



Independent Evaluation of Swiss Migration Partnerships by Maastricht Graduate School of Governance (MGSOG)

Management Response

20 April 2015

General appreciation of the evaluation report

We would like to thank the evaluation team for its thorough analysis and evaluation of the Swiss instrument of migration partnerships. We highly appreciate this very timely exercise, five years after the implementation of the first migration partnership. The valuable questions, inputs and recommendations made by the evaluation team will certainly be useful for the continuation of the implementation and the further development of this instrument.

The final evaluation report is well written and structured capturing very well the added value of the instrument. The five existing migration partnerships: 1) capture a broad range of issues within one framework; 2) institutionalise and legitimise long-term cooperation; 3) are reciprocal; 4) are flexible and create bridging social capital that can be activated as problems arise; and 5) are focused on lasting, holistic solutions to problems. Furthermore, the report shows well that the instrument is very efficient in establishing trust between partners leading to constructive solutions and opportunities for cooperation. However, we regret that some factual inaccuracies can still be found in the report.

The leading actors in the conclusion of a migration partnership are, in particular, the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) of the Federal Department of Justice and Police as well as the Human Security Division (HSD) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. The interdepartmental cooperation is assured by the IMZ-Structure. This management response is therefore also a joint product of the IMZ-Structure. The implementation of the recommendations will be monitored in the IMZ-Ausschuss.

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Management Response by Recommendations

Recommendations:	Management Response
<p>R1. Switzerland should continue with the existing migration partnerships: it is hypothesised that the partnerships will continue to mature over time and, in the long-term may evolve into latent agreements that can be activated as necessary without the need for as many inputs.</p>	<p>We fully agree. Migration partnerships have proved to be very useful instruments to fulfil Swiss migration interests. We are currently not planning to stop them. We will also reflect on the possibility of reducing the intensity of some existing migration partnerships when appropriate.</p>
<p>R1a. Western Balkans: While the strategy for the three Western Balkan partnerships is coming to an end in December 2015, the migration partnerships can play an important role in the post-2015 strategy for the region. Especially given that the relative cost of the partnerships is low in comparison to other areas of cooperation in the region and they provide a framework within which mutual interests can be explored, it does not seem logical to end the partnerships. It is argued that a natural ending point for the Western Balkan partnerships would be EU accession.</p>	<p>The possible negative impact of stopping functioning partnerships is too high and is therefore not foreseen. However, the implementation of partnerships requires a significant engagement in terms of human resources for different units of the Federal Administration (whole-of-government approach). We will look further at the possibility of reducing the intensity of some partnerships during the elaboration of the new migration strategy 2016-2019 for the Western Balkan.</p>
<p>R1b. Tunisia: Given the recent elections in Tunisia it is foreseen that a new government will be in place shortly. Building on the essential groundwork conducted between the Swiss and the various governments that have been in place during the transitional period, it is recommended that, at the first expert meeting conducted with the new government, stock is taken of the current interests and objectives reflected in the portfolio of projects and time taken to consider any omissions that (rewrite) in future projects. The new government may be in a better position to take key decisions regarding humanitarian protection, immigrant rights and so forth. The migration partnership can provide fertile ground for discussing these issues, building capacity and further improving inter-ministerial cooperation within the Tunisian government.</p>	<p>The implementation of the migration partnership will be followed up with the new government. However, it should be noted that the Tunisian administration remained relatively stable during the political transition starting in the aftermath of the so called "Arab spring". At a technical level, the good cooperation established under the previous government seems to continue. We foresee that trust building between the Swiss and the Tunisian governments will continue to improve as the implementation of the migration partnership continues.</p>
<p>R1c. Nigeria: The opportunity cost (e.g. political damage) of stopping the migration partnership with Nigeria at this stage is too high.</p>	<p>In addition to the risk of political damage if stopping the partnership, we see other arguments why the partnership should continue: proven effective and efficient instrument to fulfil Swiss migration interests, willingness of both partners to continue the partnership, positive spill over effects on other areas of bilateral relations.</p>
<p>R2. Migration dialogues should remain a key component of future strategies within the existing migration partnerships: While the process of organising regular dialogues is labour intensive, a clear finding of the evaluation has been that</p>	<p>We fully agree with the recommendation and the comment.</p>

<p>the regular meetings hold significant value to actors on both sides of the partnership. Regular meetings bring actors together, facilitate the negotiation of interest, and allow for the flexible nature of the instrument's design to be used to its full potential. Examples cited in the report such as the response to flooding in Serbia reinforce this point.</p>	<p>We fully agree. The first migration partnership was launched seven years ago and we have now experienced the added value of this instrument. We acknowledge for instance the potential of this instrument to resume or establish good cooperation on return and readmission issues as well as to strengthen cooperation on other issues such as migration and development or protection of migrants. The IMZ-Ausschuss will evaluate in 2015 the opportunity on the Swiss side for a new migration partnership.</p>
<p>R3. Creation of new partnerships: Based on the findings of the evaluation it seems that the migration partnerships are a good instrument for bilateral cooperation on migration and that it positively compares to past and current tools used by Switzerland and others to approach the topic. Thus the logical conclusion would be that, as the migration partnerships are largely on track to achieve their objectives, it makes sense to evaluate the opportunity to conclude new partnerships. However the human resources required to make a migration partnership function also need to be considered.</p> <p>R4. Selection of new partner countries: The selection of countries [for the creation of new partnerships] should not solely be based on countries with whom return is an issue. By focusing on the linkages between migration and development, countries may already address some of the root causes of migration that lead to problems with return in the first place.</p>	<p>We partially agree. We <u>do agree</u> that it would be interesting to establish migration partnerships with countries with which return is not the key issue. This could help Switzerland in the communication at the global and bilateral levels on the comprehensive and balanced approach of migration, which is followed in a partnership. Migration partnerships are often the result of a longstanding bilateral cooperation on migration and an expression of the mutual will of two states to strengthen this cooperation. As such, migration partnerships generally cover all different areas relevant to migration and therefore, return issues will most likely remain an important topic dealt with in the context of migration partnerships. Also, we do <u>not agree</u> on the causal link made between migration and development and prevention of irregular migration. Numerous researches and empirical studies have proven that more development does not always nor automatically lead to less migration. The complex linkages between migration and development have to be taken into account to maximise development impact.</p>
<p>R5. The following country specific recommendations offer potential areas for future work. They are listed in order of priority where it is assumed that 1) omissions identified by partner countries should be given higher priority; and 2) frequently cited omissions should receive higher priority. If omissions were noted by Swiss actors, they are marked with an asterisk (*). If gaps were identified through the project mapping they are marked with a hashtag (#).</p>	<p>We do not agree. The identified areas offer potential for future cooperation. However, we would like to point out, that we do not agree with some of the gaps that were identified (for example: refine strategy and structures for migrants and asylum-seekers coming to Serbia, police cooperation with Kosovo and the portability of social security rights in Tunisia), as these issues have been addressed in the different migration dialogues.</p>

<p>Additionally, we do not agree that visa procedures are not transparent. Generally, we believe that it is not correct to claim that the identified areas are completely omitted in the existing partnerships. It would be more accurate to speak of areas which are not (yet) a main focus of the partnership. In general, we think that migration partnerships will cover overtime the main issues of interests of both partners. We interpret the larger number of issues mentioned for Tunisia (in comparison to Nigeria) as a logical consequence of the maturity of the migration partnership.</p>	
	<p>R5a. <i>Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>: Human trafficking* and irregular migration* R5b. <i>Kosovo</i>: Sustainable return (including a focus on social housing), human trafficking#, protection of refugees, IDPs and vulnerable migrations#, police cooperation#</p>
	<p>R5c. <i>Serbia</i>: Refine strategy and structures for migrants and asylum-seekers coming to Serbia, police cooperation#, border management#, police cooperation on drug trafficking and transnational organised crime#</p>
	<p>R5d. <i>Tunisia</i>: increased opportunities for regular migration (including ensuring that the Stagiaire agreement is implemented), developing an overall strategy, skills recognition, transparent visa procedure, portability of accrued social security rights, cooperation on identification*, protection of immigrants (including asylum-seekers and stranded migrants) in Tunisia*, police cooperation on drug trafficking and transnational organised crime#</p>
	<p>R5e. <i>Nigeria</i>: During the evaluation no direct omissions were observed for Nigeria. It is however likely that the partners will bring new issues and challenges to the table and given there is a broad interest in promoting even better bilateral relations, no direct suggestion are made for future interventions.</p>
<p>We partially agree. Art. 100 of the Federal Act on Foreign Nationals provides for the possibility to create multilateral migration partnerships and we agree that it could be interesting to extend some partnership to a third country. But we doubt that an extension of the existing migration partnerships to countries in the South of Europe is realistic, in particular: - We have doubts that it can be achieved at reasonable human resource investments;</p>	<p>R6. Pilot multilateral migration partnerships through building on the existing migration partnerships with Nigeria and/or Kosovo by inviting at least one other country to the table. It is suggested that the top source countries of Dublin cases in Switzerland be considered as logical candidates for this invitation. It is clear that deteriorating economic conditions in many countries in the South of Europe (such as Italy and Spain) may be leading to onward migration of persons settled there. By involving these countries in the discussion common interests and challenges can be considered and constructive solutions developed. While this may also makes sense for Tunisia, it is considered premature, especially given that the new</p>

<p>government is only just being installed however, dependent on the success of the pilot, this model could be used to further develop other partnerships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We fear to lose a privileged bilateral platform; - The EU concluded a mobility partnership with Tunisia and we fear that it will be difficult for an EU member to enter a migration partnership. <p>Overall, the option to create multilateral migration partnerships would require an in-depth analysis by thoroughly considering the advantages and disadvantages as well as by taking into account the various interests.</p>
<p>R7. Develop a Communication Strategy: It is clear that the easiest way to highlight the benefits of the migration partnerships is through the implemented projects. However, given the fact that the majority of these take place in the partner countries, they fail to capture the attention of the Swiss media. Nevertheless, there is a clear need to correct some of the misconceptions surrounding the migration partnerships and their ability to stop asylum flows. It may be advisable to make more data publicly available and understandable. This will allow journalists to verify information and allow researchers to offer commentaries on different types of migration flows. This could contribute towards creating a more factual and informative narrative on migration statistics in the mainstream media. It is suggested that the public report to be published after the delivery of this evaluation report focuses much of its attention on breaking down asylum and return statistics (such as is done in Section 3.4 of this report)</p>	<p>We fully agree.</p> <p>The misconceptions in the Swiss media surrounding the migration partnerships and their ability to stop asylum flows have been acknowledged. The Postulat Amarelle and the external evaluation are seen as an opportunity to address this issue. The Report to the Federal Council pays attention to asylum and return statistics. SEM, SDC and PD will work jointly on several activities to strengthen the communication (press release, off the record conversations with journalists). Other activities towards better communication with the parliamentarians are foreseen: presentation of the report to the Parliament and possible mission of parliamentarians in a partner country.</p>
<p>R8. Disseminate experience and findings to other countries: One way to truly test whether the migration partnership can be considered as a transferrable model for bilateral cooperation on migration would be to implement the instrument in other country contexts. Given the positive experiences of the Swiss migration partnerships, it is recommended that the experience is shared, particularly relating to the internal workings of the migration partnerships such as the focus on the whole of government approach, policy coherence and on holding regular meetings and dialogues.</p>	<p>We fully agree.</p> <p>We will continue to share the Swiss experience with migration partnerships at bilateral, regional (EU) and multilateral (GFMD, HLD, KNOMAD, IGC, GDISC) levels where appropriate.</p>
<p>R9a. Conduct impact evaluations: It is too early to conduct a proper impact evaluation of the migration partnerships, particularly in Tunisia. One solution would be to conduct a follow up evaluation in 3 to 5 years using the findings of this evaluation as a baseline. Another interesting approach to assessing the extent to which the migration partnerships truly differ from the broader Swiss approach to bilateral cooperation would be to conduct a similar evaluation in countries where Switzerland does have cooperation on migration issues but no migration partnership.</p>	<p>We partially agree.</p> <p>We will evaluate the possibility to conduct a follow up evaluation in maximum 5 years (2020).</p>

R9b. Evaluate the projects implemented in the context of the migration

partnerships: While the assessment of the project impacts was beyond the scope of this evaluation, it was evident that projects differed in size and scope and that it was often the small projects that held most significance to project partners. It is important that projects include inbuilt evaluation mechanisms and that meta-evaluations are conducted of the full project portfolios.

We partially agree.

All significant projects in terms of financial resources already include evaluation mechanisms. Meta-evaluations of the project portfolios would certainly be interesting but are not deemed necessary as regular evaluations of the partnerships as a comprehensive instrument and of each project are planned.

Independent Evaluation of Swiss Migration Partnerships: Final Report

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6 February 2015

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Acknowledgements

We would like to gratefully acknowledge research assistance provided by Skerlida Agoli, Felipe Cuello, Dorothée Di-Fraia, Charles Low, Biljana Meshkovska, Nora Ragab, Hanna Röth and Soazic Elise Wang Sonne. We also appreciate editorial support from Sueli Brodin.

We are also grateful for the guidance, support and comments from members of the Steering Committee: Stefanie Allemann (FDFA Advisor to the Special Ambassador), Francesca Cardillo (FOM), Jean-Marc Clavel (SDC), Andrina Frey (PD), Eduard Gnesa (Special Ambassador for the International Cooperation in Migration), Odile Inauen (SDC), Karl Lorenz (FOM), Markus Reisle (SDC), Martina Schlapbach (SDC).

We also appreciate the logistical support provided by the Swiss delegations in each of the partner countries especially Andreas Broger (Nigeria), Jovana Mihajlovic (Serbia), Lukas Rüst (Tunisia), Azra Sarenkapa (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Arjan Shabani (Kosovo) and Donya Smida (Tunisia).

Last but not least we would like to thank all the interview participants for giving us their time to share their insights and experiences of the Swiss migration partnerships.

List of Acronyms

BA	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CBI	Central Bureau for Investigation (BA)
CRM	Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (RS)
CH	Switzerland
CHF	Swiss Francs
CRM	Commissariat for Refugees (RS)
DCPB	Directorate for Coordination of Police Bodies (BA)
EIO	European Integration Office (RS)
EU	European Union
FDFA	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (CH)
FDJP	Federal Department of Justice and Police (CH)
fedpol	Federal Office of Police (CH)
FOM	Federal Office for Migration (CH)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
HLD	High Level Dialogue
HSD	Human Security Division
IAM	Interdepartmental Working Group on International Cooperation on Migration
IDAG	Interdepartmental Working Group on Foreign Policy on Migration and Return
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILR	Interdepartmental Steering Group on Return Assistance
IMZ	International Cooperation on Migration (Internationale Migrationszusammenarbeit)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MDIC	Ministry of Development and International Cooperation (TN)
MESP	Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (KV)
MEVT	Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training (TN)
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NG, RS, TN, BA)
MoD	Ministry of Diaspora (KV)
MoEI	Ministry of European Integration (KV)
MoH	Ministry of Health (KV)
MOHR	Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees (BA)
MoI	Ministry of Interior (RS, TN)
MoIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs (KV)
MoLEVSP	Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy (RS)
MoS	Ministry of Security (BA)
MoSA	Ministry of Social Affairs (TN)
NAPTIP	National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons and Other Related Matters (NG)
NCFRMI	National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NG)
NDLEA	National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NG)
NG	Nigeria
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NIS	Nigeria Immigration Service (NG)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PC	Partner Country
PD	Directorate of Political Affairs (CH)
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
RAE	Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian
RS	Republic of Serbia
SBG	Swiss Border Guard (CH)
SCO	Swiss Cooperation Office (CH)
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (CH)
SECO	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (CH)
TN	Tunisia
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme (IP)
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WB	Western Balkans
WOGA	Whole of Government Approach

Executive Summary (EN)

Background

The Swiss migration partnerships are an instrument of bilateral cooperation on migration between Switzerland and partner countries, which has evolved within the context of a broader shift towards promoting inter-ministerial cooperation through a 'whole of government approach to migration' in Switzerland. Migration partnerships are a flexible and individually adjustable set of initiatives put in place in order to mutually address the needs and interests of Switzerland and the respective partner country on a long term basis but without a pre-defined timeframe. To date partnerships have been signed with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia, Nigeria and Tunisia. This evaluation, which was conducted in response to a postulate from the Swiss Parliament, presents a timely opportunity to investigate the Swiss migration partnerships, five years after the signing of the first partnership.

Evaluation Objectives and Methodology

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide the Swiss Federal Administration with an evidence-based, independent assessment of the results of the first five migration partnerships in order to draw lessons and highlight areas for future improvements and to provide information to an interested public audience. Four main research questions are addressed:

1. To what extent are the interests and objectives of Switzerland but also of the partner country achieved?
2. What are the perceived outcomes of the migration partnerships?
3. Do the migration partnerships provide an equitable balance between the interests of the different actors?
4. To what extent is the impact hypothesis of the instrument of migration partnerships confirmed?

Semi-structured qualitative interviews with relevant stakeholders represented the key source of data for the evaluation. In total 118 interviews with 174 participants were conducted. Fieldwork was conducted in Switzerland and the five partner countries between July and September 2014. The interviews were supplemented by desk based research.

Major Findings and Conclusions

A broad range of interests and objectives are covered by the migration partnerships. Some country specific differences demonstrate that the partnerships are flexible. However, there is a core set of interests reflected in the portfolio of projects across all of the partnerships. The areas receiving most attention are return and readmission, and migration and development. While the mandates of different ministries translate into different interests, there is general alignment in the collective interests of Switzerland with each of the partner countries.

The migration partnerships do reflect a fairly even balance of power between Switzerland and the partner countries. There are some inevitable imbalances that arise from the fact that Switzerland is the funder of the partnerships. However, these were largely mitigated by the partnerships' broad and flexible design which allowed the partner countries to develop their interests in accordance with local needs and interests. A focus on partner country needs has ensured the relevance of the partnerships to other ongoing processes such as visa liberalisation and EU accession.

The main added-value of the migration partnerships compared to past approaches to bilateral cooperation can be summarized in five main points: 1) they capture a broad range of issues within one framework; 2) they institutionalise and legitimise long-term cooperation; 3) they are reciprocal; 4) they are flexible and create bridging social capital that can be activated as problems arise; and 5) they are focused on lasting, holistic solutions to problems.

Improved inter-ministerial cooperation, fostered through regular dialogue is one of the main achievements of the migration partnerships to date, which is contributing to achieving policy coherence. Thus, the regular migration dialogues involving all of the relevant actors working on

migration are considered by the evaluators to be one of the most significant contributions of the partnerships in terms of achieving their goals. Furthermore, working together to tackle a sensitive topic such as migration establishes trust and can create opportunities for cooperation on other issues requiring bilateral cooperation.

The migration partnerships have received negative media coverage in Switzerland, primarily because asylum flows from some partnership countries have not decreased. This should not be considered a failure, however, since many asylum applications are Dublin cases. However, the partnerships do contribute to smoother cooperation and information sharing on return issues. This points to a need for better communication on the purpose of the partnerships, including a reflection of the long-term benefits that increased trust and stronger bilateral relations can have.

Recommendations

Based on the key findings of the research the evaluators offer the following recommendations:

- 1. Switzerland should continue with the existing migration partnerships:** As the partnerships mature, partners will be able to bring new challenges and existing omissions to the table and the trust established by the partnership allows the identification of joint solutions to migration challenges.
- 2. Migration dialogues should be a key component of future strategies within the existing migration partnerships:** While the process of organising regular dialogues is labour intensive, a clear finding of the evaluation is that the regular meetings hold significant value to actors on both sides of the partnership. Regular meetings bring actors together, facilitate the negotiation of interests and allow the partnership to be flexible.
- 3. Creation of new partnerships:** Migration partnerships are a good instrument for bilateral cooperation on migration that positively compares to past and current tools used by Switzerland and other countries to approach the topic. Thus, the logical conclusion would be that, as the migration partnerships are largely on track to achieve their objectives, it makes sense to create new partnerships.
- 4. Selection of Countries:** While return is clearly a concern that has been at the centre of the current migration partnerships, future migration partnerships need not only be negotiated with countries with whom return is an issue. A focus on linking migration and development and pursuing coherent policies has merit in its own right. Thus countries such as Turkey could be potential candidates for future partnerships.
- 5. Address the gaps and omissions identified by the evaluation:** The evaluation provided the opportunity for partners to reflect on the current state of the migration partnerships. Through this process specific gaps were identified, which should be reviewed and discussed at future migration dialogues.
- 6. Pilot multilateral migration partnerships** through building on the existing migration partnerships with Nigeria and/or Kosovo by inviting at least one other country of relevance to the table. It is suggested that the top source countries of Dublin cases in Switzerland be considered as logical candidates. This can be in the interest of all partners and reflects the complexities of migration management, particularly given that more than two countries can be involved in a specific migration issue. Italy, for example, may benefit from being in a partnership with Switzerland given the current pressures on their asylum system and this in turn could assist Switzerland with Dublin cases. Having Germany brought into the partnership with Kosovo may help in further achievements in implementing the visa liberalisation roadmap.
- 7. Develop a communication strategy:** It is clear that the easiest way to highlight the benefits of the migration partnerships is through the implemented projects. However, given that the majority of these take place in the partner countries, this makes it challenging to capture the attention of the Swiss media. Nevertheless there is a clear need to correct some of the misconceptions surrounding the migration partnerships and their ability to stop asylum flows. It may be advisable to make more information publicly available. This could contribute towards creating a more factual and informative narrative on migration statistics in the mainstream media.

- 8. Disseminate experiences and findings to other countries:** One way to truly test whether the migration partnership can be considered as a transferrable model for bilateral cooperation on migration would be to implement the instrument in other country contexts. Given the positive experiences of the migration partnerships, it is recommended that the experience is shared.
- 9. Conduct further evaluations:** It is too early to conduct a proper impact evaluation of the migration partnerships, particularly in Tunisia. One solution would be to conduct a follow-up evaluation in three to five years using the findings of this evaluation as a baseline. Another interesting approach to assessing the extent to which the migration partnerships truly differ from the broader Swiss approach to bilateral cooperation would be to conduct a similar evaluation in countries where Switzerland does have cooperation on migration issues but no migration partnership.

Zusammenfassung (DE)

Hintergrund

Die Schweizer Migrationspartnerschaften sind ein Instrument der bilateralen Zusammenarbeit im Migrationsbereich zwischen der Schweiz und ihren Partnerstaaten. Das Instrument wurde im Rahmen einer umfassenderen Reform der Arbeit in Migrationsfragen hin zur interdepartementalen Zusammenarbeit („whole of government approach“) entwickelt. Die Migrationspartnerschaften bestehen aus einer Reihe flexibler und individuell anpassbarer Initiativen, die es erlauben den Interessen der Schweiz sowie der Partnerstaaten Rechnung zu tragen. Die Partnerschaften sind langfristig ausgerichtet und haben keinen festgelegten Endzeitpunkt, da sie so lange bestehen sollten, wie sie den beteiligten Staaten Vorteile bringen. Bisher wurden Migrationspartnerschaften zwischen der Schweiz und Bosnien und Herzegowina, dem Kosovo, Serbien, Nigeria und Tunesien abgeschlossen. Die hier vorliegende Evaluation, die als Antwort auf einen parlamentarischen Vorstoß (Postulat 12.3858 Amarelle) durchgeführt wurde, bietet fünf Jahre nach dem Abschluss der ersten Partnerschaft eine zeitgemäße Möglichkeit das Instrument der Migrationspartnerschaft auf Erfolge sowie Verbesserungspotenziale hin zu untersuchen.

Ziele und Methodik der Evaluation

Diese Evaluation dient dazu der Schweizer Bundesregierung eine evidenzbasierte und unabhängige Evaluation der Ergebnisse der ersten fünf Migrationspartnerschaften vorzulegen, um Erfolgsfaktoren zu ermitteln, Verbesserungspotenziale herauszustellen sowie Informationen für die breite Öffentlichkeit bereitzustellen. Als Grundlage dienen folgende vier Hauptforschungsfragen:

1. Inwieweit werden die Interessen und Ziele sowohl der Schweiz als auch der Partnerstaaten erreicht?
2. Was sind die subjektiv empfundenen Folgen der Migrationspartnerschaften?
3. Ermöglichen die Migrationspartnerschaften ein angemessenes Gleichgewicht zwischen den Interessen der verschiedenen Akteure?
4. Inwiefern lässt sich die Wirkungshypothese des Instrumentes der Migrationspartnerschaften bestätigen?

