issue of asylum and migration governance during this decade. By 2021 the new MFF (2021 – 2027) of the EU started and demonstrated that the focus, in the context of asylum and migration, was with the enhancing of ‘sovereign asylum systems’. This meant that the Member States agreed to jointly protect the outside borders and received more resources from the EU to manage asylum and migration issues individually. Hence, the development of the CEAS was brought to a halt early in the decade due to the EP elections and other critical issues, such as Brexit. This did not mean that cooperation on asylum and migration totally disappeared. From 2022 onwards, a general trend towards searching for bilateral, multilateral and even plurilateral (i.e. joint actions by a small number of ‘like-minded’ states or so-called ‘coalitions of the willing’) cooperation rather than EU-wide common approaches emerged. The de-Europeanization of asylum and migration governance led to lack of structural policies and practices in the area of international protection. Hence, responsibility-sharing in this context became predominately based on ad-hoc manners and caused for a high degree of inefficiency. By 2023, the next EP elections became closer, which fostered the reignition of nationalistic discourse and resulted in politicians from various Member States discussing and questioning the system of international protection and the Geneva Convention.

The 2024 EP elections resulted in another win for conservative and nationalist MEPs, which caused in further securitization of asylum and migration and the enhancement of external borders. New in 2024 is the use of enhanced technology to reduce secondary movements. As with the trend towards de-Europeanization of asylum and migration governance there was no framework for sharing responsibility, the Dublin III system collapsed and left large numbers of people with an unclear status. This was a major incentive for secondary movement of asylum seekers and refugees. Another incentive has been the huge differences between national reception systems, which started to become visible. Hence, by 2025 internal border controls in the EU became widespread. The little cooperation that was still in place was heavily affected by these developments and the effects on the quality of cooperation with countries at the external borders was, therefore, diverse. Some countries cooperated less, resulting in reduced registration efforts of asylum seekers, other countries, however, openly considered to create a mini-Schengen zone.

Moreover, this led in 2026 in the intensification of discussions on strengthening the protection of asylum seekers in the region. The external dimension of what was left of EU’s migration policy became much more discussed as a possible solution for the challenges. Member States re-opened more determined discussions on establishing disembarkation platforms outside the EU’s territory. Platforms in unstable regions, such as central and north Africa, but also south and west Asia were suggested by MEPs. With the reluctance to build a common European asylum system, by 2027 lawmaking was de facto done by judges based on jurisprudence of the CJEU and the ECtHR, instead of by the proactive formulation of policies. Despite the agreement of Member States on enhancing access to protection

in the region, the Member States were unable to agree on collective action. So, when the new MFF (2028 – 2034) was negotiated and implemented, EU funding on asylum and migration governance ceased to serve a common purpose. Therefore, by 2029 EU's asylum and migration governance was characterized by 27 different national asylum systems and no will to share responsibilities on international protection except for protecting the EU external borders (ICMPD 2019).

Key developments that led to scenario 1:

- Early in the decade the migration pressure reduced but the topic of asylum and migration remained an important issue on the political agenda.
- Conservative and nationalistic trend caused for a low understanding of international protection as a collective good and reluctance towards transferring sovereignty.
- Bi-, multi-, and even plurilateral cooperation on asylum and migration was favored above EU-wide cooperation.
- Growing differences in national reception systems, which led to increased secondary movements.
- Internal border controls as measure to reduce secondary movements of asylum seekers in the EU.
- Externalization of asylum and migration governance to regions in Africa and Asia.

Responsibility-sharing in 2029 and the reaction of the system to a situation of “mass influx”

Without a framework for responsibility-sharing and dealing with mass influx, a situation of high or very high influx will make the CEAS collapse due to high pressure on main destination and external border Member States. At the external border, the erection and militarization of physical borders will most likely be the main answer. This might result in an increase of loss of lives in border areas and the creation and evolvement of massive camps outside EU's territory. With the affected people living in protracted situations with no solution in sight. Within the EU, more internal border controls will be established and Schengen is doomed to collapse. Third countries will have an enhanced bargaining power and “deals” will need to be better equipped financially. The role of international organizations will largely be based on facilitating deals and negotiating between countries to find a common denominator. In conclusion, the system sketched in this scenario is ill-equipped to deal with situations of crisis and mass influx.

Scenario 2 – ‘Cooperation among Sovereign Asylum Systems’: Low understanding of international protection as collective good but willing to transfer sovereignty

The EU is characterized by the divide over the question on how to respond to migration and refugees aiming to come to the EU, in 2019. Although the EP elections of 2019 established a substantial win by nationalistic and populist MEPs, major wins by the anti-EU and anti-immigrant parties were not demonstrated. In addition, while in some general elections in EU Member States conservative political parties hostile to migration gained strong support, in other EU Member States more liberal parties won. Therefore, the majority of the Member States remained open to cooperate on relevant issues of migration. While most Member States were reluctant to transfer powers on asylum and migration governance, they still saw a strong need to harmonize their approaches and to jointly address the issue of international protection. Hence, by 2020 new attempts at the EU level were made to renew a common vision for a common European asylum system.