Für diese Evaluation wurden zwischen Juli und September 2014 semi-strukturierte Interviews mit relevanten Akteuren durchgeführt. Insgesamt wurden 174 Personen in 118 Interviews in der Schweiz und den fünf Partnerstaaten zu den Migrationspartnerschaften befragt. Zur Ergänzung wurden relevante Dokumente und Daten analysiert.

Die wichtigsten Ergebnisse und Schlussfolgerungen

Die Migrationspartnerschaften decken eine große Bandbreite von Interessen und Zielen ab. Das Instrument ist flexibel und erlaubt die unterschiedlichen Kontexte der Partnerstaaten zu berücksichtigen. Es beinhaltet aber auch Schlüsselthemen, die für alle Partnerschaften gelten. Die Bereiche, die die meiste Aufmerksamkeit erhalten sind die Rückkehr und Rückübernahme von Migrantinnen und Migranten sowie Migration und Entwicklung. Obwohl die Mandate der verschiedenen Ministerien zum Teil zu unterschiedlichen Interessen führen, gibt es eine gemeinsame Ausrichtung der Kollektivinteressen der Schweiz mit jedem der Partnerstaaten.

Den Migrationspartnerschaften liegt ein relativ ausgeglichenes Kräfteverhältnis zwischen der Schweiz und den Partnerstaaten zugrunde. Dennoch gibt es einige unumgängliche Ungleichgewichte, die sich daraus ergeben, dass die Schweiz die Partnerschaften finanziert. Diese werden jedoch durch die Flexibilität der Migrationspartnerschaften gemildert, die es den Partnerstaaten erlaubt ihre eigenen Interessen abhängig vom lokalen Kontext zu entwickeln. Dieser Fokus auf die landesspezifischen Bedürfnisse der Partnerländer hat die Bedeutung der Partnerschaften auch für andere laufende Prozesse, wie zum Beispiel die Visaliberalisierung und der EU-Beitritt, gewährleistet.

Der Mehrwert der Migrationspartnerschaften im Vergleich zu anderen Ansätzen in der bilateralen Zusammenarbeit im Migrationsbereich lässt sich in fünf Punkten zusammenfassen: 1) sie decken eine große Bandbreite von Themen im Rahmen nur eines Abkommens ab; 2) sie institutionalisieren

und legitimieren eine langfristige Kooperation; 3) sie beruhen auf Gegenseitigkeit; 4) sie sind flexibel und schaffen „Brücken schlagendes“ soziales Kapital („bridging capital“), das im Fall von auftretenden Problemen jederzeit aktiviert werden kann; und 5) ihr Fokus liegt auf langfristigen, ganzheitlichen Lösungsansätzen.

Eine der bisher wichtigsten Errungenschaften der Migrationspartnerschaften ist die verbesserte Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Ministerien, die durch die regelmäßigen Dialoge gefördert wird, und die damit erreichte verbesserte Politikkohärenz. Aus diesem Grund bewertet das Evaluationsteam die regelmäßigen Migrationsdialoge mit allen relevanten Akteuren als eine der bedeutendsten Beiträge der Partnerschaften im Hinblick auf die Erreichung ihrer Ziele. Darüber hinaus schafft die Zusammenarbeit an einem sensiblen Thema wie Migration Vertrauen und Möglichkeiten für die Kooperationen in anderen Bereichen in denen bilaterale Zusammenarbeit erforderlich ist.

In den Schweizer Medien ist viel negativ über die Migrationspartnerschaften berichtet worden, vor allem weil die Zahl der Asylsuchenden aus einigen Partnerstaaten nicht rückläufig ist. Dies sollte jedoch nicht als ein Versagen der Migrationspartnerschaften angesehen werden, da ein großer Anteil der Asylgesuche Dublin-Fälle sind. Die Migrationspartnerschaften tragen zudem entscheidend zu besserer Kooperation und einem vereinfachten Informationsaustausch bei Rückführungsfragen bei. Dies deutet darauf hin, dass die Zielsetzungen der Partnerschaften, einschließlich der langfristigen Vorteile von erhöhtem Vertrauen und stärkeren bilateralen Beziehungen, besser kommuniziert werden sollten.

Empfehlungen

Basierend auf den Ergebnissen der Studie hat das Evaluationsteam die folgenden Empfehlungen erarbeitet:

- 1. Die existierenden Migrationspartnerschaften der Schweiz sollten weiter geführt werden:** Wenn die Partnerschaften sich im Laufe der Zeit festigen, können die Partner flexibel auf neu auftretende Herausforderungen sowie bestehende Lücken reagieren. Das Vertrauen, das durch die Migrationspartnerschaften entstanden ist, erlaubt es gemeinsam Lösungen für Herausforderungen im Migrationsbereich zu erarbeiten.
- 2. Die Migrationsdialoge sollten eine Schlüsselkomponente der künftigen Strategien im Rahmen der bestehenden Migrationspartnerschaften sein:** Auch wenn die Organisation regelmäßiger Treffen zwischen den Partnerstaaten aufwendig ist, ist es doch ein klares Ergebnis der Evaluation, dass diese von allen Partnern als sehr wichtig befunden werden. Die regelmäßigen Treffen bringen die Akteure an einen Tisch, fördern den Austausch über die beidseitigen Interessen und tragen entscheidend zur Flexibilität des Instrumentes bei.
- 3. Abschluss neuer Partnerschaften:** Die Migrationspartnerschaften sind verglichen mit anderen Instrumenten, die von der Schweiz und anderen Ländern in der bilateralen Zusammenarbeit im Bereich Migration eingesetzt werden, ein nützliches Instrument. Da die Migrationspartnerschaften weitgehend auf dem Weg sind ihre Ziele zu erreichen, ist es sinnvoll neue Partnerschaften zu schaffen.
- 4. Auswahl der Partnerstaaten:** Während Rückführungen ein Kernthema der aktuellen Migrationspartnerschaften sind, sollte über zukünftige Migrationspartnerschaften nicht nur mit Ländern verhandelt werden, bei denen es in diesem Bereich Herausforderungen gibt. Andere Bereiche, wie die Verknüpfung von Migration und Entwicklung sowie die Entwicklung von Politikkohärenz, sind wichtige Themen die ebenfalls durch diese Partnerschaften abgedeckt werden. Somit bieten sich auch Länder, wie zum Beispiel die Türkei, als potenzielle Kandidaten für künftige Partnerschaften an.
- 5. Die im Rahmen dieser Evaluation identifizierten Lücken und Versäumnisse der Migrationspartnerschaften sollten angesprochen werden:** Diese Evaluation war ein guter Zeitpunkt für die Akteure auf beiden Seiten über den aktuellen Stand der Partnerschaften zu reflektieren. Durch diesen Prozess wurden bestimmte Versäumnisse identifiziert, die nun überprüft und dann bei einem zukünftigen Migrationsdialog diskutiert werden sollten.

- 6. Test von multilateralen Migrationspartnerschaften:** Aufbauend auf den bestehenden Migrationspartnerschaften mit Nigeria und/oder dem Kosovo, könnten multilaterale Partnerschaften getestet werden, in dem mindestens ein zusätzliches relevantes Land mit einbezogen wird. Es wird empfohlen, dass die Haupt-Herkunftsländer der Dublin-Fälle in der Schweiz als Kandidaten hierfür in Betracht gezogen werden. Dies wäre im Interesse aller Partner und spiegelt die Komplexität der Steuerung von Migration wider, vor allem weil oft mehr als zwei Länder von einem bestimmten Migrationsthema betroffen sind. Italien könnte, angesichts des aktuellen Drucks auf ihr Asylsystem, zum Beispiel davon profitieren eine Partnerschaft mit der Schweiz einzugehen. Für die Schweiz wiederum wäre diese Partnerschaft in Bezug auf die Dublin-Fälle von Vorteil. Deutschland in die Partnerschaft mit dem Kosovo einzubinden könnte weitere Erfolge in der Umsetzung des Plans bezüglich der Visaliberalisierung bringen.
- 7. Entwicklung einer Kommunikationsstrategie:** Der einfachste Weg die Vorteile der Migrationspartnerschaften hervorzuheben ist über die umgesetzten Projekte. Da allerdings die meisten Projekte in den Partnerstaaten stattfinden, ist es schwierig die Aufmerksamkeit der Schweizer Medien dafür zu gewinnen. Es ist jedoch notwendig einige der herrschenden Missverständnisse auszuräumen, die über die Migrationspartnerschaften und ihre Möglichkeiten die Zuwanderung von Asylsuchenden zu stoppen herrschen. Es wäre daher sinnvoll weitere Informationen öffentlich zugänglich zu machen, um eine informative und sachliche Berichterstattung über Migrationsstatistiken in den Medien zu erreichen.
- 8. Verbreitung der Erfahrungen und Forschungsergebnissen in andere Länder:** Ein Weg, um zu testen ob das Instrument der Migrationspartnerschaft als übertragbares Modell für bilaterale Zusammenarbeit im Bereich Migration angesehen werden kann, wäre es, das Instrument in anderen Ländern zu implementieren. Angesichts der überwiegend positiven Erfahrungen mit den Migrationspartnerschaften, wird empfohlen, dass diese Erfahrungen geteilt werden.
- 9. Durchführung von weiteren Evaluationen:** Es ist zu früh für eine angemessene Bewertung der Auswirkungen der Migrationspartnerschaften, besonders im Fall von Tunesien. Eine Lösung für dieses Problem wäre es in drei bis fünf Jahren eine zweite Evaluation auf Grundlage dieser durchzuführen. Ein weiterer interessanter Ansatz, um zu überprüfen inwiefern die Migrationspartnerschaften sich wirklich von anderen Instrumenten der bilateral Kooperation unterscheiden, wäre es eine ähnliche Evaluation in Ländern durchzuführen mit denen die Schweiz im Bereich Migration zusammenarbeitet, jedoch keine Migrationspartnerschaft hat.

Résumé Opérationnel (FR)

Les partenariats migratoires suisses sont un instrument de coopération bilatérale en matière de migration entre la Suisse et Etats partenaires, qui a évolué dans le cadre d'un changement vers une politique favorisant une approche interdépartementale des sujets de migration en Suisse. Les partenariats migratoires sont un ensemble souple et ajustable d'initiatives visant à répondre aux besoins et aux intérêts de la Suisse et des Etats partenaires concernés, établies sur une base à long terme, mais sans calendrier prédéfini. À ce jour des partenariats ont été signés avec la Bosnie-Herzégovine, le Kosovo, la Serbie, le Nigéria et la Tunisie. L'évaluation présente, menée en réponse à un postulat du Parlement suisse, offre une occasion propice de mesurer les résultats des partenariats migratoires suisses, cinq ans après la signature du premier partenariat.

Objectifs de l'évaluation et méthodologie utilisée

Le but de cette évaluation est de fournir à l'administration fédérale suisse une analyse indépendante des résultats des cinq premiers partenariats migratoires, afin d'en tirer des enseignements, d'identifier des possibilités d'améliorations futures et d'informer un public intéressé. Quatre questions principales de recherche sont abordées:

1. Dans quelle mesure les intérêts et les objectifs de la Suisse, mais aussi de l'Etat partenaire, ont-ils été satisfaits?
2. Quels sont les résultats perçus des partenariats migratoires?
3. Les partenariats migratoires veillent-ils à un juste équilibre entre les intérêts des différents acteurs?
4. Dans quelle mesure l'hypothèse d'impact des partenariats migratoires en tant qu'instrument est-elle confirmée?

Des entretiens qualitatifs semi-structurés avec les parties prenantes concernées ont représenté la principale source de données pour l'évaluation. Au total 118 entretiens avec 174 participants ont eu lieu. Les enquêtes sur le terrain ont été menées en Suisse et dans les cinq Etats partenaires, entre Juillet et Septembre 2014. Les entretiens ont été complétés par des recherches documentaires.

Principales constatations et conclusions

Les partenariats migratoires couvrent un large éventail d'intérêts et d'objectifs. Certaines différences spécifiques propres aux Etats démontrent que les partenariats sont flexibles. Cependant, il est possible de distinguer un ensemble clé d'intérêts dans le portefeuille de projets à travers tous les partenariats. Les domaines qui reçoivent le plus d'attention sont le retour et la réadmission, ainsi que la migration et le développement. Alors que les mandats des différents ministères se traduisent par des intérêts différents, on observe un alignement général entre les intérêts réciproques de la Suisse et de chacun des Etats partenaires.

Les partenariats migratoires reflètent un équilibre de pouvoir relativement équitable entre la Suisse et les Etats partenaires. Malgré quelques déséquilibres inévitables découlant du fait que la Suisse est bailleur de fonds des partenariats, ceux-ci sont largement atténués grâce à la conception large et flexible des partenariats, qui a permis aux Etats partenaires de faire valoir leurs intérêts en fonction des besoins et des intérêts locaux. L'attention accordée aux besoins des Etats partenaires a permis de démontrer la valeur des partenariats pour d'autres processus en cours tels que la libéralisation des visas et l'adhésion à l'UE.

La principale valeur ajoutée des partenariats migratoires par rapport aux initiatives antérieures de coopération bilatérale se situe dans le fait que: 1) les partenariats migratoires captent un large éventail de questions dans un cadre unique; 2) ils institutionnalisent et légitiment la coopération à long terme; 3) ils sont réciproques; 4) ils sont flexibles et créent un capital social de liaison qui peut être activé dès que des problèmes surgissent; et 5) ils sont axés sur des solutions globales et durables aux problèmes posés.

L'une des principales réalisations des partenariats migratoires à ce jour est l'amélioration, grâce à un dialogue régulier, de la coopération interministérielle, contribuant à la cohérence des politiques. Ainsi, les dialogues migratoires réguliers réunissant tous les acteurs concernés par la migration

autour d'une même table sont considérés par les évaluateurs comme l'une des contributions les plus importantes des partenariats dans la réalisation de leurs objectifs. En outre, le fait de travailler ensemble sur un sujet sensible comme la migration établit la confiance entre les partenaires et permet de créer des opportunités de coopération sur d'autres questions nécessitant une coopération bilatérale.

Les partenariats migratoires ont reçu une couverture médiatique négative en Suisse, principalement en raison du fait que les flux de demandes d'asile en provenance de certains Etats partenaires n'ont pas diminué. Ce résultat ne devrait cependant pas être considéré comme un échec puisque de nombreuses demandes d'asile sont des cas Dublin. Les partenariats contribuent à une coopération plus aisée et à un échange d'informations sur les questions du retour, soulignant de ce fait la nécessité d'une meilleure communication sur le but des partenariats, y compris une réflexion sur les avantages à long terme d'une confiance plus approfondie et de relations bilatérales plus solides.

Recommandations

Sur la base des principales conclusions du travail de recherche, les évaluateurs proposent les recommandations suivantes:

- 1. La Suisse devrait poursuivre les partenariats migratoires actuels:** Au fur et à mesure que les partenariats prendront de la maturité, les partenaires seront mieux en mesure de faire face à de nouveaux défis et de pallier aux omissions actuelles. La confiance établie grâce aux partenariats permettra d'identifier des solutions communes aux défis posés par la migration.
- 2. Les dialogues migratoires doivent constituer un élément clé des stratégies futures des partenariats migratoires actuels:** Même si l'organisation de dialogues réguliers exige un travail intensif, une conclusion claire de l'évaluation est que les réunions régulières présentent une valeur significative pour les deux partenaires. Elles permettent en effet de réunir les différents acteurs autour d'une même table, de faciliter la négociation des intérêts et d'assurer la flexibilité du partenariat.
- 3. Création de nouveaux partenariats:** les partenariats migratoires sont un instrument efficace de coopération bilatérale en matière de migration qui se compare favorablement à d'autres outils antérieurs et actuels utilisés par la Suisse et d'autres Etats dans l'approche de ce thème. Ainsi, dans la mesure où les partenariats migratoires sont généralement en bonne voie d'atteindre leurs objectifs, la conclusion logique serait de mettre en place de nouveaux partenariats.
- 4. Sélection des Etats:** En dépit du fait le retour est clairement une préoccupation qui a été au centre des partenariats migratoires actuels, les futurs partenariats migratoires ne devraient pas être négociés uniquement avec des Etats avec lesquels le retour pose problème. Faire le lien entre migration et développement et la poursuite de politiques cohérentes ont un mérite propre. Ainsi, des pays tels que la Turquie pourraient être des candidats intéressants pour de futurs partenariats.
- 5. Traitement des lacunes et omissions identifiées par l'évaluation:** L'évaluation a été l'occasion pour les partenaires de réfléchir à l'état actuel des partenariats migratoires. Ce processus a permis d'identifier des lacunes spécifiques, qui devraient être abordées et examinées lors de futurs dialogues migratoires.
- 6. Développer des partenariats migratoires pilotes multilatéraux** à travers le renforcement des partenariats migratoires existants avec le Nigéria et / ou le Kosovo en invitant au moins un autre Etat à se joindre à la table de discussion. L'évaluation suggère que les principaux pays d'origine des cas Dublin en Suisse peuvent être considérés comme des candidats logiques. Cette démarche peut se révéler dans l'intérêt de tous les partenaires et reflète la complexité de la gestion de la migration, particulièrement dans la mesure où il est possible qu'un problème spécifique de migration implique plus de deux pays. L'Italie, par exemple, pourrait tirer parti d'un partenariat avec la Suisse, compte tenu des pressions actuelles portées sur son système de demande d'asile, et ceci pourrait ensuite aider la Suisse dans des cas Dublin. L'inclusion de l'Allemagne dans le partenariat avec le Kosovo pourrait contribuer à d'autres succès dans l'application de la feuille de route concernant la libéralisation des visas.

- 7. Développer une stratégie de communication:** Il est clair que la meilleure façon de démontrer les avantages des partenariats migratoires est mettre en valeur les projets réalisés. Toutefois le fait que la majorité de ceux-ci sont menés dans les Etats partenaires les rend difficiles à être captés par les médias suisses. Néanmoins, il est clair qu'il faut corriger certaines fausses idées au sujet des partenariats migratoires et de leur capacité à mettre fin aux flux d'asile. Il serait souhaitable de mettre plus d'informations à la disposition du public. Ceci pourrait contribuer à créer une représentation plus factuelle et informative des statistiques de migration dans les médias grand public.
- 8. Diffusion des expériences et des conclusions vers d'autres Etats:** Une façon de réellement tester si les partenariats migratoires peuvent être considérés comme un modèle transférable de coopération bilatérale en matière de migration serait de mettre cet instrument en place dans d'autres contextes nationaux. Compte tenu des résultats positifs des partenariats migratoires, il est recommandé de diffuser l'expérience vers d'autres Etats.
- 9. Réaliser d'autres évaluations:** Il est trop tôt pour procéder à une évaluation d'impact adéquate des partenariats migratoires, notamment en Tunisie. Une solution serait de procéder à une évaluation de suivi dans trois à cinq ans, en prenant comme base de référence les conclusions de l'évaluation présente. Une autre approche intéressante pour évaluer dans quelle mesure les partenariats migratoires diffèrent fondamentalement de l'approche suisse plus générale envers la coopération bilatérale serait de procéder à une évaluation similaire dans des Etats où la Suisse a établi une coopération sur les questions migratoires, mais non pas de partenariat migratoire.

1. Introduction and Background

Migration is an intrinsically complex phenomenon. It traverses multiple policy areas and is the frequent subject of debate. Within states different government departments work on different aspects of migration and the objectives of their policies often have implications for other policy areas and vice versa. There are also differences in priorities between countries, the most notable being between primarily sending and receiving countries. Attempts to address these differences are reflected in conversations regarding the concept of 'policy coherence', a process defined by the OECD (2002) as "different policy communities working together in ways that result in more powerful tools and products for all concerned. It means looking for synergies and complementarities and filling gaps among different policy areas so as to meet common and shared objectives". Within this context, the Swiss migration partnerships represent one approach to achieving coherence in policies in the area of migration. The partnerships are not a one-time agreement but rather "a process between two governments, where the interests and objectives of both partners are not set in stone but evolve" (Swiss Confederation, 2014). Nevertheless, there is limited academic literature on migration governance and policy coherence in the area of migration. The little literature available is generally focused on EU mobility partnerships or on other areas of migration governance. This evaluation, which is being conducted in response to a postulate from the Swiss Parliament, presents a timely opportunity to investigate the Swiss migration partnerships, five years after the signing of the first partnership.

The purpose of the evaluation is fourfold:

- To respond to the Postulate Amarelle;
- To provide the Swiss Federal Administration with an evidence-based, independent assessment of the results of the first five migration partnerships;
- To draw lessons and highlight areas for further improvements of implementation modalities of migration partnerships;
- To provide information to an interested public audience about what is a migration partnership and what are possible expectations towards this instrument.

1.1 Migration Partnerships and the Swiss Whole of Government Approach to Migration

In order to establish the backdrop for the evaluation, it is important to first understand the evolution of migration partnerships within the broader context of developments in foreign migration policy in Switzerland. It is clear that the whole of government approach to foreign migration policy is intrinsically linked to the development of the instrument. The broad and inclusive nature of the fields of cooperation that can be encompassed in a migration partnership calls for the involvement and close coordination of the Swiss Federal Ministries involved, if the approach is to be coherent.

Interdepartmental cooperation on migration first started in Switzerland over 15 years ago with the establishment of the 'Interdepartmental Steering Group on Return Assistance' (ILR), which was jointly chaired by the Federal Office for Migration (FOM)¹ of the FDJP and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) of the FDFA (IMZ-Report, 2011; FOM & PA IV, 2008). The main role of the ILR was to coordinate the implementation of return aid and reintegration programmes of the FOM with the activities of the Swiss Humanitarian Aid in the field. In this sense, the ILR can be viewed as the starting point of Swiss interdepartmental cooperation on migration policy.

Over time, the need for interdepartmental coordination on other topics became increasingly apparent. Thus, in 2004, the Interdepartmental Working Group on Migration' (IAM-Committee) was formed. The mandate of the committee, chaired jointly by the FOM and the Human Security Division (HSD) of the FDFA, was to ensure that the various instruments of Swiss foreign migration

¹ The Federal Office for Migration (FOM) (former Federal Office for Refugees) became the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) on January 1, 2015. As it was the official name at time of writing, FOM is used throughout this report.

policy were both comprehensive and coherent. The IAM Committee was also responsible for the development of strategies for priority countries and regions (for example the Western Balkan strategy). It was also tasked with the elaboration and implementation of the concept of migration partnerships (IMZ-Report 2011; Rittener et al., 2011).

In 2011, the structure for the whole of government approach (IMZ-Structure) was refined based on the recommendations of the report on international migration cooperation (IMZ-Report, 2011). The IMZ-Structure consists of three bodies. The highest level is the "Plenum of the Interdepartmental Working Group on Migration" (IAM-Plenum) where the Director of FOM, the State Secretary of the FDFA and the Director of SDC meet annually to ensure coherence across foreign migration policy. At a more operational level, the "Committee on International Migration Cooperation" (IMZ-Committee) coordinates the implementation of all the instruments used in migration policy, such as the migration partnerships and the 'protection in the region programme'. The IMZ-Committee supersedes the IAM-Committee and the ILR. It also maintains oversight of all of the geographic and thematic working groups that comprise the third level of the IMZ-Structure. These working groups meet regularly and deal with day to day coordination, monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes, as well as other activities implemented in countries of interest, including in the five countries with whom a migration partnership has been signed.

An annual report is prepared based on close cooperation between the three bodies of the IMZ-Structure which informs the Federal Council, the parliament and the public about Swiss foreign migration policy and specifically on progress made by the migration partnerships. The reports aid the ongoing evaluation of the migration partnerships by presenting achievements and challenges as well as opportunities for the upcoming year.