In the early 2020s the development of the CEAS steadily moved on, with EU legislators to agree on some of the instruments of the third generation of the CEAS. However, no major reforms were made as the Dublin system remained the corner stone of the CEAS and one could not find an agreement on forming a corrective allocation mechanism. During these years increased leeway for interpretation and implementation of the EU acquis appeared and resulted in varying recognition rates, reception standards and procedures among the Member States. By 2021, responsibility-sharing was understood as necessity to stem the common challenges that emerged from these common challenges, however, the political reluctance to go beyond ‘flexible solidarity’ was to widespread. This political reluctance was rooted in the fear of national governments losing sovereignty to the EU. Therefore, in 2021 various Member States voiced their unwillingness to transfer more competences on international protection to an EU asylum agency, which EASO was intended to become. Hence, migration remained an issue of national sovereignty and the EU and its agencies were steered towards increasing their services and support for the Member States and their asylum systems. By 2023, EASO’s role as an actor improved as it provided training, templates for asylum decision-making and guidance for national government officials.

Some technological developments in 2024 were seen as the solution to track asylum seekers more thoroughly, however, even the improved technology and data from EURODAC failed to reduce secondary movement of asylum seekers. The registration of applicants at external EU borders were compromised by the continuing malfunctioning of the Dublin system and in particular, by the lack of a mandatory distribution mechanism from EU countries of first asylum. For these reasons, a permanent EU relocation mechanism is established in 2025 to ease pressure on Member States at the external borders. Although participation in this scheme was not obligatory, it was strongly incentivized through the introduction of financial and non-financial benefits for relocating Member States, and disadvantages for non-relocating Member States. In the wake of new negotiations on the MFF (2028 – 2034) a common understanding emerged on the fact that the flows of migrants had to be stopped outside of the EU’s territory. Therefore, the EU Member States agree to jointly protect the outside borders of the EU even better.

Most EU Member States engage in resettlement and family reunification to ease pressure on main host countries outside the EU. An EU resettlement framework determines resettlement within the EU

with varying commitment from Member States. Return and readmission agreements with non-EU countries are based on national bilateral initiatives. Each country has its own (voluntary) return approaches but is supported by the EBCG in its implementation.

Key developments that led to scenario 2:

- The EU is characterized by the divide over the question on how to respond to migration and refugees aiming to come to the EU;
- In the early 2020s the development of the CEAS steadily moved on, with EU legislators to agree on some of the instruments of the third generation of the CEAS;
- Member States voiced their unwillingness to transfer more competences on international protection to an EU asylum agency, which EASO was intended to become;
- A permanent EU relocation mechanism is established in 2025 to ease pressure on Member States at the external borders. Although participation in this scheme was not obligatory, it was strongly incentivized through the introduction of financial and non-financial benefits for relocating Member States, and disadvantages for non-relocating Member States;
- Most EU Member States engage in resettlement and family reunification to ease pressure on main host countries outside the EU;
- Return and readmission agreements with non-EU countries are based on national bilateral initiatives.

Responsibility-sharing in 2029 and the reaction of the system to a situation of “mass influx”

Mass influx of asylum applicants will most likely destabilize the CEAS. This will happen because it would put disproportionate pressure on the Member States that share external EU borders. Therefore, the existing inequalities in the distribution of asylum applicants among EU Member States will aggravate. Draconian measures are needed to be implemented at the external border to limit the influx of asylum applicants to the EU. Furthermore, relocation and resettlement would be carried out at a minimum level, as most Member States perceive their reception systems as already overstretched. In addition, the mandate of EASO proves to be too weak to tackle the problem of asylum systems under pressure. Its role is limited and is unable to take over Member States responsibilities in the asylum procedure. For this reason, short-term ad-hoc emergency measures will most likely be sought with host and transit countries outside the EU, and long-term relations with the external dimension will deteriorate.

Similar to what happened during the 2015/2016 crisis, national solutions will be sought and the CEAS will undergo a renationalization of policies and initiatives which could eventually lead to less cooperation and a scenario in which EU Member States do not agree on collective action for international protection (and a drawback to Scenario 1).

On the other hand, if inflows remain moderate, harmonization of procedures and reception conditions, as well as a functioning (voluntary) relocation scheme would lead to a more equitable distribution of asylum applicants among the EU Member States. EASO's role would increase, EU Member States will build up trust among them and towards EU institutions resulting in a strengthening of EU institutions and networks. On cooperation with the external dimension, long-term solutions will

most likely be sought, which include increased long-term resettlement pledges. In the longer run and in the absence of mass influx, the CEAS would transition towards a scenario in which more responsibilities could be transferred to common European asylum structures (and a potential move to Scenario 3).