1.2 Legal Framework, Characteristics and Formats of Migration Partnerships

In 2008, Switzerland incorporated the instrument of migration partnerships into its legal framework. Art. 100 (1) of the Federal Act on Foreign Nationals stipulates that "the Federal Council shall encourage bilateral and multilateral migration partnerships with other states. It may conclude agreements to improve cooperation in the field of migration as well as to reduce illegal migration and its negative consequences."

Later that year, the FOM and the HSD (former Political Affairs Division IV) elaborated and published a concept note outlining the main characteristics of migration partnerships. In it, migration partnerships are defined as a flexible and individually adjustable set of initiatives put in place in order to mutually address the needs and interests of Switzerland and the respective partner country on a long term basis but without a pre-defined timeframe. The following central objectives are emphasised:

- Recognise and integrate interests of all partners in order to ensure that every partner benefits;
- Swiss migration policy towards the partner country must be coherent;
- Promote the positive effects that migration can have and address challenges constructively.

The following criteria for a Migration Partnership to be established were defined:

- Existence of fundamental Swiss interest in the area of migration policy;
- Willingness by all partners to intensify cooperation in migration;
- A well-established relationship between the two countries;
- A certain degree of stability and good governance in the partner country.

A migration partnership can be negotiated as a legally binding agreement, thus an international treaty, or as a non-binding agreement, thus a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (FOM & PA IV, 2008). As flexibility is a key characteristic of the concept, it is important that also the format can be decided on depending on the individual situation and requirements (Rittener et al., 2011).

The content of a migration partnership is variable depending on the partner country. It includes projects and programmes in the area of migration cooperation such as prevention of irregular migration, readmission, promotion of voluntary return, reintegration, return aid, combatting human trafficking, migration and development, protection of refugees, internally displaced people and

vulnerable migrants, etc. The main elements of any migration partnership will obviously always be focused on migration issues. However, initiatives agreed on can also encompass other issues which are still relevant to migration, but more remotely so, for instance social security support upon return, promotion of human rights or cooperation on police matters (IMZ-Report 2011).

1.3 Partner Countries

Within this framework, five migration partnerships have so far been agreed on. The chosen format for all of them was a Memorandum of Understanding. The first one was signed with Bosnia and Herzegovina in April 2009 followed by Serbia in June 2009, Kosovo in February 2010, Nigeria in February 2011 and Tunisia in June 2012 (see Table 1).

Table 1: Overview of Current Swiss Migration Partnerships

Country	Date of Signing	Place of Signing
Bosnia and Herzegovina	April 14, 2009	Reichenau-Tamins (CH)
Serbia	June 30, 2009	Belgrade
Kosovo	February 3, 2010	Bern (CH)
Nigeria	February 14, 2011	Bern (CH)
Tunisia	June 11, 2012	Tunis

Source: MoUs.

From the very outset of the evaluation it was clear that the migration partnerships signed by Switzerland have been concluded under different circumstances, at different points in time, and with countries facing diverse challenges. The partnerships with the Western Balkan countries were signed on the basis of an already long-standing relationship with Switzerland, a relationship that had roots in the support provided by Switzerland during war-times in the Balkans. In contrast to this, the partnerships in Tunisia and Nigeria were signed in the wake of difficult political situations. While discussions with Nigeria about expanding the cooperation on migration issues had been ongoing, the negotiations of the Nigerian migration partnership were accelerated due to two key events that led to tensions in bilateral relations and challenges with readmission². In Tunisia, migration to Switzerland increased in the wake of the Arab Spring and the partnership was signed in the context of a broader Swiss focus on North Africa. While the practical implementation of the migration partnership was started right after the signing, the agreement was not ratified by the Tunisian side until 2014 (Schweizerischer Bundesrat, 2014). It is noteworthy that the relatively recent conclusion of the partnership with Tunisia makes it challenging to truly assess the extent to which the partnership is functioning.

Table 2 summarises some of the key statistics and provides a brief overview of both immigration and emigration for the Western Balkan countries, Nigeria and Tunisia. The five countries range from rather small countries in terms of size and population, like Kosovo with a population of less than two million, to the largest African country, Nigeria, with a population of more than 177 million. At the same time, out of the partner countries, Nigeria is the least developed country at this stage. While the other four are considered to be upper-middle income countries, Nigeria remains a lower-middle income country. The Human Development Index for Nigeria (0.504) is also significantly lower than that of the remaining countries (between 0.721 for Tunisia and 0.786 for Kosovo).

Just like the overall landscape of the countries, the migration situations are diverse. One thing that the countries have in common is the fact that they are increasingly also becoming destination countries. This has implications also for the needs in terms of capacity building and overall migration management. In terms of emigration, Bosnia and Herzegovina is the country with the largest share of its population living abroad (39%). While less than one per cent of Nigerians are migrants abroad, in absolute numbers this is still more than one million people and therefore a significant population. One of the main push factors for migration, which all five countries have in common, is unemployment and a lack of opportunities in the home country. In addition, political instability remains a concern particularly in Tunisia.

² In March 2010 there was the tragic death of a returnee, who was being repatriated to Nigeria, at the airport in Zurich, which led to the halting of deportations for some time. This was followed by statements by the former Director of FOM in the media which associated Nigerian asylum-seekers with drug dealers.

Table 2: Background Information Partner Countries

	BA	KV ³	RS	NG	TN
Total area, sq km^a	51,197	10,887	77,474	923 768	163,610
Population (July 2014 est.)^a	3,871,642	1,859,203	7,209,764	177,155,754	10,937,521
Country classification by income group	Upper-middle	Upper-middle	Upper-middle	Lower-middle	Upper-middle
Human Development Index (2013), HDI^b	0.731	0.786 ^e	0.745	0.504	0.721
GDP per capita (2012), PPP, current international \$^c	9,393	8,146	11,900	5,217	10235
Unemployment rate (2012) (national or ILO* estimate), % of total labour force^c	28.1	30.9	23.9	7.5*	12.8*
Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line, % of population^c	17.9 (2011)	29.7 (2011)	24.6 (2011)	46.0 (2010)	15.5 (2010)
Immigrant population (2010) (as percentage of total population)^d	27,800 (0.7%)	-	525,400 (5.3%)	1,127,700 (0.7%)	33,600 (0.3%)
Main origin countries of immigrants	Croatia, Albania, Ukraine	Turkey, China, Albania	BA, Croatia, Montenegro	ECOWAS countries, Chad, Cameroon	Algeria, Morocco, France
Emigrant population (2010) (as percentage of total population)^d	1,461,000 (38.9%)	400,000 ^f (21.5%)	196,000 (2.0%)	1,000,000 (0.6%)	651,600 (6.3%)
Main destination countries of emigrants^d (CH if in Top 10 Destination Countries)	Croatia, Germany, Austria, USA, Slovenia Switzerland 7 th)	Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, USA ^g	Austria, USA, France, Macedonia, Denmark ⁴	USA, UK, Chad, Cameroon, Italy	France, Italy, Libya, Germany, Israel, (Switzerland 10 th)
Main push-factors for emigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young population • Lack of employment and education opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young population • Lack of employment and education opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young population • Lack of employment and education opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of employment opportunities • Political instability • Environmental factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of employment opportunities • Political instability
Other relevant factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative structure complex • Aligning with the EU's <i>acquis</i> requirements • Large border with Croatia (entry point to EU, potential route for irregular migrants and traffickers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newly formed independent state (awaiting global recognition) • Formation of a new government post-election 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning with the EU's <i>acquis</i> requirements • Increasing numbers of asylum applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boko Haram • Inter-ethnic conflicts • Upcoming elections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arab Spring • Upcoming Elections • ISIS • Lack of policy framework for immigration

Sources: ^aCIA, 2014; ^bUNDP, 2014a; ^cWorld Bank, 2014a; ^dWorld Bank, 2011; ^eUNDP, 2014b; ^fDocquier & Marfouk, 2007; ^gElezaj et al., 2012.

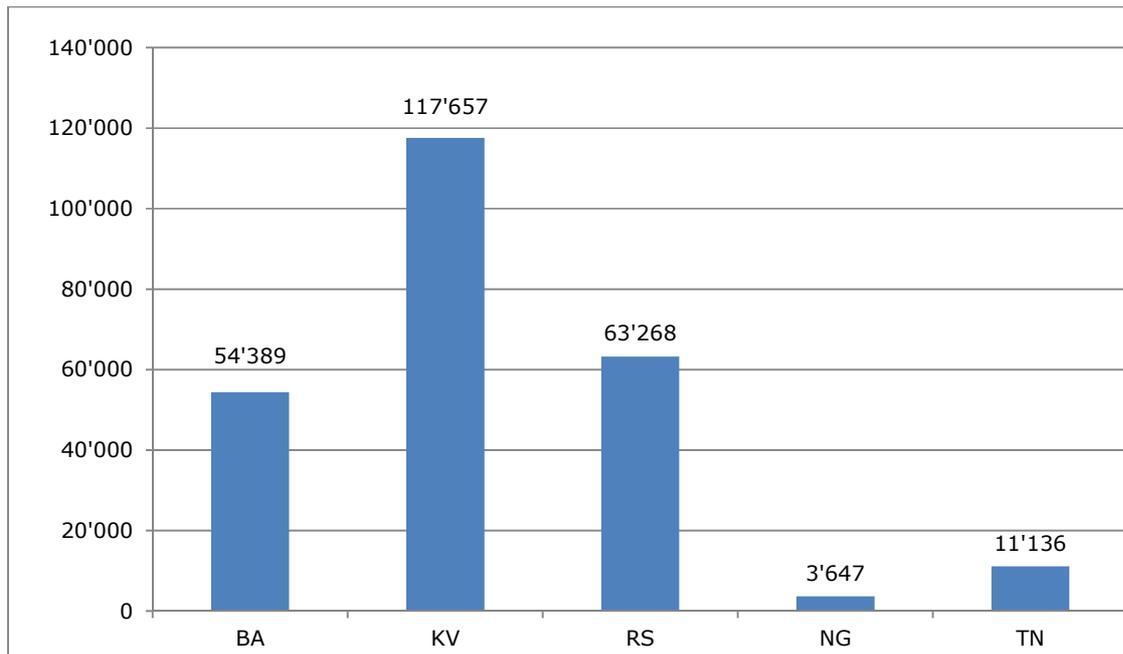
³ Kosovo is not included in many official sources of statistics owing to its status as an independent state. Thus, alternative sources of data have been used.

⁴ Data for Serbians in Switzerland are not included in the World Bank Bilateral Migration Matrix.

Partner Country Populations in Switzerland

Like the conditions in the countries and the overall migration situation, the volume of the respective populations in Switzerland differs significantly across the five partner countries. This can be further illustrated by looking at the stock of residents in Switzerland as presented in Figure 1. The figure shows the immigrant stock (permanent and non-permanent residents) in 2013 by country of birth (thus not capturing individuals belonging to the second or subsequent generations). The populations from the Western Balkan countries (between 54,389 and 117,657) are significantly larger than those from Tunisia (11,136) and especially Nigeria (3,647). This can be explained by both the historical development of the migration movements and the geographical location of the countries.

Figure 1: Partner Country Population in Switzerland, 2013



Source: Bundesamt für Statistik, 2014.

Although asylum-seekers do not represent the entirety of migrant flows from the partnership countries to Switzerland, applications from several of the partnerships are significant when viewed in the context of asylum flows to Switzerland more generally. Asylum flows from some of the partnership countries are of significance when considered within the context of the top 10 source countries of asylum applications in Switzerland (Table 3). Although the position of Nigeria has decreased over time, it was the top origin country for asylum applications in 2009 and 2010. Its movement to the 4th most common origin country by 2014 is in part due to the Syrian crisis. Tunisia's appearance in the top 10 list coincides with the revolution. For Kosovo and Serbia it is difficult to comment however is likely related to Kosovo's independence and subsequent elections as well as visa liberalization. These points will be discussed in more detail in Section 3.3.2.

Table 3: Top 10 Source Countries of Asylum Applications in Switzerland, 2009-2014

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
1	Nigeria	Nigeria	Eritrea	Eritrea	Eritrea	Eritrea
2	Eritrea	Eritrea	Tunisia	Nigeria	Syria	Syria
3	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka	Nigeria	Tunisia	Nigeria	Sri Lanka
4	Iraq	Serbia	Serbia	Serbia	Tunisia	Nigeria
5	Somalia	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Morocco	Somalia
6	Afghanistan	Iraq	Macedonia	Syria	Afghanistan	Afghanistan
7	Kosovo	Georgia	Syria	Macedonia	Algeria	Tunisia
8	Georgia	Kosovo	China	Morocco	Kosovo	Morocco
9	Serbia	Turkey	Somalia	China	Sri Lanka	Georgia
10	Turkey	Syria	Kosovo	Somalia	China	Kosovo

Source: Staatssekretariat für Migration, 2015.

2. Methodology

2.1 Objectives of the Evaluation

In accordance with the Terms of Reference, the specific objectives of the evaluation are:

1. To provide information on the added-value of migration partnerships compared to other forms of bilateral cooperation.
2. To take stock of how migration partnerships are implemented and to what extent the objectives set in this instrument are achieved.
3. To reflect on the effects of migration partnerships.

2.2 Research Questions

In order to achieve these objectives, four main questions, one guiding question and 11 sub-questions will be addressed by the research:

1. To what extent are the interests and objectives of Switzerland but also of the partner country achieved?

- *To what extent are single projects relevant to the objectives set within the migration partnerships?*

2. What are the perceived outcomes of the migration partnerships?

- *What is the effect of migration partnerships on the general public in Switzerland and in the partner country (media especially)?*
- *Does Switzerland gain any benefits at the international or European level from implementing the instrument of migration partnerships?*

3. Do the migration partnerships provide an equitable balance between the interests of the different actors?

- *Is the instrument of migration partnerships adapted to the objectives set?*

4. To what extent is the impact hypothesis of the instrument of migration partnerships confirmed?

- *Do migration partnerships enhance the coherence of the Swiss migration policy but also of the migration policy of the partner country?*
- *What are the effects of migration partnerships on the interdepartmental/ inter-ministerial coordination (in Switzerland and in the partner country)?*
- *To what extent do migration partnerships strengthen bilateral relationships and direct contacts between partner authorities?*
- *Do migration partnerships have spill-over or unintended effects on other areas of bilateral relations?*
- *How does the migration partnership affect the overall development policy of the partner country?*
- *What is the added-value of a comprehensive approach to migration? What is the added-value of migration partnerships compared to other forms of bilateral cooperation covering solely some aspects of migration (e.g. readmission)?*
- *Is there any coordination or synergies with other similar migration partnerships the partner country established already? What is the added-value of a migration partnership with Switzerland compared to other similar partnerships the partner country concluded?*

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In addressing all of these questions it is important to understand the wider context in which the partnerships are implemented and thus the following question provides structure to the analysis by acknowledging the critical role played by the specific country context. The historical relationship with Switzerland may play an important role in determining the success – or at the very least – direction of the partnership. In turn, capacity within the partner country may impact upon the ability to articulate their interests and actively engage in the partnership process.

- *What is the influence of the specific country context (post conflict, fragmented, complexity of national structure and decision making process) on the achievement of results?*

2.3 Methodological Approach

The evaluation was conducted using different research methods: desk-based research and statistical analysis; and primary data collection through qualitative interviews.

Desk Research

Although desk-based research was ongoing throughout the evaluation, it was broadly conducted in two stages: inception related activities and data analysis. At the beginning, a systematic review of documents pertaining to the migration partnerships such as the MoUs, meeting minutes, project documents and background concept notes as well as a broader review of both academic and grey literature fed into the development of the data-collection tools. This culminated in the preparation of country reports for each of the partner countries which provided background information on the migration trends, policy environment and pre-existing relationships between the specific partner country and Switzerland. The desk review also involved a systematic mapping of the actors present at the meetings conducted over the course of the migration partnerships in order to prepare a preliminary list of possible interview respondents. The final participant list was agreed upon in discussions with the Evaluation Steering Committee.

The desk review involved the mapping of interests as expressed in meeting minutes and a mapping of projects implemented as part of the migration partnerships. This fed directly into the evaluation. Additionally, a desk-based media review was also conducted to better assess the perceptions of the migration partnerships by the general public. It was not feasible to interview or survey direct beneficiaries (migrants) or the general population and thus the media was used as a proxy for public opinion although it is recognised that media coverage will inevitably cover 'extreme' news and therefore may not be fully reflective of the general opinion. Each of the identified articles was systematically analysed to assess the nature of the content and whether the tone was positive, negative or neutral. It was intended that a similar exercise would be conducted for each of the partner countries. However, very few articles were identified. In addition, it was rare for the migration partnership to be discussed explicitly in the partner countries. Another component of the desk-based research was the analysis and assessment of asylum and return statistics before and after the implementation of the migration partnerships.

Fieldwork

Semi-structured qualitative interviews with relevant stakeholders represented the key source of data for the evaluation. In total 118 interviews with 174 participants were conducted. A detailed breakdown of the fieldwork is provided below outlining the various ministries and organisations represented.

Fieldwork was conducted in Switzerland in two phases: 1) between the 23rd July and the 30th July 2014 and 2) between the 20th and the 29th August 2014. In total 39 interviews took place with 43 individuals representing all of the key ministries and departments involved in the

partnerships (see

Table 4). Respondents who were not available during this time were invited to participate in a telephone interview. Three interviews took place by telephone. Care was taken to ensure that participants covering all partner countries were included⁵. A list of potential respondents was developed through a review of relevant project documents by the research team in combination with discussions with the Evaluation Steering Committee. In total 48 people were contacted and 43 agreed to be interviewed translating into a response rate of approximately 90 per cent.

Table 4: Overview of Swiss Interview Participants⁶

Swiss Ministry	Number of Interviews	Number of Individuals
FOM	14	14
SDC	9	10
PD	12	12
fedpol	2	5
SECO	1	1
Border Guard	1	1
Total	39	43

Fieldwork was conducted in each of the partner countries in September 2014:

- Kosovo: 8-9 September
- Serbia: 11-12 September
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: 15-17 September
- Tunisia: 22-24 September (further Skype interviews between 4-16 December)
- Nigeria: 22-26 September

In total 73 interviews were conducted across the partner countries representing a total of 126 individuals⁷. In each country, with the exception of Tunisia, two researchers were present in the field. The interviews were organised by the Swiss Delegation in each country based on a list of potential respondents developed in cooperation with the Evaluation Steering Committee. Interviews were intended to be representative of the key government ministries and departments involved in the partnerships as well as project implementation partners and representatives of the Swiss delegations in each country. In addition, the EU Delegation in each country was interviewed to gain insight into how the partnerships are perceived by the EU. These interviews are included in 'other country actors'. Table 5 provides a detailed overview of the breakdown of interviews per country.

Table 5: Overview of Partner Country Interviews⁸

Category	Country	BA	KV	NG	RS	TN	Total
Partner Government Actors		9 (18)	5 (13)	5 (10)	7 (19)	9 (9)	35 (69)
Swiss Actors		3 (3)	2 (5)	2 (3)	2 (3)	3 (4)	12 (18)

⁵ The coverage of each partner country amongst the Swiss respondents was relatively equal: Bosnia and Herzegovina (11), Kosovo (14), Nigeria (11), Serbia (12) and Tunisia (16). A further 13 respondents had more general oversight of the partnerships. Some respondents had experience on more than one partnership and so the sum of these numbers is greater than the total number of interviews.

⁶ Staff members who were involved in the early stages of developing the migration partnerships who had since moved position are recorded for the ministry for whom they worked at time of involvement in the migration partnerships.

⁷ More individuals were present at some interviews. However only the primary speakers have been recorded.

⁸ The first number indicates the number of interviews completed and the number of respondents is provided in parenthesis.

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Other Country Actors⁹	7 (13)	7 (9)	4 (5)	5 (9)	3 (3)	26 (39)
Total	19(34)	14 (27)	11 (18)	14 (31)	15 (16)	73(126)

A representative of the Principality of Liechtenstein was also interviewed as the Principality co-financed some of the activities implemented in the Western Balkans and has also established similar migration partnerships with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo.

In addition, to gain further insight into the perspectives of the international community with regard to the Swiss Partnerships at a more global level, four additional interviews with five representatives from international organisations were conducted to gain further insights into how the instrument is viewed by international actors in the migration field. This was very much supplementary to interviews with international organisations and the EU Delegations working in each of the partner countries who were much closer to the actual implementation of the partnerships.

The interviews were fully transcribed and then systematically coded in order to address each of the research questions. Once answers were identified for each of the questions, the data was analysed for emerging themes and a coding frame was developed accordingly. Where relevant, illustrative quotes highlighting the most common responses are provided in the text of the report. This approach ensures that the findings are based on what emerges from the interviewees (inductive research) as opposed to being developed based on the presupposed notions of the research team (deductive research).

Methodological Reflections

There are several risks associated with the research design that should be taken into consideration. First, the advantage of using qualitative interviews is that it allows an in-depth discussion of how the key stakeholders in Switzerland and the partner countries perceive the partnerships. However, this approach also risks presenting a purely perception-based assessment of the migration partnerships in which socially desirable responses may be given. This is particularly the case where the findings may have implications for future project financing. To minimise the potential impact of this, the research team has made every effort to cross-check information provided with documents produced throughout the process (including project documents and meeting minutes).

Second, there is a clear imbalance between the numbers of people interviewed in Switzerland compared to those interviewed in the partner countries. This may risk presenting a biased perspective. While there were initially much longer lists of potential participants for each of the partner countries, it was made clear in discussions with the Steering Committee that some individuals had only been involved in one or two meetings and as such the pool of potential respondents was reduced. Additionally, it should be acknowledged that the Swiss sample is further broken down by partnership country. This does reflect a fairly even distribution between the different partner countries.

Third, some noteworthy omissions from the interviews primarily due to availability, include the former Minister of Foreign Affairs Odein Ajumogobia and Under Secretary (Economic & Consular) Abdulaziz Dankano in Nigeria, who are both key actors in the migration partnership, and Houcine Jaziri formerly from the Secretariat of State for Migration in Tunisia.

Another noteworthy omission is that migrants are not included in the evaluation. As discussed in Section 1.1, the concept of a migration partnership is based on a win-win-win approach (benefiting Switzerland, the partner country, and then migrants themselves). However, due to a number of different reasons (complexity, focus of the evaluation and resources allocation), migrants as beneficiaries of the migration partnerships are not included in the evaluation. This limits the ability of the research team to make objective comments about the direct impact of the migration partnerships on migrants (or potential migrants).

⁹ Includes implementing partners, representatives of other funders operating in the country (primarily the EU but also the British High Commission in Nigeria.)

Additionally, a last minute scheduling issue meant that the fieldwork in Tunisia was conducted by only one, more junior, researcher who was unable to communicate in French and some meetings only lasted for 10 minutes. This may have affected the responses received in Tunisia and should be taken into consideration when reviewing the Tunisian findings. This was in addition to the present evaluation being one of several evaluations conducted in Tunisia in recent months. Furthermore, due to the partnership with Tunisia being more recent, and the fact that the government is currently in transition, it should be recognised that it was perhaps premature to conduct an evaluation. These factors should all be taken into consideration when interpreting the findings for Tunisia.

It should also be acknowledged that for many actors in the partner countries, this type of evaluation was fairly unusual and as such there was often a lack of clarity relating to the purpose of the study. Additionally, in some cases it was necessary, for political reasons, to have Swiss staff present at some of the meetings. While in general this is not ideal from a methodological perspective, it was necessary.

Keeping these limitations in mind, the following two sections present the main findings of the evaluation addressing the key research questions of the study. An elaboration of the research questions can be found in Appendix 3 which highlights where each question is addressed in the report.

3. Findings: Mapping the Partnerships

In order to assess the extent to which the interests and objectives of Switzerland and the partner countries have been achieved by the partnerships, the interests and objectives first need to be mapped. Using meeting minutes and interview transcripts, Section 3.1 first maps the interests and objectives of the different actors involved in the migration partnerships on the Swiss side, and then in each of the partner countries. Section 3.2 then assesses the extent to which the technical cooperation projects implemented as part of the migration partnerships match up with the stated objectives and interests.