Scenario 3 – ‘One Common and European Asylum System’: High understanding of international protection as collective good and willing to transfer sovereignty

After the EP elections in 2019 the EU Member States remained to consider the issue of migration and asylum as a challenge. However, although anti-EU and anti-immigrant political parties won some seats in the EP, the majority of the MEPs still supports the converging of asylum and migration governance in the EU. For this reason, the Member States considered asylum and migration governance as a common challenge that needed to be dealt with. First of all because the pro-EU MEPs had the momentum, after the EP elections, of harmony and low migration pressure that was necessary to make fundamental reforms in favor of the CEAS. Second, the longer the discussion on asylum and migration issue would last the more chance there was for anti-immigrant MEPs to regain their voice and spread new nationalistic and anti-EU sentiments. So in the beginning of 2020, the Member States agreed to transfer large parts of their sovereignty on asylum and migration issues to the EU. This was mainly due to limit the impact of the discussions on migration and asylum governance in the upcoming national elections in Member States such as France, Germany and the Netherlands, which were all scheduled in 2021.

By 2021 the transfer of sovereignty was best seen in the EU’s admission policy. The EU finally established a fully-fledged successor of EASO, the EU Asylum Agency [EUAA]. This agency was developed to determine the status of applicants for international protection in all EU Member States. The asylum procedure that was conducted by the EUAA was done in special ‘determination hubs’ which were operational by 2022 and located equitably across the EU territory, with a slight stronger presence at the EU external borders because more asylum seekers would enter the EU there. Following the determination of an applicant, the beneficiaries of international protection were distributed between the EU Member States according to a key that had been negotiated before the Member States transferred their sovereignty. Although the distribution of beneficiaries of international protection was determined, some leeway for Member States in the area of integration remained. By 2023 the common determination hubs required the set up of an European Appeal Court as a pendant to the EUAA. While national courts of the Member States that hosted the determination hubs remained responsible for any criminal or administrative offences that happened within the center, the competences to decide on appeals in the asylum procedures were vested in these newly established European Appeal Court. Parallel to the common responsibility for the asylum procedure, the Member States agreed in 2024 also on a common responsibility for return. This would be done by the Member States with the help of the ECBG in resources and personnel. The relocation of recognized refugees from determination hubs to other Member States were based on a fair share principle. This relocation system was combined with a matching system taking into account refugees’ skills and preferences (with some limitations) and the host countries labor market demands. Although the Member States started discussions on such a system in the early 2020s, due to difficulties this system would bring it was fairly difficult to agree on and to implement. However, by 2025, some limited numbers of refugees were distributed by this scheme.

As the externalization of asylum and migration in the late 2010s was seen as the only ‘sustainable’ policy solution for the high influx of asylum seekers, this policy measure only regained some importance in the late 2020s. In the wake of the negotiations on the new EU MFF, the EU started to

negotiate with third countries on responsibility sharing initiatives. However, the EU's intentions was never to externalize all its asylum and migration governance. They supported third countries to develop their international protection system and agreed with some countries on return policies and offered increased resettlement places and financial support. By 2029, the asylum system in Europe consisted of one common asylum system that was applicable within the whole EU.

Key developments that led to scenario 3:

- although anti-EU and anti-immigrant political parties won some seats in the EP, the majority of the MEPs still supports the converging of asylum and migration governance in the EU;
- To limit the discussion on asylum and migration governance in national elections the Member States agreed to transfer some of their sovereignty to the EU to deal with asylum and migration;
- Establishment of the EUAA, admission of asylum seekers dealt with centrally in 'determination hubs';
- Although the distribution of beneficiaries of international protection was determined, some leeway for Member States in the area of integration remained;
- The EU set up an European Appeal Court to decide on possibly appeals in the asylum procedures;
- In the wake of the negotiations on the new EU MFF, the EU started to negotiate with third countries on responsibility sharing initiatives;

Responsibility-sharing in 2029 and the reaction of the system to a situation of "mass influx"

In the case of a significant increase of inflows the system will continue to focus on the determination hubs and the transfer of beneficiaries of international protection to other Member States based on a fair share. The countries that are most affected by the inflow receive support in crisis management from EU institutions. In addition, there will be more migration deals negotiated at the EU level with neighboring third countries, such as the EU-Turkey deal .Furthermore, the communication to civil society will need to maintain social cohesion within the population. Member States have to be attractive for refugees in order for them to remain in the country. Therefore, the harmonization of social welfare and labor policies have to be tackled. An immediate humanitarian response in Member States mostly affected by the inflow is needed. On the other hand, a small modest increase of arrivals will result in the strengthening of EU's external relations and allow for a stable and even slight increase of resettlement numbers. The fair relocation of refugees from the determination hubs will remain, as well as the joint processing in the determination hubs and joint return operations. During this time of modest inflows, Member States focus on 'keeping their house clean'. Such a premature but strong common European asylum system proves to be more crisis resilient than other scenarios for the main reason that the Union as a whole can rely on a wide range of different resources from EU agencies, Member States and civil society. Emerging problems are met with tailored EU decision-making.

Scenario 4 – ‘Mini-Schengen’: High understanding of international protection as collective good but reluctant to transfer sovereignty

Shortly after the 2019 EP elections the Member States struggled over agreeing on how to deal with asylum and migration governance in the EU. Since the EP elections resulted in substantial wins for anti-EU and anti-immigrant political parties the EU was not in the position to introduce fundamental reforms in favor of transferring power to the EU. This situation of indifference led to the forming of two blocs in the EU in 2020. On the one side, there was a number of Member States in which conservative political parties hostile to migration gained power in national elections. These Member States built a bloc that focused on opposing any further harmonization of asylum and migration issues at the EU level. This even resulted in the threat of the bloc, in 2021, to leave the EU if the EU was intending to transfer more powers on asylum and migration governance to the EU level. Hence, these Member States demanded wide discretion over migration and asylum policies. On the other side, at the same time, there were Member States who wished, or even demanded, to advance the CEAS and establish one common asylum system. These Member States were convinced that asylum and migration could only be tackled efficiently when there was one EU system implemented by one EU agency, for instance the EUAA, on behalf of the Member States. No progress on this issue was made in 2023, probably because of the coming EP elections in the next year, and the deadlock endured.

After the 2024 EP elections, which did not demonstrate a clear win for one of the two blocs, and the deadlock situation in the negotiations remained, the EU Member States leaders finally agreed to an EU of different asylum and migration system. However, this would also include the Schengen area. The Member States were left with the option to leave the Schengen area with the possibility to govern migration and asylum at the national level. Or, with the option to remain in the Schengen area, but with the transferring of power on asylum and migration governance to an EU agency. The second half of the decade (2025 – 2029) would be characterized by two systems.

Mini Schengen countries

Starting in 2025, a number of – mainly Western – EU Member States agreed to share one common area of protection for people in need of international protection. This group of Member States approached the issue of international protection as a common challenge that can only be solved jointly. To guarantee the free movement within the Mini-Schengen countries the group adopted a common migration system that would govern all parts of migration jointly in 2026. As part of this common migration system, the CEAS developed as one legislation and one procedure which is implemented by one central EU Agency. This central EUAA admitted applicants, processed them and determined the status of the applicants for international protection on behalf of the Mini-Schengen countries. Once the status was determined, the agency distributed the beneficiaries according to an agreed key, which was backed by all Member States in this bloc. Equally, returns of denied applicants were conducted jointly as well. As a common first instance required equal judicial control, one appeal body was established that reviewed asylum decisions of the EUAA.

The applicants for international protection are equally distributed to and processed in special ‘International Protection Determination Hubs’, which are spread over the countries that formed the Mini-Schengen area. The Applicants movements were restricted and limited to a region close to the

Determination Hubs. Once they were recognized, the beneficiaries of international protection receive specific social and labor market integration only in a specific assigned region with the bloc. The CEAS also implemented policies and schemes for those applicants that were denied international protection. By 2027, the Mini-Schengen countries negotiated various readmission agreements with third countries together and a part of an overall cooperation package including overall economic support as well as opening up additional pathways, in 2028, and increased resettlement initiatives by 2029.

EU-Non-Schengen countries

Starting in 2025, the remaining EU Member states re-established internal EU border controls when they left the Schengen Agreement. Asylum and migration governance once again became a national matter. Although the respective asylum legislations were led by example of the Schengen bloc, they remained transposed nationally. To prevent and reduce secondary movement of asylum seekers among the Non-Schengen countries, bilateral agreements were made within the EU in 2026.

At the political level the Non-Schengen countries cooperated in finding a common position towards the Mini-Schengen countries. However, the Non-Schengen block did not cooperate in practice with each other. By 2027, the Non-Schengen countries heavily invested in border management systems as this was one of their options in dealing with increasing inflows. The responsibilities in international protection were only shared on ad-hoc basis within the bloc of Non-Schengen countries and also with third countries the block did not cooperate on a daily basis. By 2028, each country tried to get an advantage in bilateral negotiations with third countries. Therefore by 2029, the asylum and migration governance of the Non-Schengen countries followed a 'cherry-picking'-mentality, meaning that they only engaged in very limited numbers of resettlement and only for specific profiles which would fit to their societies.

Relation between Mini-Schengen and Non-Schengen EU countries

Due to the divide in the EU, new legislation was required to govern the borders between the Mini-Schengen and non-Schengen EU Member States. The notion of applicants for international protection being safe in a transit country was required a renewed approach, as the responsibility of non-Schengen EU countries ceased under Dublin, but they were also no third country for deducing responsibility from the safe third country principle.