Section 3.3 addresses the overarching question relating to whether or not the partnerships provide an equitable balance of interests between the different actors involved. Building on the objective analysis presented in section 3.2, this section of the report first presents a subjective analysis of the question by looking at self-reported views on the representation of interests within the partnerships as well as by concretely looking at omissions and compromises made (3.3.1). The section continues with a review of the evolution of interests over time considering both the process of negotiation as well as any changes over the course of implementation (3.3.2). The section is concluded with a discussion of whether or not the Swiss migration partnerships reflect an equitable balance of power between the interests of the different actors involved (3.3.3).

Section 3.4 assesses the perceived outcomes of the migration partnerships by considering a range of perspectives. First coverage of the migration partnerships in the media is critically analysed (Section 3.4.1). One of the main expected impacts of the partnerships reflected in the media is a reduction in asylum flows from partnership countries to Switzerland. As this is not the case, Section 3.4.2 provides a more detailed analysis of return and asylum statistics in order to assess whether or not this can be considered as a failure of the migration partnerships. Beyond this analysis, the perceived outcomes of the migration partnerships are also assessed by looking at 1) reactions of the international community (3.4.3); and 2) analysing the perceived benefits of the partnership (3.4.4).

3.1 Mapping Interests

This section of the report maps the interests of the different actors involved in the migration partnerships in a) Switzerland and b) each of the partner countries. It demonstrates that a broad range of interests and objectives are covered by the migration partnerships. While the mandates of different ministries translate into different interests, there is general alignment in the collective interests of Switzerland with each of the partner countries.

Table 6 maps Swiss interests in the five migration partnerships by affiliation according to responses given during the interviews. Interests that actors from one Swiss stakeholder identified as being relevant in all five migrant partnerships (four in the case of fedpol and SECO) have been highlighted. This exercise finds that a significant number of interests are relevant to a stakeholder either for all partner countries or not at all. This is logical given that interests will be largely shaped by the specific mandate of the Federal Agency represented by each individual. Interestingly, however, the mapping does illustrate that interests are broader than just the core mandates. For example, while good cooperation on return issues is the key interest of the FOM, migration and development was also identified as being in their interest.

Table 6: Interests of Swiss Stakeholders in the Five Migration Partnerships

Interest	FDFA		FDJP		SECO ¹⁰	SCO/ Embassy
	PD	SDC	fedpol ¹¹	FOM		
Promotion of orderly migration/ tackling irregular migration		TN		All		WB
Promotion of voluntary return and reintegration of returnees		NG, RS		All		BA, TN
Well-functioning cooperation on readmission issues				All		
Ensure that readmission of nationals (special flights) are carried out with dignity				NG		
Capacity building of migration authorities	TN	RS, TN		All		WB
Migration & development	WB	All		All	All	BA, TN
Protection and social inclusion of minorities		WB		BA, RS		
Protection of refugees, IDPs and vulnerable migrants	All	All				
Fight against trafficking in human beings	All		All			BA
Creation of synergies with police cooperation			All			BA
Border management						BA
Closer cooperation and training to fight against drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organised crime	All		All			
Access to Swiss labour market						
Employment creation in PC		TN			TN	
Broader discussion of migration issues	NG	All		All	All	
Closer bilateral relations	NG	NG		WB		NG, RS
Stability in the country	All					
Domestic security			All			
Internal contacts			All			
Other						NG

Source: Interviews.

¹⁰ Nigeria is not a priority country for SECO and it is therefore not directly involved in this migration partnership.

¹¹ Fedpol is currently not involved in the migration partnership with Tunisia and has therefore no specific interests in it.

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Second, the interests of different government actors within each of the partner countries were mapped using interview transcripts and meeting minutes. The analysis of interviews was supplemented with meeting minutes to limit any omission bias caused by some key stakeholders not being interviewed, particularly in Tunisia and Nigeria. Individual disaggregated tables for each of the partner countries can be found in Appendix 4. However, due to space limitations, Table 7 presents the aggregated interests expressed by each of the partner countries listed next to the interests expressed for each partner country by relevant Swiss respondents.

The key observations that can be taken from this exercise are that the interests of the partner countries are also broad, and in general, in alignment with Swiss interests. The exception here is Tunisia, where the interests of the Swiss and the Tunisian government are not as well aligned as in other partner countries¹². For example, the Swiss are interested in protection issues, while the Tunisian government is more interested in border control and access to labour market opportunities in Switzerland. As this migration partnership is the most recent one, this might change over time as more expert meetings take place between Tunisia and Switzerland.

One interesting observation is that, in general, very few people talked about general access to the Swiss labour market during the interviews, with the exception of Tunisia, despite this being discussed by many of the Swiss participants as being a key partner country interest. This may be due to an understanding that the partnership could not provide general access to the Swiss labour market, which was made clear during the early stages of the negotiations. To illustrate this point, during the bilateral meetings, access to the Swiss labour market was discussed through a presentation by the Swiss delegation in which the legal framework for immigration to Switzerland was explained and, within this framework, options were explored. It was only then further discussed within the context of some smaller projects designed to provide some opportunities for migration to Switzerland. For Kosovo the Agroimpuls project provides 10-25 intern placements in the agricultural sector in Switzerland. In Tunisia, the Stagiaire Agreement for young professionals allows up to 150 young Tunisians annually to come to Switzerland for a maximum of 18 months to get on-the-job training. The Nestlé project provides five scholarship placements to Nigerian trainees to participate in an advanced training module at the Nestlé headquarters in Switzerland.

¹² This could be due to a number of factors. First, not all of the key stakeholders for Tunisia were interviewed and some participants only had limited time available. Furthermore, Tunisia is a country in transition and has had three governments in place during the short time the partnership has been in place. The partnership is much newer in Tunisia and it is Switzerland's first real interaction with the country on these issues. Thus these findings should be interpreted with caution.

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Table 7: Aggregated Interests of Switzerland and Partner Countries

Interest	BA		KV		RS		NG		TN	
	CH	BA	CH	KV	CH	RS	CH	NG	CH	TN
Promotion of orderly migration/ tackling irregular migration	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Promotion of voluntary return and reintegration of returnees	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Well-functioning cooperation on readmission issues	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Ensure that readmission of nationals (special flights) are carried out with dignity							x	x		
Capacity building of migration authorities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Migration & development	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Protection and social inclusion of minorities	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Protection of refugees, IDPs and vulnerable migrants	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Fight against trafficking in human beings	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Creation of synergies with police cooperation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Border management	x	x			x	x				x
Closer cooperation and training to fight against drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organised crime	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Access to Swiss labour market				x		x		x		x
Employment creation in PC								x	x	x
Other	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Source: Interviews and Meeting Minutes.

3.2 Implementation

This section of the report systematically maps the technical cooperation projects implemented as part of the migration partnerships against stated interests. This exercise has highlighted that, in general, the interests of the different actors involved in the migration partnerships are well reflected by the projects. The areas receiving most attention are return and readmission, and migration and development. The topics that have received less attention relate to cooperation in the police sector. Some country specific differences reflect that the partnership can be adapted to the objectives set. However there is a general set of interests that are reflected in the portfolio of projects across all of the partnerships.

In order to assess the extent to which the projects implemented as part of the migration partnerships were relevant to the interests and objectives, project descriptions were systematically analysed and matched to the interests and objectives outlined in Section 3.1. Where a project related to one or more objective, multiple categories were assigned.

Table 8 provides an overview of the ongoing projects in each of the partner countries by interest. It can be seen that the number of projects that are being implemented as part of the migration partnerships are significantly higher in Nigeria (27) and Tunisia (25) than in the Western Balkans (between 10 and 14 per country). In fact, in Tunisia one of the main added-values of the partnerships was considered to be its large technical cooperation folio.

There is only one interest that is not directly reflected in any of the projects which is well-functioning cooperation on readmission issues. However this may be more due to classification than omission. Overlap exists between promotion of return and reintegration and well-functioning cooperation on readmission and thus the absence of projects here reflects a distinction made between projects designed to improve reception and reintegration in the former category and those designed to build capacity and improve general cooperation on readmission for the latter. For example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina there is a project on reception and integration of readmitted citizens which has been classified as a project on promoting voluntary return and reintegration. Nevertheless, the project implicitly depends upon good cooperation to function. Thus this interest is still reflected in the partnerships.

The key areas in which projects are implemented differ quite significantly across the countries. This is however not surprising as the interests and needs are also quite diverse and adjusted to the different country contexts. Therefore the variation in the projects across the countries is a reflection of the flexibility of the instrument. Additionally, projects may differ in size and scope. This does, however, not directly correlate with impact. Many of the smaller projects were actually referred to more often as being particularly beneficial.

Table 8: Matching Projects and Interests

Interest	BA (10)	KV (14)	RS (11)	NG (27)	TN (25)
Promotion of orderly migration/ tackling irregular migration	1	1	0	1	6
Promotion of voluntary return and reintegration of returnees	2	3	2	2	4
Well-functioning cooperation on readmission issues	0	0	0	0	0
Ensure that readmission of nationals (special flights) are carried out with dignity ¹³	0	0	0	1	0
Capacity building of migration authorities	4	1	7	7	10
Migration & development	2	4	1	6	7
Protection and social inclusion of minorities ¹⁴	1	4	3	0	0
Protection of refugees, IDPs and vulnerable migrants	1	0	4	4	6
Fight against trafficking in human beings	1	0	3	3	2
Creation of synergies with police cooperation	1	0	0	2	0
Border management	1	0	0	1	3
Closer cooperation and training to fight against drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organised crime	1	0	0	2	0
Access to Swiss labour market	0	1	0	1	1 ¹⁵
Employment creation in PC	0	3	1	1	2
Other	3	1	1	2	2

Source: Project Documents of currently ongoing projects (Desk Review).

Mapping the table above against the interests mapped in the Section 3.1 allows the objective identification of current gaps. The following interests are currently not represented in the projects of the migration partnerships:

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- None

Kosovo

- Protection of refugees, IDPs and vulnerable migrants
- Fight against trafficking in human beings
- Creation of synergies with police cooperation

Serbia

- Promotion of orderly migration/ tackling irregular migration
- Creation of synergies with police cooperation
- Border management
- Closer cooperation and training to fight against drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organised crime

Nigeria

- None

Tunisia

- Closer cooperation and training to fight against drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organised crime

¹³ This interest was of particular importance in the migration partnership with Nigeria and is not considered an omission for the other countries

¹⁴ The protection of minorities in this context refers mostly to RAE communities in and from the Western Balkan countries and is therefore only considered for these three countries.

¹⁵ While the Stagiaire Agreement is not a project per se, the associated inputs, such as a migration attaché placed in Switzerland and efforts through the diaspora project to identify job placement opportunities do address this interest to an extent.

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This exercise has highlighted that, in general, the interests of the different actors involved in the migration partnerships are well reflected by the projects. The areas receiving most attention (reflected in both interviews and in meeting minutes) are return and readmission, and migration and development, which were discussed in all five partnerships. The topics that have received less attention relate to cooperation in the police sector. Given the lesser role of these actors in the migration partnerships to date, this is maybe not surprising. In the future, more engagement of these actors and this area of cooperation should be considered.

One notable omission is the issue of human trafficking in Kosovo. Considering that Kosovo is a source, transit and destination for trafficking victims (US Department of State, 2013, 2014a, 2014b; Government of Kosovo, 2012), it is rather surprising that so far this topic has rarely been addressed.

3.3 Perceived Outcomes

This section of the report assesses the perceived outcomes of the migration partnerships by considering a range of perspectives. First coverage of the migration partnerships in the media is critically analysed. This shows broadly that positive coverage of the partnerships cover specific projects implemented by the partnerships. Negative coverage relates to the perceived failure of the partnerships because asylum flows from partnership countries have not decreased. Owing to the inherent complexities of migration flows, the next part of the section provides a detailed analysis of return and asylum statistics in order to objectively assess whether or not this can be considered as a failure of the migration partnerships. The main finding of this analysis is that it is not possible to assume direct relationships between inflows of asylum-seekers or the number of returning migrants and the signature of the migration partnership. However the partnerships may be contributing to better cooperation and information sharing which can make asylum and return systems work more smoothly and efficiently. Beyond this analysis, the perceived outcomes of the migration partnerships are also assessed by looking at 1) reactions of the international community; and 2) analysing the perceived benefits of the partnership. The former identifies a general lack of awareness by certain international organisations of the purpose of the Swiss migration partnerships beyond the specific projects implemented by certain international organisations while the latter highlights a broad range of, often intangible, benefits of the migration partnerships. This points to a need for better communication on the purpose of the partnerships, including a reflection of the long-term benefits increased trust and stronger bilateral relations can have.

One of the hardest aspects of the evaluation has been to concretely assess what outcomes can be associated with the migration partnerships and what would have happened anyway. While it is for example common for the media to present a direct correlation between numbers of asylum-seekers and/or repatriated migrants and the migration partnerships, it is clear that this is a gross oversimplification of a complex reality. In the discussion of outcomes it is extremely important to differentiate between perceived and actual outcomes. Within the framework of this evaluation it is not possible to assess the impact of the migration partnerships on migration flows or on development in the partner countries. It allows, however, to discuss some of the perceived outcomes on both Switzerland and the partner countries.

3.3.1 Media Review

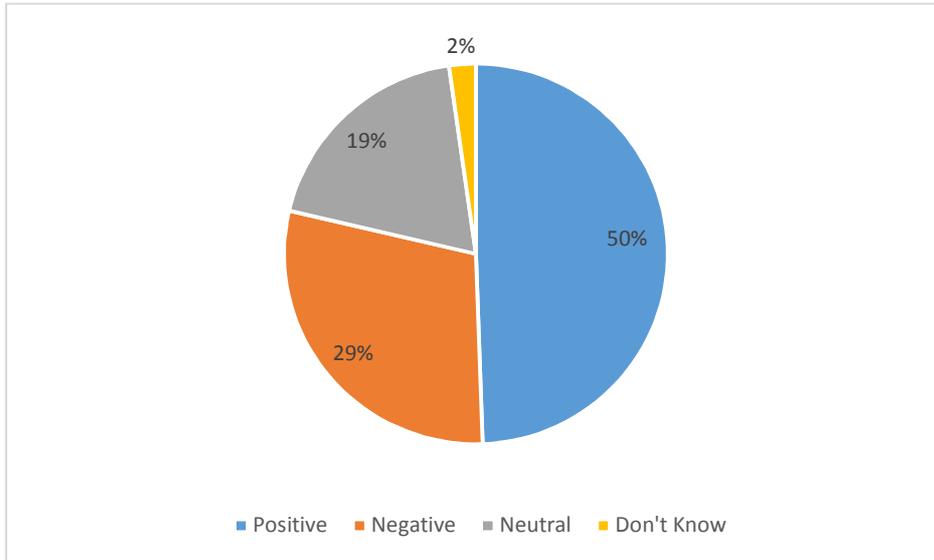
In order to understand how the migration partnerships were perceived by the wider public, a media review was conducted in order to establish the nature of media coverage. This was done in two key stages: 1) by asking respondents for their perceptions on media coverage; and 2) by systematically reviewing articles published in the Swiss media that directly reference the migration partnership(s).

During the interviews, participants were asked for their perceptions on the nature of media attention given to the Swiss migration partnerships (see

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Figure 2). Respondents were asked to state whether they were aware of any media coverage of the partnerships, and if so whether the articles were generally positive, negative or neutral in their discussion of the partnerships. In total, 89 responses were provided by 78 respondents. It should be noted that more responses to this question were provided by Swiss respondents (58%) compared to partner country respondents (42%) which may have introduced bias into the sample.

Figure 2: Perception of Media Coverage of Swiss Migration Partnerships



Source: Interviews (89 observations from 78 participants¹⁶).

Around half of the reported media coverage of the migration partnerships was considered to be positive. This coverage primarily related to projects implemented through the partnerships. These articles typically appeared in partner country media where project staff would invite media to events being held within the context of their projects. Coverage was very much dependent on the media interest in the topic. For example, in Serbia, projects that had implications for the visa liberalisation process and EU accession were more likely to be covered in a positive light. In Bosnia and Herzegovina,

“I think here they have a lot of media attention because they solve concrete situations... like: Roma children, schooling of Roma children or housing for Roma.” (R075; CH).

A frequently mentioned positive story in Switzerland is the police cooperation with Nigeria (see

¹⁶ When participants offered multiple examples of media coverage, these were mapped individually. Sometimes this meant that one respondent identified both positive and negative articles.

Box 1).

Box 1: Police Cooperation Switzerland – Nigeria

The pilot project Police Cooperation Nigeria-Switzerland was launched in early 2011 with the aim of providing an additional instrument that was conducive to curbing the dealings in narcotics, particularly by some Nigerians in Switzerland.

In the fall of 2011, Nigerian police staff of NDLEA and NIS were stationed for the first time with local police or border agencies in three locations throughout Switzerland (Geneva, St. Gallen, Zug). They stayed for two to three weeks each. The main purpose of these working visits was to familiarise the Nigerian officials with the day-to-day work of Swiss police. They joined local police officers on patrol, shadowed border control officers, and observed police investigations of white-collar crime and money laundering cases. While the Nigerian officials were actively involved in carrying out various policing duties and at times wore their uniform, they neither held police powers nor carried weapons.

The media coverage of the project was quite extensive, particularly in newspapers. The visits of the Nigerian policemen were covered extensively in local media in the different cities where such cooperation took place, but also in the national newspapers. In addition there were several documentaries on TV. This really made the project visible to a big part of the population of Switzerland and as such also had an impact on Nigerians in the country.

“I think this is really a good story for the public, to see what exactly we do” (R018; CH).

Just under a third of the responses were related to negative media coverage. These articles are primarily in Swiss media and generally argue that the migration partnerships are failing because asylum applications are increasing, or return figures are not high enough. This is primarily attributed to a misunderstanding of the objectives of the partnership(s) and a general disinterest in their less tangible benefits (i.e. establishing trust, smooth bilateral relations).

“I think many journalists or public opinion for that matter asks the question: so, Switzerland has a migration partnership with Nigeria, but the asylum claims from Nigeria are not decreasing. What’s the use of the migration partnership?” (R001; CH).

The remaining responses were primarily neutral and referred to the technical reporting of key events in the process such as the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding or the agreement of a project.

Beyond the subjective analysis of media articles presented above, the media review was also supplemented with an objective analysis of Swiss media articles. This systematic review largely confirmed the findings from the interviews, particularly with regards to content. In total 73 articles from Swiss newspapers that specifically mentioned the migration partnerships were identified between 2009 and 2014. Of these approximately 40 percent were in French (28 articles) and the remaining 60 percent (45 articles) were in German¹⁷. The majority of articles were decidedly neutral in tone with equal numbers of positive and negative articles (Figure 3). It is likely that the lower levels of neutral coverage reported in the interviews arose because of a tendency to remember – and thus report - extreme stories – whether positive or negative. However, as identified during the interviews, the majority of negative articles related to asylum and return statistics and the perceived failure of the migration partnerships, while positive articles related primarily to specific project or interventions such as the cooperation with the Nigerian police. The coverage of the migration partnerships with Tunisia and Nigeria received considerably more media attention than those in the Western Balkans, or of the concept more generally (Figure 4).

¹⁷ No search was conducted in Italian.

Figure 3: Tonality in Swiss Media Articles

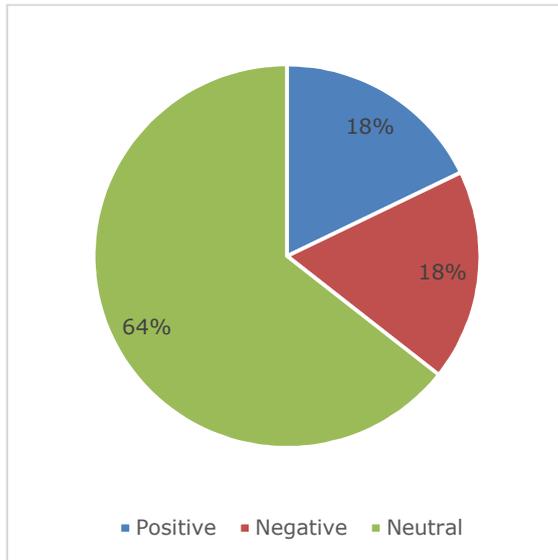
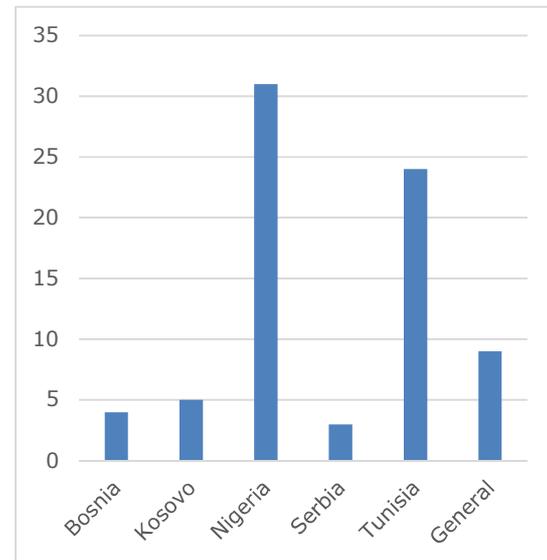


Figure 4: Distribution of Articles by Country



Source: Authors' Own.

3.3.2 Analysis of Asylum-seeker and Return Flows

Since many of the negative reflections in the media on the migration partnerships revolve around a lack of effects of the instrument on the inflows of asylum-seekers from the partner countries and return to those countries, it is important to take these into account in the framework of this evaluation. This section therefore challenges the rather simplistic assumption of a direct connection between the existence of a migration partnership and a decrease in asylum-seekers and increase in returns respectively.

While there might be an expectation (see section 3.4.1) that a migration partnership should lead to a decline or even stop of asylum-seekers from the partner country, this link cannot be made directly.

There are many factors that cause people to take this route and different push factors exist in all five countries, some examples of which have already been presented in Table 2. A lack of employment and education opportunities remains a problem in all five partner countries and as such is one of the main motivations to go to other countries, including Switzerland, in the search of better opportunities. In addition, migration patterns do not always follow a simple trajectory of migration from country A to country B and thus factors in third countries should also be considered when analysing asylum statistics.

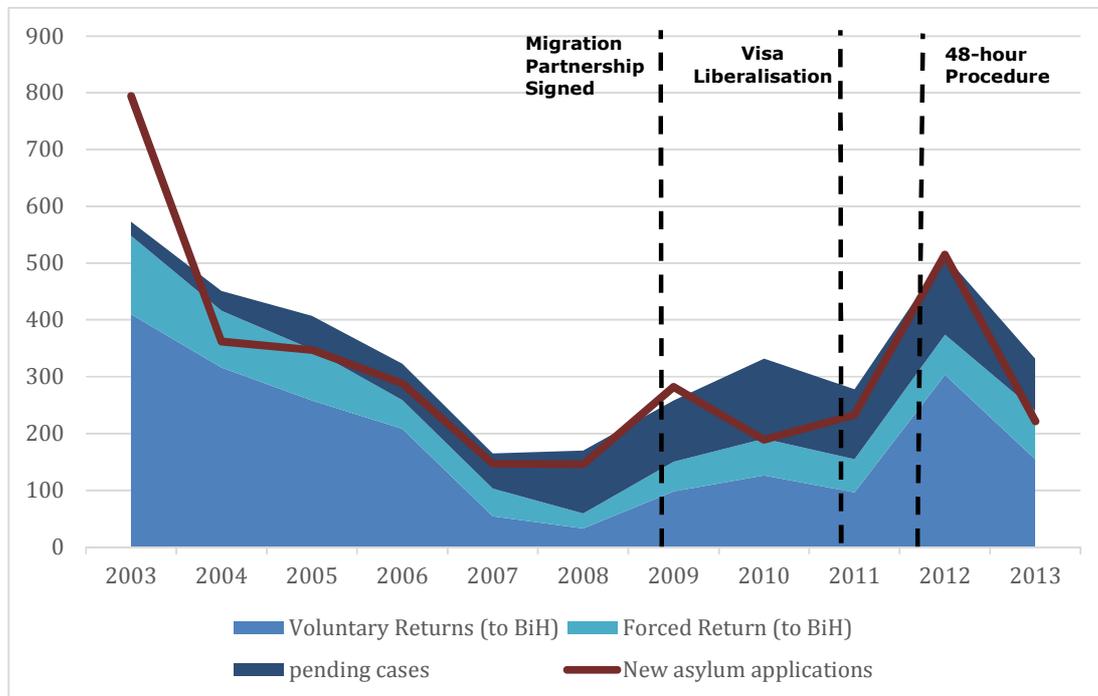
Figures 5-9 present total asylum applications from each of the partner countries and look at the patterns of return to the country by whether the person returned voluntarily or was forced to return. It is important to note that this only reflects returns to the origin country as many asylum claims come from applicants who have first sought asylum in another country party to the Dublin Regulation¹⁸. For these cases, returns are not to the origin country, but to the country in which the first asylum claim was lodged. This is an important point that will be returned to in Figure 10 because Dublin cases account for the majority of flows from both Nigeria and Tunisia.