Joint actions

- The EU external borders are jointly protected by Mini-Schengen and Non Schengen EU countries
- Funds for migration are distributed across the whole EU according to set criteria mainly connected with the number of applicants received
- In asylum there exist ad hoc measures to support each other.

Key developments that led to scenario 4:

- The situation of indifference led to the forming of two blocs in the EU in 2020;
- To guarantee the free movement within the Mini-Schengen countries the group adopted a common migration system that would govern all parts of migration jointly;
- To prevent and reduce secondary movement of asylum seekers among the Non-Schengen countries, bilateral agreements were made within the EU;
- The CEAS developed as one legislation and one procedure which is implemented by one central EU Agency. This central EUAA admitted applicants, processed them and determined the status of the applicants for international protection on behalf of the Mini-Schengen countries.
- The Non-Schengen countries heavily invested in border management systems as this was one of their options in dealing with increasing inflows. The responsibilities in international protection were only shared on ad-hoc basis within the bloc of Non-Schengen countries and also with third countries the bloc did not cooperate on a daily basis;

Responsibility-sharing in 2029 and the reaction of the system to a situation of “mass influx”

This scenario is a very complex one with various interdependencies between the Member States within the two blocks, the blocks with each other, and between the blocs with third countries outside the EU. This complexity increases with increasing numbers of arrivals of applicants for international protection in the EU.

At a general level, the Mini-Schengen bloc has a variety of measures such as joint reception, processing and returning in place and could rather easily shift and balance any shortcomings with respect to resources, equipment or know how in one of the major influx areas. The central agency well maneuvers between and monitors the level of burden per region and immediately re-directs inflows when a regional hub is over-burdened. This system proves, at least for the internal dimension, to be crisis resilient to the extent that is possible. The overall understanding remains that a crisis only could be solved in a cooperative manner. In contrast, the Non-Schengen EU Member States react to increasing flows by further strengthening the national borders. Fences and other restrictions for border crossings will increase at the expense of human rights and international standards. The Member States will most likely compete with each other to make their national asylum systems the least attractive. Therefore, a race to the bottom increases. The Member States in this bloc also understand their strategic position and put pressure on the Mini-Schengen group to support them as they would otherwise only waive through all incoming applicants for international protection and irregular migrants.

The strong interdependencies between the blocs are widely manifested by increasing frictions between the two blocs. The Mini-Schengen area is represented by the EUAA, which needs to find deals and agreements with each Non-Schengen EU Member State separately. The system shows high interdependencies, which are to be addressed by the leaders of both blocs. Although the Mini-Schengen Member States common system shows high level of resilience, their benefits are strongly connected with the faith of Non-Schengen EU Member States. A failure and break down will quickly spill over to the other bloc and shows the overall mutual dependency of both blocs from each other.

5.3 Preliminary findings

Two findings were identified across all scenarios: 1) The conviction prevails that the external border of the EU are a common concern in all scenarios, and that its protection will be achieved jointly. 2) Another insight that penetrated all scenarios was their vulnerability in case of increasing numbers of incoming refugees. An exceptional situation such as in 2015 could not be managed by any system without revealing shortcomings and increasing tensions among Member States. One may deduce from this finding that the CEAS should not be measured in how crisis resilient it is, but rather how it functions under normal circumstances.

Regardless of this, scenarios that were built on an understanding that international protection is a responsibility that requires joint and coordinated actions were in general considered more crisis resilient. Shared responsibilities provide an array of solutions for different situations where one Member State faces shortcomings and allow leaning on collective action by other member States. The more national and flexible responsibility sharing arrangements have been made, the more vulnerable they are to changes in migration flows or political changes in EU Member States.

The recently more nuanced debate on a Europe of different speeds at first sight seems to offer a fresh idea that allows those who wish, to advance integration, and those who do not, to advance more slowly. However, also this scenario faces a number of problems and is predisposed to create a Europe of different classes, bearing much potential for conflict, particularly in case of increasing influx. It therefore may well turn into an overall two steps back, rather than a partial step forward. Finally, each scenario showed that responsibility sharing hugely is dependent on a joint understanding or a vision of what shall be shared, by whom and for what purpose. Some smaller steps ahead that are backed by most – if not all – EU Member States seem to create more robust results than too ambitious and far reaching ideas.

6. Conclusion and recommendations for the future of the CEAS

The scenario exercises showed us the constrained abilities of the nation states and national governments to cope with the fast and ever-changing features and dynamics of mixed migration flows. For this reason, we argued in deliverable 7.3 that local level government could offer a good alternative for the current CEAS. In the next paragraphs we will further focus on three changes to the CEAS in which the local level as a political base and venue plays a more prominent role. These changes might possibly result in more sustainability and equity in the CEAS. In order for cities to follow their local logic and needs we believe that cities need direct EU funding without interventions of or influencing by the Member States; a judicial framework that allows for mutual recognition of asylum decisions; and more formal and discretionary powers to grant some (limited) form of citizenship based on the notion of ‘jus domicile’.