¹⁸ The Dublin Regulation is an EU law intended to "identify as quickly as possible the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application, and to prevent abuse of asylum procedures" (EUROPA, 2014).

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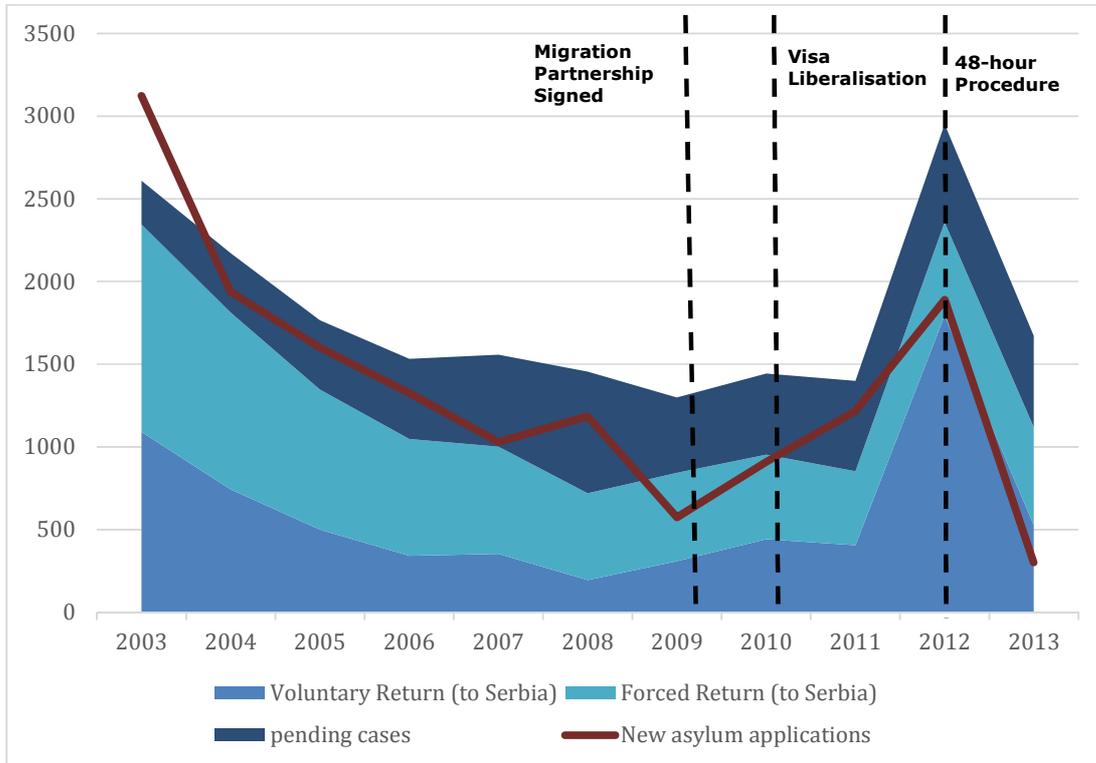
Figure 5 and Figure 6 provide asylum-seeker and return statistics for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia respectively. Both countries display remarkably similar trends. In both countries the numbers steadily decrease from 2003. Small increases are noted around the time of the economic crisis which may be a product of decreasing opportunities for employment in the respective origin countries or countries of residence. In both countries asylum applications increased after the migration partnerships were signed. However, this is likely to be a response to external factors as opposed to the migration partnership. In recent years, the countries of the Schengen area underwent visa liberalisation processes for citizens of Serbia in 2010 and Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2011. These dates correspond to increases in asylum applications in Switzerland. Within the context of the Swiss migration partnership, this increase was noted and discussed between partner countries and Switzerland introduced a 48-hour procedure for applicants from these countries. In both countries, a decrease in applications is apparent after the procedure was implemented. In Serbia, it is also clear that the proportion of forced returns has decreased, while voluntary returns have increased.

Figure 5: Asylum-seeker Applications and Return Flows, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2003-2013



Source: Statistics provided by FOM.

Figure 6: Asylum-seeker Applications and Return Flows, Serbia, 2003-2013



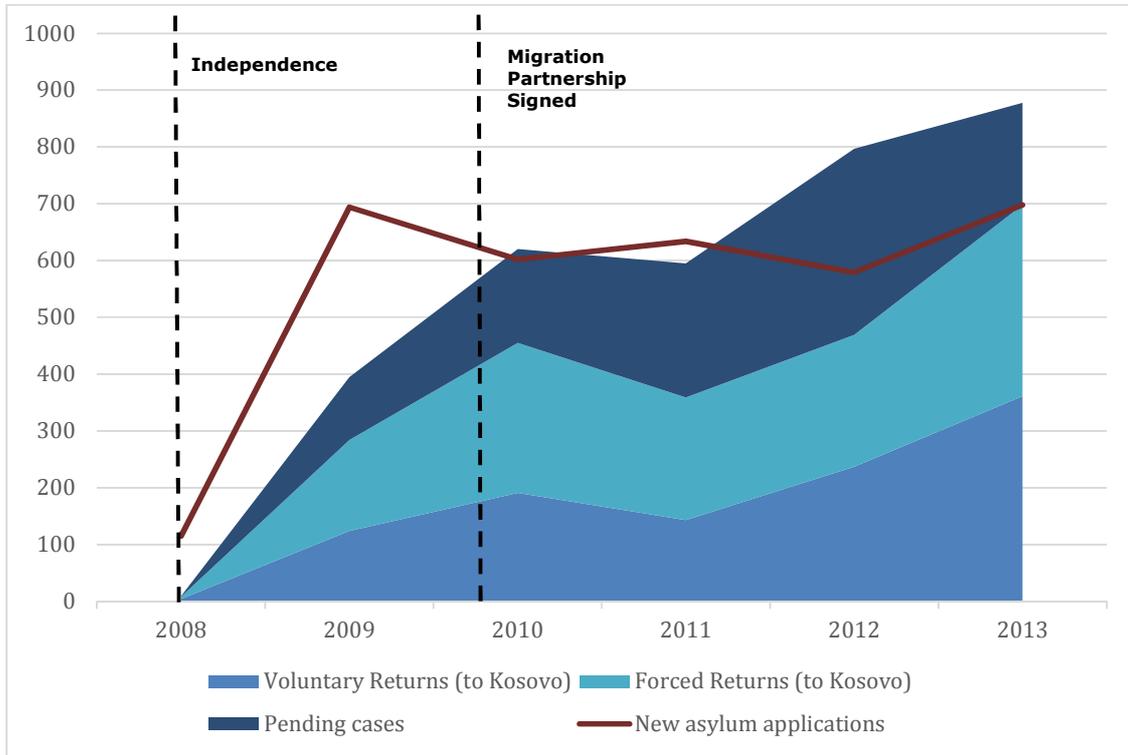
Source: Statistics provided by FOM.

A slightly different picture emerges in Kosovo (

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Figure 7). This is in part due to disaggregated statistics only being available since Kosovo declared independence in 2008. The data shows that asylum claims increased significantly in the year after independence which may be linked to uncertainties regarding the country's status as an independent state. Since 2010 asylum numbers have fluctuated but remained relatively stable. Irregular flows from Kosovo where the migrant does not specifically apply for refugee status are not covered by this data. In the context of the migration partnership a media campaign aimed at discouraging irregular migration has been implemented. While it is widely believed to have been successful, we do not have the data to substantiate this claim. However, it is clear that return is steadily increasing. Kosovars do not yet benefit from visa-free travel in Schengen, but the visa liberalisation roadmap involves improving cooperation on returns and, given the number of readmission agreement signed by the country, it is clear that return is a current priority.

Figure 7: Asylum-seeker Applications and Return Flows, Kosovo, 2008-2013



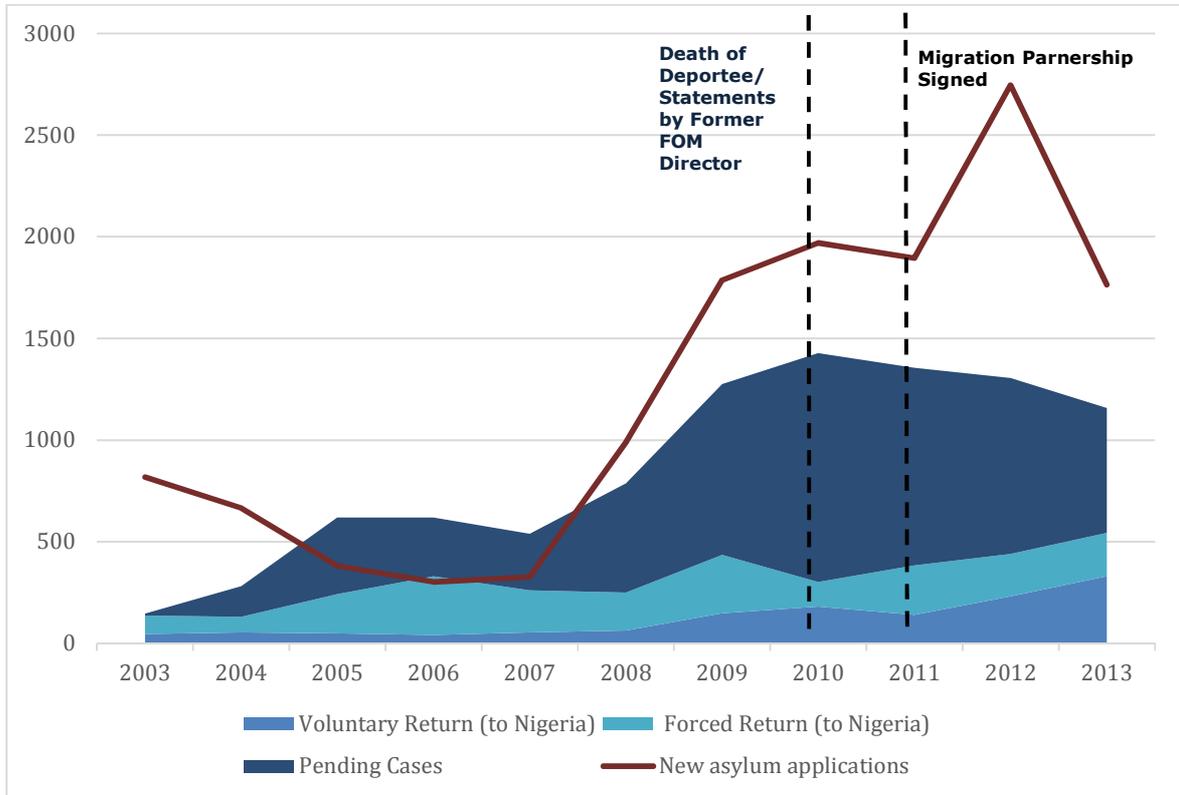
Source: Statistics provided by FOM.

As

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Figure 8 shows there was a significant increase of asylum claims by Nigerians in Switzerland between 2007 and 2010. The number decreased slightly in 2011, the year of the signing of the migration partnership. However, from 2012 the numbers increase again. A quick interpretation of the data may give the impression that the migration partnership is failing. However, it is also clear that returns to Nigeria only capture part of the total asylum flow. As can be seen in Figure 10, the number of Dublin cases has increased in the same period and represents the majority of Nigerian asylum applications. This means that, rather than coming from Nigeria to Switzerland to claim asylum, there is an increase in Nigerians coming from other countries within the Schengen region to Switzerland, most likely as a result of deteriorating economic conditions after the financial crisis. Between 2009 and 2014, just over four fifths (83.0%) of all asylum applications have been Dublin cases (see Figure 10). More recently there has been a significant decrease in asylum claims from Nigeria in Switzerland in 2013. This coincides with an increase in returns since the migration partnership was concluded in 2011. While the numbers are not rising significantly, the trend seems to be going up steadily. This might be a first indication of increased capacity and better cooperation on return and readmission. The decrease in the number of pending cases supports this assertion. Whether this trend will continue and in how far the migration partnership might have impacted upon it remains to be seen. However, it is important to note that an overly simplistic interpretation of the data (i.e. that the migration partnership is not working because asylum numbers increased) should be avoided and the complexity of the migration patterns of Nigerians acknowledged.

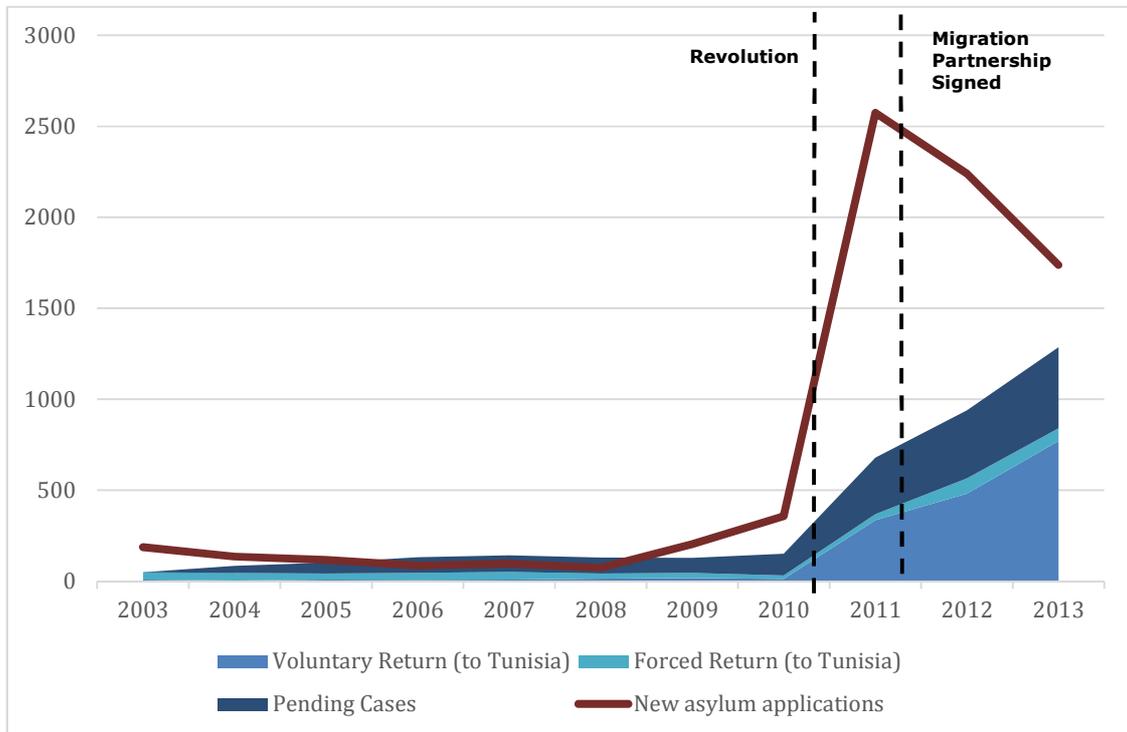
Figure 8: Asylum-seeker Applications and Return Flows, Nigeria, 2003-2013



Source: Statistics provided by FOM.

For Tunisia a clear picture emerges (Figure 9). The number of asylum-seekers increased exponentially between 2010 and 2011; however they have been decreasing since. Returns from Switzerland to Tunisia have been increasing in the same time period. These trends reflect the political situation in Tunisia. In December 2010, protests demonstrating against the economic hardship, high unemployment, corruption, and poverty spread across the country, and led to the downfall of President Ben Ali in January 2011 after 23 years in power. In response a "national unity government" was formed and the new Constituent Assembly as well as the interim president Moncef Marzouki were elected in October 2011 and December 2011 respectively (CIA, 2014). Since the uprisings, Tunisia is undergoing a process of democratic transition. The murder of two Tunisian high-level politicians and a political deadlock in 2013 led to ongoing institutional and political instability. Yet, at the beginning of this year the current government adopted a new Constitution, appointed a new government and announced general elections for the end of 2014 (World Bank, 2014b).

Figure 9: Asylum-seeker Applications and Return Flows, Tunisia, 2003-2013



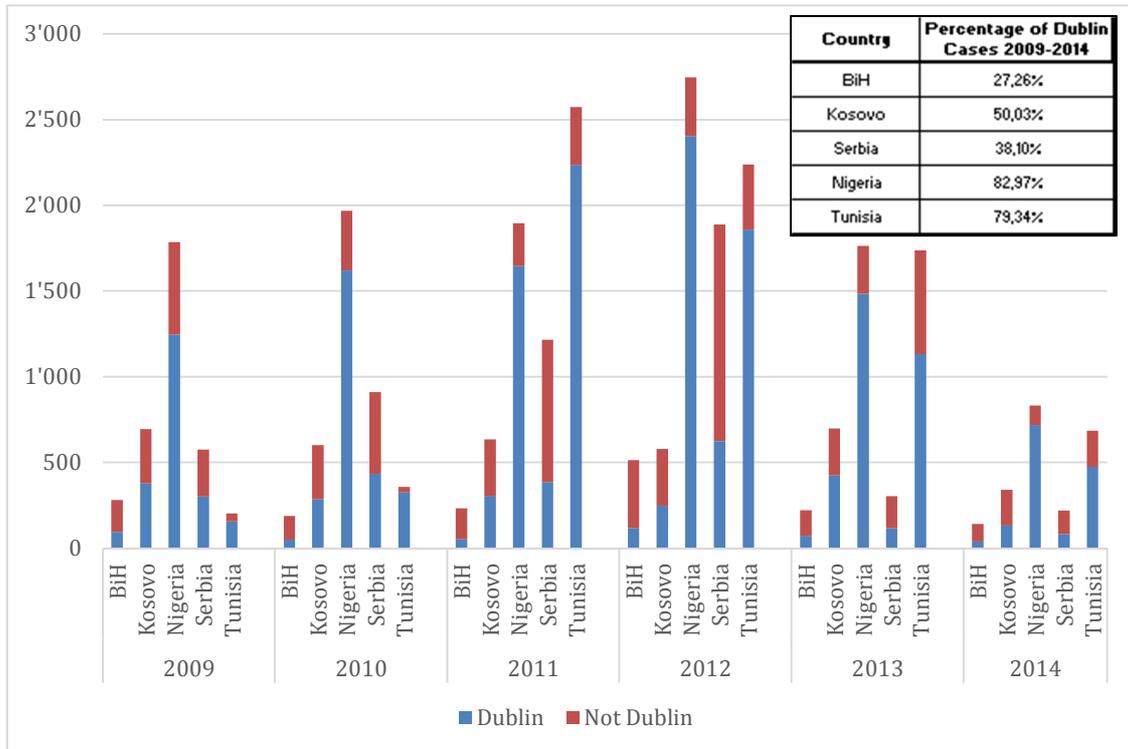
Source: Statistics provided by FOM.

Figure 10 provides an overview of asylum applications received in Switzerland between 2009 and 2014¹⁹ disaggregated by whether the claim was a Dublin case or not. As has already been highlighted above, the statistics for Nigeria and Tunisia clearly show that the majority of asylum claims (83 percent and 79 percent respectively) are from applicants who have first applied in another country covered by the Dublin regulations (such as Italy²⁰). For Kosovo, around half of the claims that have been made are Dublin cases and for Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina the numbers are much smaller but still remain significant at 38 percent and 27 percent respectively. The significance of these numbers points more to changing circumstances in the EU than to specific country related factors driving asylum numbers in Switzerland. It is not reasonable to expect that a bilateral partnership between two countries can also tackle push factors in third countries. However this does point to the possible added-value that multilateral partnerships could have.

¹⁹ 2014 statistics as available on 15 December 2014.

²⁰ Approximately 60% (11,365/18,941) of all Dublin cases in Switzerland in 2014 were from migrants who first applied in Italy (FOM, 2014)

Figure 10: Asylum Applications from Partnership Countries, 2009-2014



Source: Statistics provided by FOM.

What the preceding discussion of asylum and return statistics makes clear is that context matters. Asylum flows are often driven by external circumstances that go beyond what one can reasonably expect a partnership between two governments to control. Often, as in Tunisia and Nigeria, the majority of asylum claims are Dublin cases meaning that it is more plausible that factors in third countries are influencing flows. This cannot be controlled by a migration partnership, however it does provide the rationale for exploring multilateral migration partnerships, as already set out in Article 100. However, it is clear that the migration partnerships may make both asylum and return processes smoother. This became very clear during the course of the interviews. Aside from the identification of the 48-hour asylum procedure outlined above, the cooperation on return with Nigeria was also viewed very positively:

“This is a programme that more than 500 Nigerians have benefitted from and has enabled these Nigerians to be assisted to return voluntarily” (R102; NG).

Furthermore, between January 2005 and mid February 2011, when the Swiss Migration Partnership with Nigeria was signed, a total of 16 identification missions to Switzerland took place. Of the persons to be identified, 81 per cent (1,468 individuals) were successfully identified. Since the migration partnership has been signed there has been a further 15 identification missions. The identification rate has risen to 93 per cent (1,027 individuals).

In order to view the situation in Switzerland in a comparative perspective, the research team first examined asylum trends from the partnership countries in several key destination countries (France, Germany, Italy and Sweden) (EASO, 2014). Using Eurostat data from 2008 to 2013²¹, the trends in asylum requests from each of the partnership countries were coded according to whether flows increased, decreased, fluctuated or remained constant over this

²¹ With the exception of Kosovo where data from 2009 to 2013 was used.

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time period (Table 9). This exercise uncovered findings that asylum flows are often in a state of fluctuation and, that flows to Switzerland are comparatively low when examined next to flows to other main destination countries such as Italy and Germany.

Table 9: Patterns in Asylum Applicants in Key Destination Countries, 2008-2013²²

	France	Germany	Italy	Sweden	Switzerland
BA	+	+	~(=)	~(+)	~(=)
KV	~(+)	~(+)	-	~(=)	=
RS	~(-)	+	=	~(=)	~(-)
NG	+	+	~(-)	+	~(+)
TN	+	~(+)	~(-)	~(+)	~(-)

Source: Authors' own analysis based on data from Eurostat (see Appendix 5).

Note: + upward trend; - downward trend; = even trend; ~ (+ - =) fluctuation plus overall direction

In Switzerland, asylum applications from each of the partnerships countries have fluctuated and either remained fairly constant or decreased. The exception is Nigeria. However, as discussed above, this may be due to deteriorating economic conditions in other EU countries, such as Italy. Germany, on the other hand, has witnessed increased flows across the board, with the largest increases from the Western Balkans. France and Sweden have generally also experienced upward trends in asylum applications although to a lesser extent.

While asylum applications from the Western Balkans increased in Switzerland after visa liberalization and decreased after the introduction of the 48-hour procedure, numbers have continued to rise in Germany. Between 2012 and 2013, the numbers of asylum applications from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Germany more than doubled (from 2,370 to 4,845 applicants). Applications from Serbia have also been steadily increasing with 2013 figures representing a nine-fold increase on 2008 numbers (2,250 to 18,000 applicants). While applicants from Kosovo have fluctuated, an overall upward trend is evident increasing from 1,900 applicants in 2009 to 4,425 applicants in 2013.