6.1 Direct EU funding to municipalities

The first fundamental change centres around the funding of asylum and migration governance. In the current framework the EU has funding tools that “complement the Member States’ effort to the Union” (EPRS 2019). One main tool is the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund [AMIF], the funds resources are implemented by the Member States for national programs, by the EC for Union actions, for instance in the case of emergencies, and via indirect management by for example the ICMPD (Ibid). Another tool is the Internal Security Fund [ISF], which focuses on the protection of EU borders. The AMIF allocates 50 percent of its budget to initial national programs. This means that 50 percent of the total fund is received by the Member States (European Commission 2018). 40 percent of the total budget is allocated periodically to the Member States for their national programs and 10 percent of the budget is reserved as a mid-term allocation models so the EC can shift halfway the Multiannual Financial Framework [MFF] its focus on different policy areas if necessary (Ibid). It is necessary to make a distinction within the AMIF and ISF (and possible other funds in the future) between initial national programs and initial local programs. Currently, the Member States receive the sum and allocate the received money between certain national and local programs. The result is that the local programs receive less money than the national programs. In some Member States, the local authorities are even more neglected than in other Member States (ECRE 2018: 8). The current allocation of the AMIF demonstrates that the Member States are the main beneficiaries of the fund. Hence, to support the importance of the local level in asylum governance it should be coupled with a different approach in funding asylum and migration governance. For this reason, we endorse the proposition made by the CEMR, who noted in ‘EU Funds in the Area of Migration. Local and Regional Governments’ Perspective’ (2018) that there should be a “possibility of partially providing direct funding to local authorities under AMIF resources”(CEMR 2018: 2)” (Gomes and Doomernik 2019: 24-25). The best possible reform would involve less interference from the Member States in the allocation of funds for asylum and migration governance.

Direct funding from the EU to Local and Regional Authorities [LRAs] is also supported by Schwan (2017). Schwan argued that with the coming MFF in 2021, it should be made easier for LRAs to apply and receive direct funding for refugee reception and integration (Schwan 2017a: 4-5). To ensure that the local level is more involved in the shaping of asylum and migration governance four alterations to the funding guidelines should be made. First, “to ensure that the maximum number of municipalities

can apply, a clear initial incentive to provide additional support would be needed [however], this would only succeed if the municipalities satisfy the requirements set out in the application and are accepted as funding beneficiaries” (Schwan 2017a: 11). Second, smaller municipalities often perceive more difficulties with applying for EU funds, therefore, these “municipalities would also be given assistance in applying for funds” (Ibid). Third, most of the financial assistance that the EU provides “should take the form of a grant” (Ibid), the advantage of a grant is that it is a direct financial contribution that does not have to be repaid. This makes applying for the AMIF much more appealing and would possibly positively affect the willingness of LRAs to accommodate asylum seekers. Fourth and last, in the current framework there exists an ‘own-contribution’ principle, which means that beneficiaries partially have to finance their programs with their own money. Schwan argues that if this principle is maintained then “it could be pre-financed by the European Investment Bank [EIB] as an (interest-free) loan with favourable repayment terms, so as not to put the pursued objective of economic growth at risk again (Ibid). The EC published in 2018 a proposal to create a new Asylum and Migration Fund [AMF] for the next MFF, in this proposal the own-contribution principle was upheld. ECRE wrote a paper in which they commented to this proposal and they argued that “the suggested co-financing rate level of up to 90 [percent] in the field of integration is addressing a long-standing obstacle to civil society accessing the funds” (ECRE 2018: 4).

To ensure that the procedure of applying for the funding of local programs is accessible it needs to be easy and straightforward. Therefore, there should only be made a distinction between three types of funding. The first type of funding is the most important one, this is a simple grant and this is a “financial incentive” (Schwan 2017a: 11) for the LRAs. The second type of funding consists of “grants that have been applied [...] to fund the reception and integration of refugees” (Ibid). The third type of funding should only exist when the EC definitely decides to uphold the own-contribution principle and consists of “long-term [(interest-free)] loans to top up the own-contribution share of the requested funding” (Ibid).

As we have questioned the nature of current harmonisation policies in the context of the CEAS, we believe that reforming the funding structure of asylum and migration governance in the EU could play a decisive role in future harmonisation and integration. A direct funding mechanism that would enable the LRAs to receive funding for local programs from the EC without interference from the Member States could be perceived as a different form of harmonisation in which local actors use, adapt and shape policies by a structure provided by the EU.

The last reform within the structure of the EU funding we propose is that if an LRA successfully applies for funding, this “funding should be disbursed under a programme running for at least five years, as growth and integration cannot improve more quickly” (Ibid). The only exemption to this rule would be if an asylum seeker moved to another municipality, or even another country, because this would retain his or her human capital. In such a case there should be a framework of LRAs across the EU Member States for a fair transfer of funds. Hence, this would mean that besides the funding the other LRA also becomes responsible to offer a program for integration to complete the remaining period of the five years of the fund. However, without the asylum seeker able to move to retain its human capital this is not necessary. For this reason, we propose a second fundamental change to the current CEAS, namely, a framework for mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions. In the next section, we will elaborate on this framework.

6.2 Framework for mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions

The second fundamental change to the CEAS will on the one hand further strengthens the position of the local level in asylum and migration governance as it gives them a more integral part. On the other hand, it will stimulate the equity in the CEAS and foster a fair responsibility-sharing mechanism on the local level. This will be possible when the Member States acknowledge the mutual recognition of a positive asylum decision. This would mean “that protection can be transferred without the adoption of specific mechanisms at European level” (ECRE 2014: 4), in this case asylum-seekers will experience more freedom to move from one Member State to the other and retain their human capital. ECRE noted that “in order for mutual recognition to succeed, mutual trust is needed between Member States. Mutual trust requires that Member States trust other Member States’ legal systems and decision. It obliges them to accept and/or enforce a decision handed down by another Member State and attach the same legal effects to similar national judicial decisions, even if they were made by a different judiciary” (ECRE 2016: 2).

To comply with the EC’s objectives when formulating the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union [TFEU] and designing the CEAS, mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions is a must for sustainable and equitable asylum and migration governance in the EU. In addition, “[m]utual recognition already occurs in asylum law, for example in the realm of rejected asylum seekers under the Returns Directive and under the lesser used Mutual Recognition of Decisions on the Expulsion of Third Country Nationals Directive” (ECRE 2014: 3). Mitsilegas argues that mutual recognition initially was introduced in EU asylum governance by the “mutual recognition based on automaticity and trust [...] by the Dublin Regulation, which sets out a system of automatic inter-state cooperation which has been characterised as a system of negative mutual recognition” (Mitsilegas 2018: 200).

Mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions will, in the context of international relations, be indispensable with the notion of extra-territorial jurisdiction of states (Nicolaidis 2007: 689). The mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions will remain an act of extra-territorial jurisdiction whether it is codified in the form of “policies, regulations or laws and the ways in which states may help each other in enforcing these acts” (ibid), and therefore, is “embedded in a system of state practices” (ibid). Therefore, the mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions is beneficiary in two ways. First, it stimulates the importance of the local level in asylum and migration governance in the EU and increases the power of LRAs as it enables them to integrate people with highest capacity of human capital. Second, as the nature of mutual recognition in the EU is based in a system of state practices the EU Member States do not lose any of their sovereignty when transferring powers to the local level. Thus, this system could be a solution to overcome the reluctance of the Member States to acknowledge mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions.

Article 78 of the TFEU describes already the criteria of an asylum decision, which should be a “uniform status that is valid throughout the Union” (ECRE 2014: 14). This uniform status entails “that refugees must be treated as the most favoured foreigner in terms of wage earning employment, places an obligation on States to extend full rights and responsibilities to a beneficiary of international protection recognized in another Member State [as described in the 1951 Refugee Convention]” (Ibid). To make mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions, including above features, feasible, “an arrangement [...] which would stipulate that the country that granted the status has the sole responsibility for revoking or ceasing the status [must be in place]. If the applicant then applies for a transfer of their status, then that Member State would assume that responsibility” (Mitsilegas 2018:

196). This specific instrument could be a complement to the Dublin system, which consists of the Dublin Regulation and the EURODAC database. In the EURODAC database one could find the fingerprints of all asylum seekers who applied for asylum, hence this database is a system that tries to identify asylum seekers. If someone already applied for asylum in another Member State the “Dublin criteria creates a duty for one Member State to take charge of an asylum seeker and thus recognise the refusal of another Member State (which transfers the asylum seeker in question) to examine the asylum claim” (Mitsilegas 2018: 200). This recognition can be viewed as a negative mutual recognition of an asylum decision. However, if this works for ‘negative’ mutual recognition, this database could be used too for positive asylum decisions. Moreover, accepting the judiciary decisions of other EU Member States results in a system that does not exclude and is less state-centred and could be seen as another attempt to harmonise asylum and migration governance in the EU. Furthermore, “[p]olitically, it would be difficult for States to argue that Member States asylum systems are too different to implement and partake in such an instrument as to do so would undermine the CEAS” (Ibid).

While mutual recognition of positive asylum decisions could positively contribute to the retention and optimal allocation of asylum seekers’ and refugees’ human capital, a broader notion of citizenship would stimulate this even further. In addition, formal citizenship based on residence, which is informally often already granted by LRAs, will establish more discretionary power to the local level. For this reason, the next section will discuss the third fundamental change we propose for the CEAS the notion of *jus domicile*, citizenship based on residence.