While the case of Tunisia is slightly more complex, a plausible geographical explanation can be offered. Italy and Switzerland received the greatest numbers of asylum requests from Tunisia among the selected countries. Both countries are now witnessing a decrease in flows, which is in line with improvements in Tunisia post revolution. Italy was the main point of entry for Tunisians leaving during the revolution (FRONTEX, 2012). Given the geographical border Italy had with Switzerland it is not unusual to observe that some asylum-seekers transit through Italy towards Switzerland. It is also possible that Switzerland is also a transit country for those wishing to settle in France, a more traditional destination country for Tunisian migrants.

What becomes apparent from this analysis is that the flows to Switzerland are comparatively lower than in other destination countries such as Germany and Italy.

In short, when assessing the impact of the migration partnerships on asylum and return, it is of utmost importance that the complex reality of migration flows and trends is taken into consideration, which can often take the discussion beyond the bilateral relationships between two countries. This is particularly true for Nigeria and Tunisia given the high numbers of applicants from Dublin countries.

Thus, the migration partnerships should not be judged based solely on trends asylum applications or return numbers. It is plausible that, in the long-term the migration partnerships may increase returns. This would be a product of improved relationships and processes achieved through mutual discussions on a sensitive issue, which is ultimately one of the primary areas in which the migration partnerships offer added-value as an approach to migration management (see Section 4.3).

²² See Appendix 5 for graphs by partner country on which the table is based.

3.3.3 Reactions from the International Community

Many of the representatives of the international community that were interviewed in the context of the evaluation were not aware of the specificities of the migration partnerships and felt unable to comment on many of the interview questions (see Appendix 1). It appears that they know about Swiss involvement in migration issues in these countries and also about the way the Swiss work, but do not connect this with the concept of migration partnerships.

However, the migration partnerships seem to generate interest and received positive comments among those actors that are aware of what they are and how they function. One reason for this interest is a broader interest in migration governance at a global level. During the preparatory discussions for the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the design of a new set of Sustainable Development Goals, the role of global partnerships has been forwarded. However it has also been argued that many issues relating to migration require bilateral cooperation and that the success of any global partnership will depend on first achieving good partnerships both bilaterally and at a regional level (McGregor et al, 2014). Thus, there is interest in following the progress of the Swiss migration partnerships, particularly given that the establishment of multilateral migration partnerships is also stipulated in Article 100.

This interest can be concretely seen in the coverage of the migration partnerships at the High Level Dialogue (HLD) on Migration and Development in New York on 3-4 October, 2013. At the HLD, the Round Table on "Strengthening Partnerships and Cooperation on International Migration, Mechanisms to Effectively Integrate Migration into Development Policies and Promoting Coherence at all Levels" was co-chaired by Switzerland and Nigeria, which, in some sense, brought visibility to the migration partnership between the two countries. The Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees (MHRR) of Bosnia and Herzegovina also participated in the High Level Dialogue. In their speech, the representative of MHRR highlighted that many developed countries do not include linkages between migration and development in their strategies:

"The [...] Migration Partnership between BA and Switzerland, which contains a specific area linking migration with development, (is a) best instance of bilateral cooperation". (Quotation provided by the SCO Office in BA).

Even more explicitly, the migration partnership was presented by Nigeria as a "best practice" in terms of cooperation on migration issues:

"Nigeria also refers to this migration partnership as a good practice" (R001; CH).

"They (other countries) should learn from it [...] maybe you can't beat the example of Switzerland" (R102; NG).

"Other countries should try to emulate it" (R098, NG).

This in turn generated interest in other countries based on what they have heard about the cooperation with the current partner countries:

"We do get [...] requests from other countries that ask for a migration partnership to be concluded" (R021; CH).

3.3.4 Perceived Benefits for Switzerland and the Partner Countries

While the benefits of the migration partnerships will be discussed more thoroughly in Section 4, participants were also asked to reflect on the benefits they perceived the migration partnerships were bringing to Switzerland and the partner countries. In general, these related very much to improvements in relationships between different stakeholders, whether internally within governments, between governments and project implementers (often civil society or international organisations) and bilaterally between governments. This in turn led to smoother cooperation on a range of issues, most notably on irregular migration and return. The main benefits highlighted during the interviews are summarised in

Table 10. These are listed by the overall frequency with which they were cited. Improved bilateral relations relates to improved contacts, new communication channels and mutual learning and information exchange. Policy development primarily relates to developing overarching strategies that seek to promote the positive developmental impacts of migration while mitigating negatives effects. Technical assistance primarily relates to the projects (and associated budgets), that were made possible through the partnerships. In general the perceived benefits across the partner countries were very similar although some differences can be observed particularly in Tunisia and Nigeria where the perceived benefits related more to concrete outcomes and as opposed to improvements in processes more generally. In Kosovo, the focus of government partners lied mostly on the technical support with international and civil society actors reporting improved relations with different parts of the government and as a result reporting better internal coordination.

Table 10: Perceived Benefits of the Migration Partnerships

Perceived Benefits Switzerland				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve bilateral relations • Helps to promote whole of government approach • Increases efficiency in day to day operations • Better management of irregular migration • Improved understanding of partner country context • Improved cooperation on return • Strong basis for addressing current and future problems • Improves reputation of Switzerland • Promotes development and stability in partner countries • Flexibility to respond to partner country needs. 				
Perceived Benefits Partner Countries (listed based on frequency of citations in interviews)				
BA	KV	RS	NG	TN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building • Bilateral relations • Policy development • Technical assistance • Internal coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance • Capacity building • Policy development • Bilateral relations • Better coordination between national actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bilateral relations • Internal coordination • Policy development • Technical assistance • Internal coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bilateral relations • Capacity building • Improved international profile • Increased public awareness • Reduced irregular migration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal migration opportunities • Bilateral relations • Capacity building • Policy development • Return assistance

Source: Interviews.

3.4 Balance of Interests

This section of the report addresses the overarching question relating to whether or not the partnerships provide an equitable balance of power between the different actors involved. It builds on the interest and project mapping (Section 3.1 and Section 3.2) by examining self-reported views on the representation of interests within the partnerships as well as by concretely looking at omissions and compromises. Consideration is also given to perspectives on the flexibility of the partnerships and to how they have evolved over time. Key observations are that the migration partnerships are largely adapted to their objectives and do reflect a fairly even balance of power between partner countries. There are some inevitable imbalances that arise from the fact that Switzerland is the funder of the partnerships. However these were largely mitigated by their broad and flexible design which allowed the partner countries to reap benefits in accordance with local needs and interests. It is hypothesised that, as the partnerships mature, partners will be able to bring new challenges and existing omissions to the table and the trust established by the partnership will help to identify joint solutions to these challenges. For this reason it is considered premature to end any of the partnerships at this stage.

3.4.1 Representation of Interests

In the framework of the evaluation, interview respondents were asked for their subjective opinion on whether the migration partnerships represent their interests. The majority of respondents – both Swiss and partner country actors – responded positively:

“We presented our needs and they accommodated our needs” (R087; BA).

The framework of the migration partnership allows different actors to bring forward topics that may not be naturally discussed within the context of other forms of bilateral cooperation such as bilateral readmission agreements. Several Swiss respondents identified that having a partnership that covered a broad range of issues, also allowed sensitive issues like return to be broached in a constructive manner as illustrated by the following quote:

“I do not think we would be able to talk so openly about extremely sensitive topics like return, without this institutionalised framework” (R001; CH).

One of the main reasons why participants argued that they were satisfied with the extent to which their interests were reflected in the partnerships was due the partnerships’ broad and flexible design with integrated government to government dialogues organised on a regular basis. This has a number of implications. First, as existing objectives are achieved, new interests and objectives can be brought to the table. For example, in Nigeria, the topic of migration and development was only covered extensively by project implementation after cooperation on return had improved. Second, as new challenges arise, they can be jointly tackled through the network of contacts established by the partnerships. An example is the joint reaction of actors on both sides to an increase in asylum applications from Bosnia and Herzegovina after visa liberalisation.

“The Swiss side reacted immediately in consultations with us and we together resolved that problem” (R073; BA).

When asked more concretely about current **omissions** from the partnerships, the majority of respondents did not identify any specific aspect that is missing. Those omissions that were mentioned are summarised in Table 11 below. The majority of omissions were identified on the Swiss side, while only a few partner country actors identified specific areas that they would

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still like to see represented in the migration partnerships. This may however be due to respondents providing socially desirable responses – a risk in any evaluation.

The highest number of omissions was identified in the case of Tunisia. Due to the relatively recent ratification of the partnership and the transitional nature of the Tunisian government, this is not a surprising finding. For example, social security was noted as an omission on the Tunisian side and yet this was discussed in the first expert meeting where a meeting between the Ministry for Social Affairs (MOSA) and the Federal Social Insurance was suggested as a first step in moving cooperation between the two countries forward in this area. This does not reappear in later minutes and was not identified by interview respondents. However, the representatives of the Tunisian government at these meetings also fluctuated over time and thus it is plausible that this interest fell through a gap.

Table 11: Perceived Omissions from the Migration Partnerships

Migration Partnership	Perceived Omissions	Identified By	
		Country	Affiliation
General	Addressing human trafficking	CH	SDC
	Possibilities for regular migration	CH CH	FOM SDC
	Further strengthening bilateral relations	CH	PD
	Transferability of social security	CH	SDC
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Addressing human trafficking	CH	SDC
	Tackling irregular migration	CH	SCO
Kosovo	Sustainable return	CH KV	FOM MOIA
Nigeria	Further strengthening bilateral relations	CH	Embassy
Serbia	Better treatment of migrants	CH	SDC
	Overall strategy and coordination	RS	EIO
Tunisia	Better treatment of migrants	CH	PD
	Cooperation in identification	CH	FOM
	Diaspora engagement	CH CH	PD SECO
	Overall strategy and coordination	CH TN	SCO MFA
	Possibilities for regular migration	TN	MEVT
	Portability of accrued social security rights	TN	MOSA
	Recognition of skills	TN	MOSA
	Transparency of visa procedure	TN	MOSA

Source: Interviews.

If one group of actors consistently has to make **compromises** in terms of the representation of their interests, this could be considered an imbalance of power. However, when asked about whether compromises had been made, many actors viewed this question in a different way and instead discussed compromises as an integral and necessary part of the migration partnership instrument. It is acknowledged that, while not everything is implemented in the exact way an actor envisioned, the regular dialogues and discussions mean that there is usually a mutual decision in the end. This is not viewed as a compromise per se, but the result of a discussion. This view is neatly captured by the following quotes:

“The whole thing and the whole of government approach is a constant re-worked and re-invented compromise” (R028; CH).

“There is no agreement that does not have compromises” (R118; TN).

“(In) every partnership [...] you have to make compromises” (R100; CH).

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Funding and human resources is another area where compromises are inevitable. The projects implemented within the partnerships require funding as well as oversight. Thus it is logical that some compromise will need to be made in terms of how many activities can be pursued within the constraints of the available resources. It is plausible that those actors with both human and monetary resources may be in a better position to push their interests forward although the evaluators find no direct evidence of this.

While there was a general consensus regarding the inevitability of compromises, actors in Tunisia were the most likely to report specific examples. Many of the omissions cited by Tunisian actors (Table 11) were also considered to be compromises. Additionally, the Stagiaire Agreement for young professionals, which Switzerland signed with Tunisia in 2012 and which entered into force in mid-August 2014 could be considered as the product of compromise. This agreement allows up to 150 young Tunisians annually to come to Switzerland for a maximum of 18 months to get on-the-job training. As there is no legal basis for general access to the labour market, this was introduced to address the Tunisian interest of additional access to the Swiss labour market (beyond that already offered through Article 18 ff. of the Federal Act on Foreign Nationals). It was also conditioned on the ratification of a readmission agreement, which addressed Switzerland's interest in return.

3.4.2 Evolution of Interests over Time

As highlighted in Section 1.1, the Swiss government has a long history in applying a whole of government approach to foreign migration policy. This means that the different mandates and interests of actors have been discussed and there is a general awareness of the goals of other actors working on migration related matters within the Swiss government. Ultimately, this meant that the Swiss government entered into the partnerships with a clearly defined set of flexible objectives that could be adapted to specific country contexts, but which was reflective of the broad range of interests of different actors in Switzerland.

While the actors on the Swiss side had spent significant time navigating the various interests of different actors during the design of the instrument, a similar process also had to take place in each of the partner countries. For some of the partner countries, structures to promote inter-ministerial cooperation (such as the IMZ-structure) do not exist and thus time was needed for the partner countries to be clear on their own interests and objectives. For this reason, several respondents in the partner countries highlighted the added-value of the regular meetings conducted within the framework of the partnerships. These meetings allowed them to meet, prepare and travel with other actors working on similar issues within their own government, which helped them to reach common ground. In the case of Tunisia, the partnership also helped in the establishment of a general technical cooperation steering committee representing actors from Switzerland and Tunisia, which also brought actors together. Resources for this kind of activity may not have otherwise been made available.

This has meant that the quality of the migration dialogues²³ improved over time. This is explicitly recorded in the minutes of the meetings conducted within the Bosnia and Herzegovina partnership and has been observed by interview participants in the case of Kosovo and Nigeria:

"The partnership is getting more and more refined, sophisticated and much better". (R093; NG).

"What we have seen in the migration partnership is something that was reinforced with time passing by" (R042; KV).

In Tunisia it is perhaps too early to see such shifts in the discussions. However, it will be important that time is allocated to discuss the broader objectives of the migration partnerships beyond return and labour market access at the first expert meeting after the new government is in place.

²³ This was also referred to during Joint Technical Committees and Expert Meetings.

3.4.3 Migration Partnerships: Equitable Balance of Interests?

The preceding sections have considered the balance of interests represented in the Swiss migration partnerships in several stages. First, the interests of each actor was mapped and compared between partner countries. This mapping exercise was then used to categorise the projects implemented within the partnerships to establish the extent to which they were reflected in project implementation. Government participants were then asked for their perception on the extent to which the partnership reflected their interests both directly and indirectly. An initial assessment may point towards power imbalance simply because the Swiss are the primary funders of the project. However, as they also have interests (such as good cooperation on return), partner countries also hold a degree of power. Thus, a more nuanced approach to the question is necessary.

Migration is an inherently difficult field around which to base a partnership. According to Hansen (2011), this is because the interests of primarily origin and primarily destination countries differ. Hansen does however argue that, under certain circumstances, such as where interests converge and common ground is identified, international cooperation on migration can succeed. What the evaluation has found, albeit with some caveats and exceptions, is that the expressed interests and implemented activities are largely in alignment. This is reflected by the general levels of satisfaction with the partnership as captured by the following quotes:

“We feel that this is the way to proceed in relations between nations...” (R102; NG).

“The Swiss always give you what you need if it fits in their general plans” (R070; BA).

However, the second quote does indirectly point to the fact the Swiss government does have more power and the ways in which this manifests are worthy of consideration. At the first migration dialogues in each of the countries, the Swiss delegation opened with a presentation of what the migration partnership could include. It was already established at this point in time that general access to the Swiss labour market, while of interest to several of the partner countries (particularly Nigeria and Tunisia) could not be offered within the confines of the Swiss legal framework. Thus it could be argued that the set of interests that partner countries can have is predefined.

Return also took a central place in the discussion. When talking about the balance of interest, the fact that cooperation on return issues is the key interest of Switzerland in concluding a migration partnership to this date, cannot be ignored. In that sense, one could say that there is an inherent imbalance of interests between the partners. However, as Hansen (2011) asserts: “cooperation is hardly likely to succeed if it begins with the claim that we (the receiving country) want less of you (the sending country). To avoid this, both sending and receiving countries require incentives to cooperate” (p17-18). An increased recognition of the interconnected nature of migration issues makes cooperation on development issues also of relevance to return, since it can tackle the factors that may contribute to migration in the first place, or which inhibit return. A key example, which will also be discussed later in the report, is that of the clinical psychology project in Kosovo, where psychological support, given the psychological impacts of war, was assessed to be a key need for many potential returnees. A gap in service provision is being addressed through the implementation of a post-graduate education course to increase the domestic supply of clinical psychologists.

Additionally, the whole of government approach that is key to the migration partnerships is a specific way of working within a government. While this has been institutionalised in Switzerland for some time already, it is unusual in some of the partner countries (Kosovo, Nigeria, Tunisia). In a sense, the migration partnerships require a degree of inter-ministerial cooperation on the side of the partner country for it to function well and thus in a sense, could be viewed as a way of exporting the Swiss way of internal cooperation to the partner countries, which could be considered as an imposition and thus an imbalance of power. However, it is questionable whether this should be considered as a negative point, particularly when many representatives in partner countries consider this to be one of the benefits of the migration partnerships since through preparation and travel to the meetings they are able to

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meet, discuss and negotiate a common set of interests that can in turn be presented to the Swiss delegation. Section 4 provides a more detailed analysis of this particular point.

The way countries communicate their interests is important to also have these heard and taken into account. This very much also depends on the way the partner country coordinates internally and with the Swiss. A stronger partner is likely to have a better balance of interests. What is important to keep in mind in this context is the fact that the migration partnership is a process and, as such, is also inherently flexible. So, if the balance of interest is uneven, that can change over time and even change direction.

In summary, it can be said that the migration partnerships are largely adapted to their objectives and reflect a fairly even balance of power between partner countries. There are some inevitable imbalances that arise from the fact that Switzerland is the funder of the partnerships. However, these were largely mitigated by the partnerships' broad and flexible design which allowed the partner countries to bring forward their interests in accordance with local needs and interests. While there are some areas where more could be done, e.g. the fight against human trafficking, interests of actors on both sides are largely reflected in the implementation of the partnerships. It is hypothesised that, as the partnerships mature, partners will be able to bring new challenges and existing omissions to the table and the trust established by the partnership will enable to identify joint solutions to these challenges. For this reason, it is considered premature to end any of the partnerships at this stage.

4. Discussion: Impact Hypothesis

The impact hypothesis of the instrument is that migration partnerships give the possibility through mutual understanding and cooperation to find constructive solutions to the challenges posed by migration, to promote opportunities as well as to create synergies between the different actors involved in migration policy within each partner country. This is based on the central objectives emphasised in the partnerships:

1. Recognise and integrate interests of all partners in order to ensure that every partner benefits;
2. Swiss migration policy towards the partner country must be coherent;
3. Promote the positive effects that migration can have and address challenges constructively.

The first objective has largely been covered by Section 3.1-3.3 of the report and it can be broadly stated that the migration partnerships do recognise and, where possible, integrate the interests of a broad range of partners. This is evidenced both by a systematic assessment of the translation of interests into technical cooperation projects as well as by considering the subjective opinions of project partners. The second and third objective will therefore be the primary focus of Section 4.

Given that coherence is one of the key stated objectives of the instrument, it is important to establish some conceptual clarity before proceeding with the evaluation findings. Policy coherence is generally situated within the context of development²⁴. However, it can also be considered as a process of ensuring that policy objectives are not undermined by either internal inconsistencies (i.e. an objective of promoting the access of migrant or minority children to education may be undermined if budget allocations for education are not in alignment with the proposed method of achieving the objective); or by policies in another area (i.e. policies to promote return may be undermined if there is an inadequate supply of housing). In the area of migration these policy interdependencies also exist between countries which, as argued by Betts (2011) "represents a normative basis for developing institutionalised cooperation insofar as it results in the choices that are made leading to outcomes that are sub-optimal in comparison to those that would have maximised the aggregate welfare of society" (Betts, 2011, p25).

Given that the third central objective of the partnership is to promote the positive effects that migration can have while addressing its challenges, the concept of policy and institutional coherence for migration and development becomes relevant. While discussing policy and institutional coherence for migration and development, Hong and Knoll (2014) state the following: "Policies related to migration and development, across various policy domains, are coherent to the extent that they: pursue synergies to advance shared objectives, actively seek to minimise or eliminate negative side effects of policies; prevent policies from detracting from one another or from the achievement of agreed-upon development goals" (pvii). Embedded in this definition are two sets or interrelated factors: institutional arrangements that foster coherent policies; and the policies themselves. These broad categories have been applied in the coding of the interview transcripts.

Keeping these conceptual definitions in mind, the remainder of this section assesses the extent to which the impact hypothesis can be confirmed. The section is divided into three main areas. The first considers the extent to which the partnerships promote institutional mechanisms that can contribute towards the process of achieving policy coherence. The second considers concrete examples of incoherencies and constructive solutions to migration problems that have been identified, and in some cases addressed, by the migration partnerships. The third offers some discussion regarding the added-value of having such an approach to migration.

²⁴ Policy coherence for development, according to the OECD, is the process of "taking into consideration the economic, social, environmental and governance dimensions of sustainable development at all stages of national policy making and international decision making" (OECD, 2013, p1).

4.1 Institutional Coherence

This section of the report considers institutional factors that promote policy coherence on two levels: internal coordination and bilateral cooperation; and assesses the extent to which the migration partnerships have contributed to improvements in these areas. The key ways in which the migration partnerships are believed to improve institutional coherence are through bringing actors together and promoting a comprehensive approach to migration. Thus the regular migration dialogues¹ involving all of the relevant actors working on migration are considered by the evaluators to be one of the most significant contributions of the partnerships in terms of achieving its impact hypothesis.

Government respondents were directly asked to identify ways in which the Swiss migration partnerships had assisted in identifying policy incoherence²⁵. The key ways in which the migration partnerships are believed to improve institutional coherence are by bringing actors together and promoting a comprehensive approach to migration (see Table 12).

Table 12: Institutional Mechanisms for Promoting Coherence

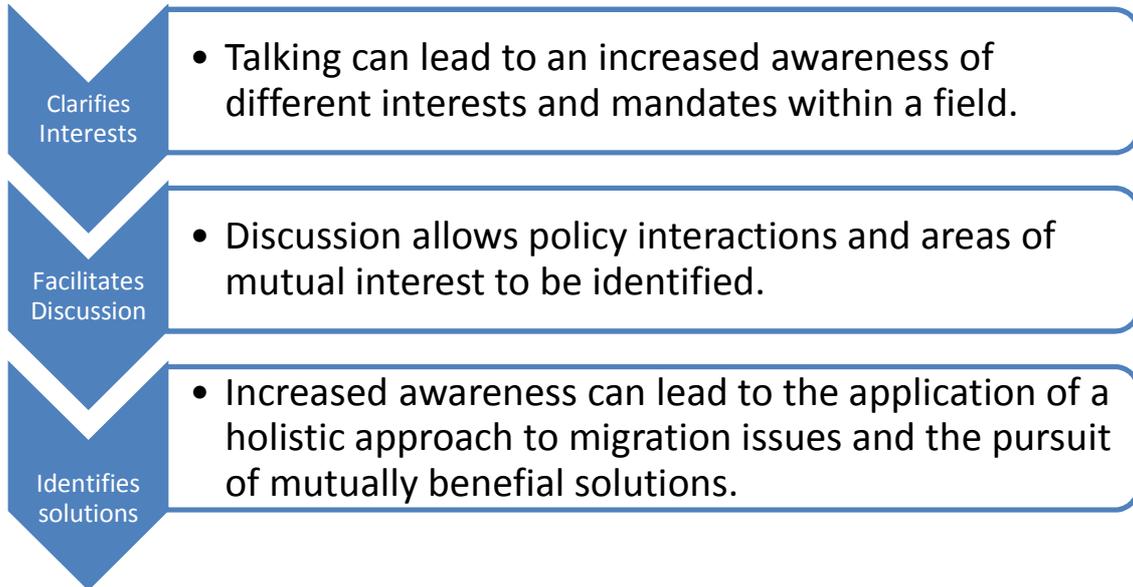
Institutional Coherence	
Brings actors together	Clarifies interests
	Facilitates discussion
	Identifies common interests and solutions
	Coordination
	Cooperation
	Facilitates bilateral information exchange
Comprehensive approach to migration	Involves broader actors
	Changing discourse
	Link and develop strategies
Other	Budget allocation does not match objectives

Source: Interviews.