6.3 Increased discretionary powers for the local level

The last fundamental change is centred around the transferring of more discretionary powers to the local level and in particular the notion of citizenship. Bauböck (2003), Varsanyi (2006), Kostakopoulou (2007), Bauder (2012) and Doomernik and Ardon (2018) point at the contrast between state citizenship and local citizenship. The former based on ‘*jus soli*’ and ‘*jus sanguine*’ or on naturalization after prolonged residence and (increasingly) having fulfilled national integration requirements, while the latter is received by a mere ‘*jus domicile*’ (Bauböck 2003: 234). Although cities do not have the formal power to grant citizenship, they include migrants into the city as residents, thereby reshaping the actual meaning of citizenship. Hence, informally cities already provide immigrants some sort of citizenship, regardless of legal status. The question thus arises, what could be gained if local governments were to receive more formal or discretionary powers and would thus be more closely involved in asylum and migration governance. It might, for instance, positively affect the retention and optimal allocation of asylum-seekers’ and refugees’ human capital (Gomes and Doomernik 2019: 27).

Citizenship based on residence and on the contribution to a certain community is seen as a good alternative for forms of citizenships that are received by ‘pure luck’. Bauder stresses the importance of citizenship by arguing that “citizenship connotes inclusion and belonging in a political community, the possession of political, social and economic rights, and the promise of equality between fellow citizens and social groups” (Isin and Turner 2002; Bauder 2012: 185). The people that do not fit in the requirements for citizenship, therefore, cope with inequality, and “the unfair distribution of social, political and economic benefit and responsibilities and [...] disproportionate exploitation” (Bauder 2012: 186). The dominant citizenship practices maintain these systems of subordination” (Bauder

2012: 187). For this reason, citizenship based on residence is valued as a welcome alternative and may be (partially) the solution for integration of asylum seekers in host countries. In addition to the argument of equality, the jus domicile principle of citizenship is also in line with the arrangement of a liberal democratic society (Bauder 2012: 188). By including asylum seekers and migrant residents this principle upholds the notion that “democratic decision making and the flourishing of a political community require the involvement of all the community – not simply of a segment of it” (Kostakopoulou 2007: 126).

For citizenship based on jus domicile to work as an alternative, two conditions have to be met. First, everyone who contributes to the community, either in economic, civic and/or other contributions, must have the right to stay in the place of residence (Bauder 2012: 191). Bauder argues that “only when these members are no longer threatened with the expulsion from their community and are instead offered jus domicile citizenship, can they experience equality and social justice” (Ibid), and thus retain the optimal allocation of human capital, which will help them to contribute to and integrate in the community. Second, everyone with jus domicile citizenship must have the right on mobility (Ibid). Mobility in the context of jus domicile citizenship means the right to enter a state’s territory, thus, implies a favour for the open border argument, made by Carens (1987), and is further expanded by the argumentation of Cole (2000) who noted that from a liberal perspective constraints on mobility “violate overarching principles, including the principle of universal human equality” (Bauder 2012: 191). Hence, citizenship based on jus domicile stands for equality and free mobility, both values of high concern in the EU.

Although free mobility of citizens is a precondition for jus domicile citizenship, this principle does not neglect the reciprocity between citizenship and territoriality (Bosniak 2007). However, Bauder argues that these territories should be seen as a territory with “permeable borders” (Bauder 2012: 192-193). Which means that borders are subjects of changing geographically as well as political entities and citizenship. As borders are permeable and subject of change, another precondition of jus domicile is that it recognizes different geographical scales at which citizenship can be enacted (Bauder 2012: 193). The example of EU citizenship demonstrates that it is “equally conceivable to rescale citizenship to the local, regional or supra-national scales” (Ibid). EU citizens are allowed to vote in municipal and EU elections and have the freedom of mobility within the EU territory. Hence, “[t]his EU citizenship effectively enacts the jus domicile principle [and also] exemplifies that jus domicile can be practiced at local scales, where non-nationals possess the right to vote in municipal elections” (Ibid).

Moreover, Schwan argues that the ‘cooperation between the state and the local level needs to be deepened and improved’ (Schwan 2017b: 2). When the state transfers power on citizenship to the local level, the LRAs are able to show “possibilities to integrate refugees [and how they] can help their national governments to fulfil their duties” (Ibid). Hence, we argue that the implementation of jus domicile as alternative for the usual principles of citizenship, will be more convenient and results in an optimal allocation of human capital. In this way the reform of the CEAS will establish a structure that provides the maximum amount of agency for asylum seekers, while the EU creates, on a decentralised basis, “a new [and] hospitable European identity that is close to the citizen” (Schwan 2017b: 14).

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