As noted in Section 3.1 interests can often be shaped by a particular mandate. If ministries work in silos they may not recognise the overlaps between their interest and mandates, and those of another ministry. A clear example of this is promoting development in origin countries may encourage return and investment thus assist in achieving the interest of the FOM in return and the interest of the SDC in development. The very fact that the FOM also identifies migration and development as an interest is perhaps a legacy of the approach to migration in Switzerland, for example, the IMZ-Structure (see Section 1.1). However having different interests is not policy incoherence and thus reflects only the first step in moving actors towards discussions that lead to the identification of common interests. This in turn can develop into constructive solutions to migration issues that reflect the interests of different actors and promote synergies between them. This can lead to more coherent policies (see Figure 11). Thus, the regular meetings and dialogues that have occurred within the context of the migration partnerships can be considered to be one of the most significant contributions towards achieving the instrument’s impact hypothesis of the partnerships.

²⁵ It should be noted that this question was not clear to all participants, particularly in the partner countries. Often what was identified related more to gaps, omissions or differences of interests as opposed to policy incoherence. Thus the majority of responses (75%) analysed in this section come from Swiss interviews. This imbalance is addressed through an examination of answers provided to more specific questions about internal coordination and bilateral cooperation.

Figure 11: Bringing Actors Together: The Process of Achieving Coherence



Source: Authors' Own based on Interviews.

This process is equally applicable for discussions between domestic actors as it is for bilateral discussions. On one hand, meetings between different actors within a government can potentially facilitate internal coherence. On the other hand, meetings with actors from another country can facilitate coherence between governments. Discussions with a broader range of actors such as policy implementers (in the case of Switzerland Cantonal Offices) as well as service providers (such as NGOs) and civil society can help in the identification of areas in which policy is not working and where incoherence may be the cause. This can lead to the development of mutually beneficial solutions.

4.1.1 Internal and Bilateral Cooperation

The preceding section has identified how the migration partnerships can promote policy coherence, largely from the Swiss perspective. The following section explores whether it does by looking at whether government actors report that the migration partnerships have improved internal coordination and bilateral cooperation.

Within Swiss Government

In general, most Swiss actors feel that the migration partnerships have improved cooperation within the Swiss government.

“It forced us to really sit down together, to work on a joint concept” (R036; CH).

Those that were less sure about the impact of the Swiss migration partnerships on internal cooperation most often questioned the relationship between the *modus operandi* of the Swiss government (the WOGA) and the partnerships.

“I think it is difficult to distinguish between the partnership and this whole of government programme that we have anyway” (R031; CH).

“It is not the partnerships that have improved the cooperation. Maybe the other way around” (R021; CH).

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However, for many Swiss actors, the migration partnerships allow them to practice the WOGA in a very pragmatic and practical way through preparations for dialogues and developing projects.

Within Partner Country Governments

There was general agreement across all partner countries that the migration partnerships had, to a greater or lesser extent, assisted in their own internal cooperation. Table 13 summarises how actors within each partner government perceive the impact of the migration partnerships on their own internal coordination.

Table 13: Self-Reported Improvement in Internal Coordination by Partner Countries

Country	Self-Reported Improvement in Internal Coordination
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Unanimous agreement that the partnership has improved coordination. Given the complexity of the administrative structures in the country, it is interesting to note that both horizontal and vertical cooperation is said to have improved. The idea of coordinating is not new in the context but the partnerships have pushed forward and encouraged more contact between different actors.
Kosovo	Unanimous agreement that the partnership has improved coordination. In particular, it is pointed out that coordination and cooperation have improved over the course of the partnership in part due to the preparations necessary for the dialogues and also in the assistance provided by the Swiss thus far in the creation of an inter-ministerial Migration Authority to manage migration matters in a coherent way.
Nigeria	Unanimous agreement that the partnership has improved coordination. This includes both the act of preparing for the dialogues but additionally very specific examples of collaborations between ministries and the development of a 'databank' to improve the sharing of information both between Nigerian government actors as well as with foreign counterparts.
Serbia	The majority agrees that the partnerships have improved internal coordination however with the caveat that inter-ministerial cooperation already occurred and could not be attributed to the Swiss although their involvement did increase the frequency and intensity of contact.
Tunisia	Mixed views. Those who agreed point out that the partnership brings people together however those who disagree note that this often highlights – but does not resolve – communication problems between ministries.

Source: Interviews.

While there was a general sense that in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Serbia, intern-ministerial cooperation was already very normal, statements such as 'intensified cooperation' (R076; BA), 'enhances our ability to cooperate' (R55; RS) and 'increases the frequency of contact' (R057; RS) were commonplace. The country in which this was least evident was Tunisia, however given the newness of the partnership and the government being in transition it is plausible that this will develop in the future. This view was largely confirmed by several Swiss respondents, as the following quote shows:

"At least in Tunisia, the partnership obliged two to three ministries to at least get together, talk to each other, prepare an agenda, (and) travel jointly. The same with the Western Balkan countries [...] so the whole of government approach on the partner side is something that is being developed or provoked by our partnership" (R021; CH).

4.1.2 Bilateral Cooperation

The extent to which the partnership has improved cooperation between Swiss actors and their partner country counterparts is less clear. One reason for this is that many of the actors interviewed started their position after the migration partnership was established, and thus cannot comment on the changes. However, it is clear that there has been an evolution in the relationships between Switzerland and the partner countries in various ways.

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The majority of Swiss actors believe that the migration partnerships have positively affected cooperation between Switzerland and the partner countries. In part, this is due to approaching the partner country with a broader range of issues:

“The perspective is changing. You are not just looking at a country as ‘take back your asylum-seekers’ [...] you try to have a real partnership” (R014; CH).

Thus, rather than only discussing specific issues, such as return, the partnerships cover many topics. This helps to smooth cooperation and to handle issues in a constructive way (a point that will be further discussed in section 4.2). This has been particularly true in Nigeria where, as previously discussed, the partnership was established in the wake of several unfortunate events.

“Before, we just sent a letter, and we were waiting and waiting and waiting, until we got an answer. Now, we have direct contacts” (R007; CH).

However, some also argue that this can lead to problematic situations whereby cooperation on one issue is conditioned on support in another.

Partners also express mostly positive views regarding cooperation with Switzerland although they are less convinced that the partnership has helped to forge new relationships. In general, most countries express improvements – or at the very least more intensity – in the relationships with Swiss staff in the partner countries whether in the SCO or at the Embassies (See Table 14).

Table 14: Self-Reported Improvement in Cooperation with Switzerland

Country	Self-Reported Improvement in Cooperation with Switzerland
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Generally, yes and through the projects government actors have come in contact with a broader range of actors within this Swiss government.
Kosovo	The majority thinks that the partnership has really helped to create opportunities to engage on a broad range of issues, starting with readmission but expanding over time. Government actors would like such a cooperation with other countries.
Nigeria	Generally yes but with specific actors such as the police in Switzerland and the embassy staff in Abuja.
Serbia	Mixed responses. Some agree the partnership has improved relations and is a ‘gesture of friendship between the two countries’ (R066). However others believe little has changed other than some more engagement with the embassy.
Tunisia	Yes the partnership has generally helped to create and sustain lines of communication.

Source: Interviews.

4.2 Policy Coherence

This section of the report addresses the question of whether the migration partnerships enhance the coherence of the migration policy of Switzerland and of the partner countries. The analysis is based on the assumption that identifying incoherence is the first step in developing constructive solutions to migration issues and thus promoting coherence. It is evident that the partnerships are aiding in the identification of areas where policies are incoherent and also that many of these incoherencies are being addressed through technical cooperation projects.

Beyond bringing actors together and creating more intense relationships, the objective of the partnerships is to improve coherence in policy terms. The migration partnerships seem to have helped in identifying policy coherence (or policy gaps) and in the development of constructive solutions to migration issues. The following sections review concrete examples of each area identified by the evaluators.

4.2.1 Identifying Policy Incoherence

In addition to the identification of ways in which institutional arrangements can facilitate the identification of areas of policy incoherence, the respondents also provided a number of specific examples of how the migration partnership had assisted in the identification of concrete examples of policy incoherence.

Table 15: Examples of Policy Incoherence

Policy Area	Incoherence	Country	Illustrative Quote
Access to Swiss Labour Market	Swiss law does not allow for demands relating to labour market access to be met.	CH	"The perfect coherence would be to have more flexibility in regular migration" (R011; CH). "We are looking for solutions [...] that can help us to absorb this unemployment" (R090; TN).
Education	The supply of clinical psychologists does not meet demand.	KV	"We had lack of personnel in Kosovo" (R049; KV).
Housing	Housing supply is a key component of sustainable reintegration.	KV	"We will help the citizens that return to our country even more if we can secure a permanent residence for them (047; KV).
Investment	No clear government mandate for managing investments.	KV	"If you need something, some help or you know, different ministries are in charge of investment" (R051; KV).
Asylum Procedures	Lack of a coherent legal framework for asylum-seekers.	RS	"The asylum issue is dealt with on so many levels" (R065; RS).
	Incentives for irregular migrants to seek asylum.	CH	"The Serbian side was encouraging Switzerland to be [...] stricter with its migration policy and to reduce the so-called incentives for migrants" (R065; RS).
	Lack of capacity to deal with unaccompanied minors.	RS	"Serbia lacks good capacities for the accommodation and assistance and protection of unaccompanied minors (R056; CH).
Readmission and reintegration	Lack of capacity for the readmission and reintegration process.	BA	"Practically we were not able to support that person or that group of persons (returnees) because that is not the area of our expertise..." (R076; BA).
	Lack of mechanisms for skills recognition.	TN	"Can they use their (acquired) competences when they return? That remains the question: the portability of skills" (R090; TN).
	Lack of opportunities to apply skills gained abroad.	TN	"Especially since we don't have research laboratories here in Tunisia. Study centres and researchers, logistics" (R094; TN).

Source: Interviews.

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In addition to the specific examples outlined in Table 15, another common observation was that the discussions helped in identification of policy gaps. For example, several participants (particularly from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia) made comments regarding the comparison of systems in Switzerland to their own, and how this assisted in their progression towards EU accession. In general, therefore, it is apparent that the migration partnerships are helping to identify areas of incoherence, the first step in promoting policy coherence.

4.2.2 Constructive Solutions to Migration Issues

When asked whether the migration partnerships have helped to identify any constructive solutions to migration issues, several respondents argue that each project in itself represent a constructive solution to a specific problem or challenge. Others provide examples that go beyond the implemented project. This section will elaborate on some of the key observations using some illustrative examples. Some of the incoherencies identified in section 4.2.1 have been addressed within the context of the migration partnership. For example, the lack of mental health support for returnees to Kosovo has been addressed in the Clinical Psychology projects implemented in Kosovo (Box 2).

Box 2: Clinical Psychology in Kosovo

At first glance, the provision of support for a post-graduate course in Clinical Psychology may not appear to be particularly relevant for migration. However, the project provides a clear illustration of a constructive solution to a migration issue:

“Knowing the reality in Kosovo, knowing the situation we came from, I know that there has been lots of post-traumatic stress, the need for psychologists and psychiatrists (was) quite significant” (R049; KV).

Over a decade ago, Switzerland supported the construction of a clinical psychiatric hospital in Pristina. However, as highlighted above, it became evident that the supply of human resources did not meet demands. This was especially true given the number of people who had experienced trauma during the war and thus, for them to return to Kosovo, necessary support mechanisms needed to be in place.

It was therefore suggested that psychologists could be trained to be clinical psychologists. However the necessary training did not exist in Kosovo. Through a partnership with the University of Basel, and with funds from the Migration Partnership, this post-graduate course has been developed and embedded in the Kosovo education system.

While the project has faced some implementation challenges, the general consensus of both Swiss and Kosovar government representatives is that the project is working well. Currently 20 students have been recruited. There is a desire for the programme to continue and the training of trainers further supports its sustainability. Secondary side effects of the project are increased educational opportunities and job creation.

Another commonly cited example of a constructive solution was that of the 48-hour asylum procedure for applicants from the Western Balkans in Switzerland. The change is widely believed to have cut asylum applications in Switzerland from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia since its introduction. This was after an initial increase after Visa Liberalisation opened up visa-free travel in Schengen from several Western Balkan countries in 2010 (see Section 3.4.2 for more information). Indeed an examination of asylum data from this period does show a drop in numbers. However, from a broader perspective, this may reflect a

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displacement of irregular flows since numbers in Germany, a prime destination for migration from the Western Balkans, have increased in the same time frame²⁶.

The most commonly cited examples of constructive solutions relate to return: either through 1) the facilitation of readmission through technical support with identification and the provision of travel documents or by arranging specially chartered flights to ensure human rights are respected; or 2) by looking at the wider context of return and reintegration to ensure that the context to which people return provides the necessary services to facilitate their successful reintegration. While on one hand this can be viewed as an imbalance of power, with solutions focusing primarily on return, on the other, it could be seen as a shift towards a more holistic view of migration, where the development context in origin countries takes centre stage in discussions.

4.3 The Added-Value of a Comprehensive Approach to Migration

This section of the report reflects on the added-value of a comprehensive approach to migration by first considering the spillover effects of the migration partnerships and then by analysing how they function in comparison to other tools used by governments to approach migration. The three main spillover effects of the migration partnerships were: 1) improved inter-ministerial cooperation in other areas of government; 2) complementarity between the work done on the migration partnerships and other processes relevant to the partner countries (such as visa liberalisation and EU accession); and 3) broader work on mainstreaming migration into development planning. The partnerships also seem to have broader spillover effects on other areas of bilateral cooperation whereby trust in jointly tackling a sensitive issue may create opportunities for cooperation on other issues.

The main reasons why the migration partnerships differ from past approaches to bilateral cooperation are: 1) they capture a broad range of issues within one agreement; 2) they institutionalise and legitimise long-term cooperation; 3) they are reciprocal; 4) they are flexible and create bridging social capital that can be activated as problems arise; 5) they are focused on lasting, holistic solutions to problems.

4.3.1 Spillover Effects

A number of general spillover effects were identified by the evaluators relating to: inter-ministerial cooperation, visa liberalisation and EU accession and development policy. Other less tangible spillover effects that were attributed to the migration partnerships include a changed mind-set on migration, and the use of technology provided through the partnership for other purposes.

One of the most commonly cited spillover effects of the migration partnerships links to the discussion of **inter-ministerial coordination** discussed in Section 4.1. In Nigeria, for example, it has been noted that coordination activities are becoming common place in other areas of government: "I see a lot of ministries copying this inter-ministerial approach" (R093: NG). In Kosovo this approach has been institutionalised and the Swiss are providing technical support to the government in operationalising the 'Government Authority for Migration' which was established as a permanent body representing 20 different government departments working on migration issues on 29 November 2013 (Decision Nr. 08/158).

²⁶ In Germany, the number of asylum claims increased from 15,347 to 22,424 for Serbia (including Kosovo) between 2012 and 2013 and for Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2,371 to 4,847 in the same years (UNCHR, 2014).

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Another frequent example is the complementarity of work conducted within the context of the migration partnership on **Visa Liberalisation processes** in Kosovo, and on **EU Accession** in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. In Kosovo, for example, indirect support for the development of a migration profile was important because having the profile is one of the requirements for visa liberalisation. Many of the discussions that have taken place during the migration dialogues have raised questions that have also been raised by the EU and thus the partnerships have been described as “a good opportunity to prepare and discuss actual questions relating to migration” (R058; RS).

In several of the partner countries, activities are underway to promote the **mainstreaming of migration** into development planning. Many of these projects have long time-frames, extending to 2023, highlighting the intrinsic challenges that are faced. Particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where complex administrative structures often render national policy frameworks ineffective, a focus on the local level, has been particularly interesting and has helped to identify areas where migration could be factored in (for example regarding the process of starting a business).

Spillover Effects on Bilateral Relations

The effects of the migration partnerships on bilateral relations can be divided into three primary categories: 1) exchanges between Switzerland and the partner country on different subject matters or in other fora; 2) new areas of cooperation between Switzerland and the partner country; and 3) cooperation between the partner countries and third countries.

The first category is of particular relevance in Nigeria. The human rights dialogue, which takes place between the Human Security Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Nigeria, is believed to have been facilitated by relationships already established through the migration partnership, particularly given that some participants were involved in both dialogues. In general fostering good relations is expected to have positive spillover effects on other areas of bilateral relations, as captured by the following quotations:

“If you create a good partnership based on trust, on a specific subject matter, normally you can take advantage of that when you have other issues” (R036; CH).

“It had generally a very positive effect and impact on the whole relationship between the two countries” (R035; CH).

“The migration partnership is a nice framework for conducting bilateral relations” (R102; NG).

The second category was primarily identified in Tunisia and the Western Balkans. As a result of the partnership, Tunisia has been identified as a priority country for SECO. Additionally, SECO has introduced a Start-Up Fund which provides grants for small businesses. This clearly represents an interest of the governments in the Western Balkans in terms of job creation and yet occurs outside of the scope of the migration partnerships.

With regards to relations with third countries, in 2011 similar migration partnerships were established between the Principality of Liechtenstein and both Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Principality of Liechtenstein started co-financing projects implemented in the context of the migration partnerships with the Western Balkans in 2007. In addition, Serbia has signed a similar agreement with Hungary. The migration partnerships have also been promoted as a best-practice example and a model for other agreements, particularly by Nigeria. Other countries have also approached the Swiss government to request a similar agreement.

4.3.2 Comparison to other forms of Cooperation on Migration

A full objective and comparative analysis of the Swiss migration partnerships compared to other forms of cooperation on migration is beyond the scope of the evaluation. Nevertheless, this section offers some insights into potential similarities and differences, based in part on theory and in part on the responses given by interview participants.

One form of migration agreement that could be compared to the migration partnership – and often is – are the EU mobility partnerships. However, making a direct comparison is challenging. The only country to have both agreements is Tunisia, and this was the source of the most concrete answers regarding perceptions of both instruments. However, it should be noted that both agreements are young; the EU mobility partnership was only signed in early 2014, just a few years after the Swiss Migration Partnership. Additionally, in the other partner countries, there was limited interest (in the case of the Western Balkan countries who are more interested in EU integration) or knowledge (Nigeria). Where comments were made, these often related to the incomparability of the EU mobility partnership and the Swiss migration partnerships owing to their intrinsically different nature: the former being a multilateral agreement with more of a focus on concrete options for mobility and the latter being bilateral with more of a focus on situating migration into a broader policy context. However, it was also suggested that they were both trying to achieve the same objective: “The idea of having a migration partnership or a mobility partnership is that you are actually trying to meet the needs of both countries simultaneously [...] These sorts of policy-instruments are very positive for moving [...] these ideas into the mainstream” (R052; IC). The Swiss approach was positively compared to the EU mobility partnership for being more responsive, flexible, diverse and open. However, specifically in Tunisia, it was also challenged for being more of a ‘goodwill agreement’ (089; TN) without concrete options for mobility or clearer visa rulings and less generous in monetary terms.

Table 16: Comparing Swiss Migration Partnerships to EU Mobility Partnerships

Swiss Migration Partnership	EU Mobility Partnership
Differences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bilateral • Broad focus (including development, international protection etc.) • Direct negotiations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multilateral • More specific focus (on mobility) • Negotiations by EU on behalf of member states
Similarities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed within a broader change in discourse in which due consideration should be given to both origin and destination countries in order to promote the positive developmental potentials of migration while mitigating its potentially negative impacts. • Have similar goals in terms of matching the interests of both partners. 	

Source: Interviews.

Many respondents in the partner countries, however, found it difficult to directly compare the migration partnerships to other forms of bilateral cooperation on migration. The main reason cited was that they did not have any similar all-encompassing agreements on migration. For the Swiss, as highlighted in Section 1.1, the migration partnerships represent a further step in the evolution of institutional approach to migration in Switzerland. In fact, for several Swiss respondents, the migration partnerships simply represent the maturation of existing bilateral relations with a country: “It is just ... an advanced partnership.” (R014; CH). This in itself highlights an interesting finding. **The migration partnerships differ from other forms of bilateral cooperation on migration because they holistically tackle many different areas relevant to migration within the confines of one agreement.** It is far more common for countries to have independent agreements covering different areas such as readmission agreements, bilateral labour migration agreements and so forth, than for these tools to be integrated into a holistic framework.

There were several other factors that made the migration partnerships stand out from other types of bilateral engagement on migration. The first main observation is that the **migration**

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partnerships, through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding, institutionalise and legitimise cooperation: “the added-value is that you name it.” (R023; CH). The very fact that an agreement can be referred to can create a common level of trust between countries which can reduce the risk of cooperation breaking down due to staff turnover. Another aspect of this is that the migration dialogues bring people together on a regular basis. This creates connections between people, bridging capital that can facilitate cooperation, representing a significant human resource investment not common in other forms of bilateral cooperation. A final benefit of the institutionalised nature of the migration partnerships is that they can improve transparency by ensuring that all issues are discussed within one venue reducing the risk of one of the partners feeling that the other has a hidden agenda.

The second main observation is that **migration partnerships provide the potential for these relationships to be reciprocal.** Often bilateral agreements in the area of migration deal with a specific issues, most often readmission, which involve very technical discussions about the specificities of that particular issue, which is usually of more interest to one of the two partners. However, the migration partnerships are commended for promoting two-way communication on a range of issues covering the interests of both partners and recognising that many migration related issues are interconnected. This is facilitated through regular meetings and dialogues as well as through a diverse portfolio of projects which are not commonly part of bilateral agreements. The down-side of this is that, as discussed in Section 3.3, it takes time to develop such a two-way relationship especially given that the Swiss partners start from a position in which inter-ministerial communication is the norm and as such, do not need to change their culture of policy making in order to function within the migration partnerships. This requires significant commitment and investment of human resources, which are not always available.

A third key difference between the migration partnerships and other forms of bilateral cooperation on migration is that **they provide a platform through which issues can be addressed as and when they arise,** whether through technical cooperation projects or otherwise. For example, the 48-hour asylum procedure, discussed in section 3.4, was developed in response to discussions held within the context of the migration partnerships. The problem may not have been as quickly identified, discussed and resolved without the platform provided by the partnerships and the flexibility of the instrument due to its broad scope. Additionally, in Serbia, in response to recent flooding, the Swiss were able to offer quick assistance by applying an instrument developed under the migration partnerships (a dweller driven social housing programme for RAE communities that was already tested and internationally recognised) to assist both RAE and non-RAE families in flood recovery. The comprehensive nature of the partnership allowed lessons learnt in one context to be applied in another in response to an identified need. This flexibility, which is not always present in other bilateral agreements, allows both partners to respond to challenges and seek assistance in their resolution.

Therefore, compared to other mechanisms for dealing with migration, **the migration partnerships have added-value compared to other forms of bilateral cooperation because of their long-term focus.** In other words, in addition to not being focused on a specific issue, they focus on creating lasting relationships both within and between governments as well as with the international community and civil society. This has the potential to create fertile ground for addressing future challenges and for extending cooperation into third countries (multilateral partnerships). The flexible nature of the instrument’s design means that rather than becoming defunct when a specific issue is resolved or circumstances change, as this is the case of many bilateral labour agreements which become defunct when particular labour needs cease to exist, the partnerships can evolve and adapt to changing circumstances. This makes the migration partnerships much more of a tool of international relations than other mechanisms for facilitating bilateral cooperation on migration.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

From the very outset of the evaluation, it was clear that the migration partnerships signed by Switzerland had been concluded under different circumstances, at different points in time, and with countries facing diverse challenges. Through desk-based research and fieldwork in each of the partner countries and Switzerland, the evaluation provides insight into how the migration partnerships, as an instrument of foreign migration policy are functioning, five years after the signing of the first partnership. It should already be noted, that this is more straightforward in some of the partner countries than in others. The partnerships with the Western Balkans build on a long history of bilateral cooperation between nations and as such provide a rich testing ground for the instrument. The partnership with Tunisia not only represents Switzerland's first real engagement with the country but has also only just been ratified making it hard to assess the extent to which the partnership is achieving its expected impacts. For Nigeria, the partnership is also relatively new and had a trickier starting point in the sense that bilateral relations were not in the best state at inception and the instrument was also viewed as a way of resolving issues between the two countries. For this reason, the following conclusions and subsequent recommendations are presented on two levels: first on the level of the instrument in general, and second for each of the specific countries where relevant. Unless otherwise specified, recommendations are applicable to each of the migration partnerships.

The main research question addressed by the evaluation is: to what extent is the impact hypothesis of the instrument of migration partnerships confirmed? The impact hypothesis of the instrument is that migration partnerships give the possibility through mutual understanding and cooperation to find constructive solutions to the challenges posed by migration, to promote opportunities as well as to create synergies between the different actors involved in migration policy within each partner country. This is based on the central objectives emphasised in the partnerships:

1. Recognise and integrate interests of all partners in order to ensure that every partner benefits;
2. Swiss migration policy towards the partner country must be coherent;
3. Promote the positive effects that migration can have and address challenges constructively.

The following paragraphs take each objective in turn and discuss the extent to which they have been achieved.

To confirm whether or not the first objective is achieved, it is necessary to consider whether the migration partnerships provide an equitable balance between the interests of the different actors. In turn, to answer this it is first important to understand what the interests of Switzerland and the partnerships are and how this is reflected in the technical cooperation portfolio. In order to make an objective assessment of the balance of power, stated interests but also omissions and compromises have to be considered. While the mandates of different ministries translate into different interests, there is general alignment in the collective interests of Switzerland with each of the partner countries. This is generally reflected in project implementation which can be considered the concrete manifestation of interests. Some country specific differences reflect that the partnership can be adapted to the objectives set. However there is a general set of interests that are reflected in the portfolio of projects across all of the partnerships. This points to the fact that the Swiss side has set the framework within which interests of the partnerships can be pursued. Given the broad and flexible design of the instrument, however, this need not translate into an imbalance of power and, with the exception of a minority of dissenting voices, the vast majority consider the migration partnerships to be a genuine and equal partnership. **This reflects achievement with regards to the first central objectives of the instrument** and thus confirms one component of the impact hypothesis.

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The primary research question addressing the second objective is whether the migration partnerships enhance the coherence of the Swiss migration policy but also of the migration policy of the partner country. The evaluation finds that the partnerships have very concretely improved institutional mechanisms supporting policy coherence and identified some examples of how they have assisted in the identification of incoherence and the subsequent development of constructive solutions to some of these challenges. However, it is too early to assert that the migration partnerships have resulted in more coherent policies directly. The main way in which the instrument has achieved this outcome is through the regular meetings and dialogues held between Switzerland and the partner countries, which bring together a plethora of actors who may not otherwise cross paths. **Thus it can be said that the migration partnerships are somewhat achieving objective 2.** This assessment is based on the assumption that identifying incoherence is the first step in developing constructive solutions to migration issues and thus promoting coherence.

To an extent, the third objective builds upon objective 2 in the sense that constructive solutions to migration issues would be expected to promote the positive effects that migration can have while mitigating negative impacts. While it is beyond the scope of the evaluation to really comment on impact, self-reported instances of constructive solutions being implemented aid in commenting on the extent to which objective 3 is achieved. The most commonly cited examples of constructive solutions relate to return: either through 1) the facilitation of readmission through technical support with identification and the provision of travel documents or by arranging specially chartered flights to ensure that human rights are respected; or 2) by looking at the wider context of return and reintegration to ensure that the context to which people return provides the necessary services to ensure their successful reintegration. This highlights a shift towards a more holistic view of migration, where the development context in origin countries takes centre stage in discussions. However it is also clear that much more can be done in these areas. Thus it can be said that, through recognising and integrating a broad range of interests into the migration partnerships and promoting institutional practices that support coherence, that it has been possible to consider solutions to migration issues in a more holistic way recognising both the positive and negative effects of migration. Shifting paradigms takes time, however in general it seems **that the migration partnerships are making headway in achieving objective 3.**

The evaluation has demonstrated that the experience of implementing the migration partnerships with respect to its impact hypothesis has been largely positive to date. While progress on achieving objectives 2 and 3 is less advanced than the first objective, the instrument should be viewed as a process in which the groundwork laid in terms of negotiating interests and encouraging inter-ministerial cooperation will make it easier to achieve objective 2 and 3. It is hypothesised that, as the partnerships mature, partners will be able to bring new challenges and existing omissions to the table and the trust established by the partnership mobilised to identify joint solutions to these challenges. For this reason, it is considered premature to end any of the partnerships at this stage. Based on the cumulative findings, the following recommendations are made:

Recommendations 1-4

1. **Switzerland should continue with the existing migration partnerships:** It is hypothesised that the partnerships will continue to mature over time and, in the long-term may evolve into latent agreements that can be activated as necessary without the need for as many inputs.
 - a. *Western Balkans:* While the strategy for the three Western Balkan partnerships is coming to an end in December 2015, the migration partnerships can play an important role in the post-2015 strategy for the region. Especially given that the relative cost of the partnerships is low in comparison to other areas of cooperation in the region and they provide a framework within which mutual interests can be explored, it does not seem logical to end the partnerships. It is argued that a natural ending point for the Western Balkan partnerships would be EU accession.
 - b. *Tunisia:* Given the recent elections in Tunisia it is foreseen that a new government will be in place shortly. Building on the essential groundwork conducted between the Swiss and the various governments that have been in place during the transitional period, it is recommended that, at the first expert meeting conducted with the new government, stock is taken of the current interests and objectives reflected in the portfolio of projects and time taken to consider any omissions that (rewrite) in future projects. The new government may be in a better position to take key decisions regarding humanitarian protection, immigrant rights and so forth. The migration partnership can provide fertile ground for discussing these issues, building capacity and further improving inter-ministerial cooperation within the Tunisian government.
 - c. *Nigeria:* The opportunity cost (e.g. political damage) of stopping the migration partnerships with Nigeria at this stage is too high.
2. **Migration dialogues should remain a key component of future strategies within the existing migration partnerships:** While the process of organising regular dialogues is labour intensive, a clear finding of the evaluation has been that the regular meetings hold significant value to actors on both sides of the partnership. Regular meetings bring actors together, facilitate the negotiation of interest, and allow for the flexible nature of the instrument's design to be used to its full potential. Examples cited in the report such as the response to flooding in Serbia reinforce this point.
3. **Creation of new partnerships:** Based on the findings of the evaluation it seems that the migration partnerships are a good instrument for bilateral cooperation on migration and that it positively compares to past and current tools used by Switzerland and others to approach the topic. Thus the logical conclusion would be that, as the migration partnerships are largely on track to achieve their objectives, it makes sense to evaluate the opportunity to conclude new partnerships. However the human resources required to make a migration partnership function also need to be considered.
4. **Selection of new partner countries:** The selection of countries [for the creation of new partnerships] should not solely be based on countries with whom return is an issue. By focusing on the linkages between migration and development, countries may already address some of the root causes of migration that lead to problems with return in the first place.

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The evaluation also provided the opportunity for both parties to reflect on the process thus far and to identify areas where projects could be better targeted in the future. While in general interests are in alignment, certain omissions have been identified by actors involved. Additionally, when mapping the projects against interests, certain gaps appeared. The following country specific recommendations offer potential areas for future work:

Recommendation 5

5. The following country specific recommendations offer potential areas for future work. They are listed in order of priority where it is assumed that 1) omissions identified by partner countries should be given higher priority; and 2) frequently cited omissions should receive higher priority. If omissions were noted by Swiss actors, they are marked with an asterisk (*). If gaps were identified through the project mapping they are marked with a hashtag (#).

- a. *Bosnia and Herzegovina*: Human trafficking* and irregular migration*
- b. *Kosovo*: Sustainable return (including a focus on social housing), human trafficking#, protection of refugees, IDPs and vulnerable migrations#, police cooperation#
- c. *Serbia*: Refine strategy and structures for migrants and asylum-seekers coming to Serbia, police cooperation#, border management#, police cooperation on drug trafficking and transnational organised crime#
- d. *Tunisia*: increased opportunities for regular migration (including ensuring that the Stagiaire agreement is implemented), developing an overall strategy, skills recognition, transparent visa procedure, portability of accrued social security rights, cooperation on identification*, protection of immigrants (including asylum-seekers and stranded migrants) in Tunisia*, police cooperation on drug trafficking and transnational organised crime#
- e. *Nigeria*: During the evaluation no direct omissions were observed for Nigeria. It is however likely that the partners will bring new issues and challenges to the table and given there is a broad interest in promoting even better bilateral relations, no direct suggestion are made for future interventions.

Negative media coverage of the partnerships has pointed to the perceived failure of the instrument because asylum flows from partnership countries have not decreased. However, the analysis of return data demonstrates that it is not possible to assume direct relationships between inflows of asylum-seekers or the number of returning migrants and the signature of the migration partnership owing in part to the complexities of migration trajectories and in part to the specific drivers of these flows. For example, in Nigeria, Tunisia and Kosovo, more than half of asylum claims between 2009 and 2014 have been Dublin cases. Nevertheless, the migration partnerships do smooth relations and thus improve the efficiency of asylum and return management between Switzerland and each of the partner countries, with the former of particular relevance to Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina where the 48-hour asylum procedure has had observable impacts on return flows, and for the latter in Nigeria and Tunisia where identification processes have become more efficient. This points to an area in which the multilateral migration partnerships, outlined already in Article 100, could be piloted. Thus the evaluations make the following recommendation:

Recommendation 6

6. Pilot multilateral migration partnerships through building on the existing migration partnerships with Nigeria and/or Kosovo by inviting at least one other country to the table. It is suggested that the top source countries of Dublin cases in Switzerland be considered as logical candidates for this invitation. It is clear that deteriorating economic conditions in many countries in the South of Europe (such as Italy and Spain) may be leading to onward migration of persons settled there. By involving these countries in the discussion common interests and challenges can be considered and constructive solutions developed. While this may also make sense for Tunisia, it is considered premature, especially given that the new government is only just being installed however, dependent on the success of the pilot, this model could be used to further develop other partnerships.

There are strong differences between the perceived impacts of the migration partnerships among different groups of actors. Beyond the analysis of return and asylum data, the perceived outcomes of the migration partnerships are also assessed by analysing 1) perceived benefits of the partnership; and 2) reactions of the international community. Those active within the migration partnerships report a broad range of, often intangible benefits of the migration partnerships such as building trust, strengthening bilateral relations, capacity building, improved internal coordination, and increasing the efficiency of day-to-day operations. While there is clearly some interest from the international community regarding the partnerships, those actors interviewed within the context of the evaluation, even many of the implementing partners, exhibited limited awareness of the partnerships and its objectives beyond specific technical cooperation projects. This, along with misunderstanding about the scope of the migration partnerships in the media, point to the need for a communication strategy.

Recommendation 7

7. Develop a Communication Strategy: It is clear that the easiest way to highlight the benefits of the migration partnerships is through the implemented projects. However, given the fact that the majority of these take place in the partner countries, they fail to capture the attention of the Swiss media. Nevertheless, there is a clear need to correct some of the misconceptions surrounding the migration partnerships and their ability to stop asylum flows. It may be advisable to make more data publicly available and understandable. This will allow journalists to verify information and allow researchers to offer commentaries on different types of migration flows. This could contribute towards creating a more factual and informative narrative on migration statistics in the mainstream media. It is suggested that the public report to be published after the delivery of this evaluation report focuses much of its attention on breaking down asylum and return statistics (such as is done in Section 3.4 of this report)

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One of the general findings of the evaluation was that the migration partnerships seem to be functioning better than other forms of bilateral cooperation on migration. The main reasons why the migration partnerships are said to differ from past approaches to bilateral cooperation are: 1) they capture a broad range of issues within one agreement; 2) they institutionalise and legitimise long-term cooperation; 3) they are reciprocal; 4) they are flexible and create bridging social capital that can be activated as problems arise; and 5) they are focused on lasting, holistic solutions to problems. Thus the Swiss Migration Partnerships could be considered as a good practice in bilateral cooperation on migration that could be emulated by other countries. Building on R6, the following recommendation encourages the Swiss government to further disseminate its experiences with the migration partnerships with other interested parties:

Recommendation 8

8. Disseminate experience and findings to other countries: One way to truly test whether the migration partnership can be considered as a transferrable model for bilateral cooperation on migration would be to implement the instrument in other country contexts. Given the positive experiences of the Swiss migration partnerships, it is recommended that the experience is shared, particularly relating to the internal workings of the migration partnerships such as the focus on the whole of government approach, policy coherence and on holding regular meetings and dialogues.

While this independent evaluation has provided considerable insights into how the migration partnership is functioning, one of the risks of conducting a qualitative, process evaluation at such an early stage is that it is not possible to truly assess impact. Nevertheless this evaluation can act as a baseline for future assessments of the instrument. The evaluation team makes the following recommendations regarding future evaluations:

Recommendation 9

9a. Conduct impact evaluations: It is too early to conduct a proper impact evaluation of the migration partnerships, particularly in Tunisia. One solution would be to conduct a follow up evaluation in 3 to 5 years using the findings of this evaluation as a baseline. Another interesting approach to assessing the extent to which the migration partnerships truly differ from the broader Swiss approach to bilateral cooperation would be to conduct a similar evaluation in countries where Switzerland does have cooperation on migration issues but no migration partnership.

9b. Evaluate the projects implemented in the context of the migration partnerships: While the assessment of the project impacts was beyond the scope of this evaluation, it was evident that projects differed in size and scope and that it was often the small projects that held most significance to project partners. It is important that projects include inbuilt evaluation mechanisms and that meta-evaluations are conducted of the full project portfolios.

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Appendix 1: Data Collection Tools

Interview Guide Swiss Government



Interview Guide Swiss
Government.docx

Interview Guide Swiss Actor in Partner Country



Interview Guide Swiss
Actor in Partner Couni

Interview Guide Partner Country Government



Interview Guide
Partner Country Govei

Interview Guide Implementing Partners



Interview Guide
Implementing Partner:

Interview Guide International Community



Interview Guide
International Commun

Appendix 2: List of Interview Participants

Interview Participants²⁷

Swiss Actors

Allemann, Stefanie	SDC
Astier, Sylvain	FOM
Benoit, Magalie	FOM
Betschart, Urs	Cantonal Office for Migration Zurich, formerly FOM
Bornoz, Pascal	PD
Colombo, Simone	FOM
Cottier, Philippe	FDJP
Crausaz, Jérôme	FOM
Flükiger, Roland	FOM
Frey, Andrina	PD
Gattiker, Mario	FOM
Gnesa, Eduard	SDC
Guha, Stephanie	SDC
Haeberli, Simone	SECO
Haxhi, Stela	Seconded by PD to EU LEX
Hellmüller, Guillaume	FOM
Inauen, Odile	SDC
Jud, Ursina	FOM
Junker, Adrian	PD
Kanziger, Anita	PD
Karstens, René	FDJP
Kuenzi, André	FOM
Kuthan, Fiorenza	PD
Lorenz, Karl	FOM
Maric, Marco	FDJP
Meier, Medea	FDJP
Middleton, Christopher	FOM
Mona, Tamara	PD
Morf, Michael	FOM
Moulin, Anne	SDC
Reisle, Markus	SDC
Ruegg, Thomas	SDC
Sarott, Chasper	PD
Schmidt, Martina	PD
Schori, Philipp	PD
Siegenthaler, Gabriele	SDC
Strässle, Rebekka	Swiss Border Guard
Toscano, Stefano	Formerly PD
von Arb, Urs	FOM
Weber, Pia	FDJP
Wild, Claude	PD
Zemp, Jana	SDC
Zumstein, Susanne	SDC

²⁷ The list of interview participants is as complete as possible. Sometimes additional persons were present on at interviews and it was not always possible to capture names from the interview recordings. If names are missing we sincerely apologize.

Bosnia and Herzegovina*Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina*

Aljic, Amra	CBI
Baotic, Marjan	MoS
Dzaferovic, Murveta	MoS
Jahic, Edin	MoS
Kavazovic, Samir	DCPB
Kosovac, Adnan	CBI
Kovac, Dragana	MHRR
Kozul, Janja	MoS
Lipjankic, Medzid	MHRR
Mektic, Dragan	SFA
Nenadic, Mario	MHRR
Nizam, Izet	SFA
Pesto, Ermin	MoS
Ramljak, Ivo	SFA
Rizvo, Samir	MoS
Selimovic, Muris	SFA
Stanic, Isma	MHRR
Tihic-Kadric, Ruzmira	MHRR

Swiss Representatives

Bäbler, Regula	SCO
Guntern, Joseph ²⁸	SCO
Maurer, Heinrich	Swiss Embassy
Sarenkapa, Azra	SCO

Implementing Partners

Amhof, Peter	CARITAS
Beljak, Sanda	CRS
Curulija, Elma	CARITAS
Dimova, Marina	UNDP
Imamovic, Sanela	CRS
Kokotovic, Ljiljana	UNHCR
Master, Maureen	UNHCR
Mayne, Andrew	UNHCR
Pozder-Cengic, Adela	UNDP
Rocco, Gianluca	IOM
Sadikovic, Irma	IOM
Selimbegovic, Edita	IOM

Other

Hrustanovic Isovica, Lejla	EU
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²⁸ Participated in de-brief meeting.

Kosovo*Government of Kosovo*

Buzhala, Pashk	MoH
Citaku, Arben	MESP
Dalipi, Merita	MESP
Dedushaj, Naim	MoD
Duraku, Artan	MIA
Gruda, Shaban	MIA
Halilaj, Gani	MoH
Krasniqi, Valon	MIA
Rexhepi, Fisnik	MIA
Salihu, Flamur	MEI
Sefaj, Syle	MIA
Shillova, Riza	MIA
Ternava, Fahrije	MIA

Swiss Representatives

Baechler, Markus	SCO
Elsässer, Marc	Swiss Embassy
Marty Lang, Krystyna	Swiss Embassy
Shabani, Arjan	SCO
Stavileci Mustafa, Merita	SCO

Implementing Partners

Bogujevci, Valbona	UNDP
Cancel, Roberto	IOM
Curri, Fatmir	KCSF
Gërdovci, Yllka	UNDP
Kreshnik, Basha	CARITAS
Nushi, Denis	UNDP
Spahiu, Ardian	UNDP
Skenderi, Isak	VORAE

Other

Visentin, Ecnrico	EU
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Serbia*Government of Serbia*

Barac, Milan	MoI
Cakic, Marina	CRM
Cucic, Vladimir	CRM
Djokic Milosavljevic, Zorica	MoI
Djuraskovic, Mitar	MoI
Gerginov, Ivan	CRM
Golubovic, Milos	SEIO
Ilic, Ana	SEIO
Kljajic, Sanja	MoLEVSP
Korac, Jugoslav	CRM
Loncar Kasalica, Zorica	MoI
Miletic, Aleksandra	MoLEVSP
Niksic, Ljiljana	MFA
Popovic Rocco, Danijela	CRM
Puletic, Jovo	MoI
Uzelac, Jovan	CRM
Vasilgevic, Jelena	MoI
Velimirovic, Svetlana	CRM
Zatezalo, Milos	MoI

Swiss Representatives

Mihajlovic, Jovana	SCO
Oesch, Jean-Luc	Swiss Embassy
Perich, Isabel	SCO

Implementing Partners

Bu, Robert	EHO
Djurovic, Rados	APC
Perovic, Marko	IOM
Petrovic, Monika	IOM
Puric, Olivera	UNDP
Savic, Marijana	ATINA
Strahinjic-Nikolic, Tatjana	UNDP
Vojackova-Sollorano, Irena	UNDP

Other

Palotta, Marzia	EU
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Nigeria*Government of Nigeria*

Audu, Wasilat	NDLEA
Giade, Ahmadu	NDLEA
Giaw, Maroof	NIS
Harande, M.S.	NAPTIP
Kangiwa, Hadiza	NCFRMI
Ningi, Ahmed Suleiman	NDLEA
Nwanelo, Charles Anelo	NCFRMI
Opotu Shaibu, Abdulrahim	NAPTIP
Terna Esq, Tumba	NAPTIP
Uhumoibhi, Martin	MFA

Swiss Representatives

Ali, Ojoma	Swiss Embassy
Broger, Andreas	Swiss Embassy
Hodel, Hans-Rudolf	Swiss Embassy

Implementing Partners

Krdzalic, Enira	IOM
Omoyeni, Tunde	IOM
Sissoko, Mariam	UNODC

Other

Onabolu, Yvonne	British High Commission
Varenne, Frederic	EU

Tunisia*Government of Tunisia*

Amiri, Khalil	Formerly MOSA
Bouroufi, Ouni	MoI
Essid, Naceur	MFA
Hammami, Ahlem	MoSA
Jaouani, Raoudha	MDIC
Louizi, Habib	MoSA
Messaoudi, Ahmed	MEVT
Triki, M.	Formerly Tunisian Embassy
Tilli, Helmi	MoSA

Swiss Representatives

Adam, Rita	Swiss Embassy
Dätwyler Scheuer, Barbara	SCO
Rüst, Lukas	SCO
Walt, Siri	Swiss Embassy

Implementing Partners

Elbassil, Anais	Maison des Droits et Migration
Lando, Lorena	IOM

Other

Mussetti, Ilaria	EU
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International Community

Amez-Droz, Eve	IOM Berne
Schnöring, Katharina	IOM Berne
Fonseca, Ana	IOM Geneva
Tomei, Manuela	ILO Headquarters
Gallotti, Maria	ILO Headquarters

Appendix 3: Elaboration of Research Questions²⁹

Evaluation Question	Sub-questions	Methodology	Place in Report
To what extent are the interests and objectives of Switzerland but also of the partner country achieved?***	<i>What are the interests of the different actors in Switzerland?</i> <i>What are the interests of the different actors in each partner country?</i> <i>What do the different stakeholders want to achieve with the migration partnership?</i>	Interest Mapping Exercise.	Chapter 3.1
	<i>To what extent are single projects relevant to the objectives set within the migration partnerships?***</i> <i>Is the instrument of migration partnerships adapted to the objectives set?***</i>	Project Mapping Exercise.	Chapter 3.2
	<i>To what extent are these interests and objectives achieved?</i>	Analysis of interviews Partnership and Project Mapping Exercise.	Chapter 3.4
Do the migration partnerships provide an equitable balance between the interests of the different actors?***	<i>Have the objectives relating to the partnership changed at all?</i> <i>How does the actual implementation of the partnership compare to the expressed interests??</i> <i>Are there any omissions from the partnership?</i> <i>Have any compromises had to be made?</i> <i>How has the process of negotiating the partnerships been viewed by relevant stakeholders?</i>	Analysis of interviews and critical comparison with the partnership and project mapping exercise.	Chapter 3.3
What are the perceived outcomes of the migration partnerships?	<i>What is the effect of migration partnerships on the general public in Switzerland and in the partner country (media especially)?**</i> <i>What is the nature of media coverage of the migration partnerships?</i> <i>Does Switzerland gain any benefits at the international or European level from implementing the instrument of migration partnerships?*</i> <i>What is the international community's impression of the Swiss Migration Partnerships?</i> <i>What benefits do Swiss partners perceive the migration partnerships bringing to Switzerland?</i>	Media Review. Analysis of interviews.	Chapter 3.4

²⁹ *** High Priority ** Medium Priority * Low Priority

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To what extent is the impact hypothesis of the instrument of migration partnerships confirmed?***	<i>What are the effects of migration partnerships on the interdepartmental/ inter-ministerial coordination (in Switzerland and in the partner country)?***</i> <i>To what extent do migration partnerships strengthen bilateral relationships and direct contacts between partner authorities?***</i>	Analysis of interviews.	Chapter 4.1
	<i>Do migration partnerships enhance the coherence of the Swiss migration policy but also of the migration policy of the partner country?***</i>	Analysis of interviews.	Chapter 4.2
	<i>Have there been any spill-over effects of the migration partnerships? Do migration partnerships have spill-over or unintended effects on other areas of bilateral relations?***</i> <i>How does the migration partnership affect the overall development policy of the partner country?*</i> <i>What is the added-value of a comprehensive approach to migration? What is the added-value of migration partnerships compared to other forms of bilateral cooperation covering solely some aspects of migration (e.g. readmission)?**</i> <i>How does the migration partnership compare to other tools used currently or in the past by (country) to approach migration? What is the added-value of a migration partnership with Switzerland compared to other similar partnerships the partner country concluded?*</i>	Analysis of interviews.	Chapter 4.3

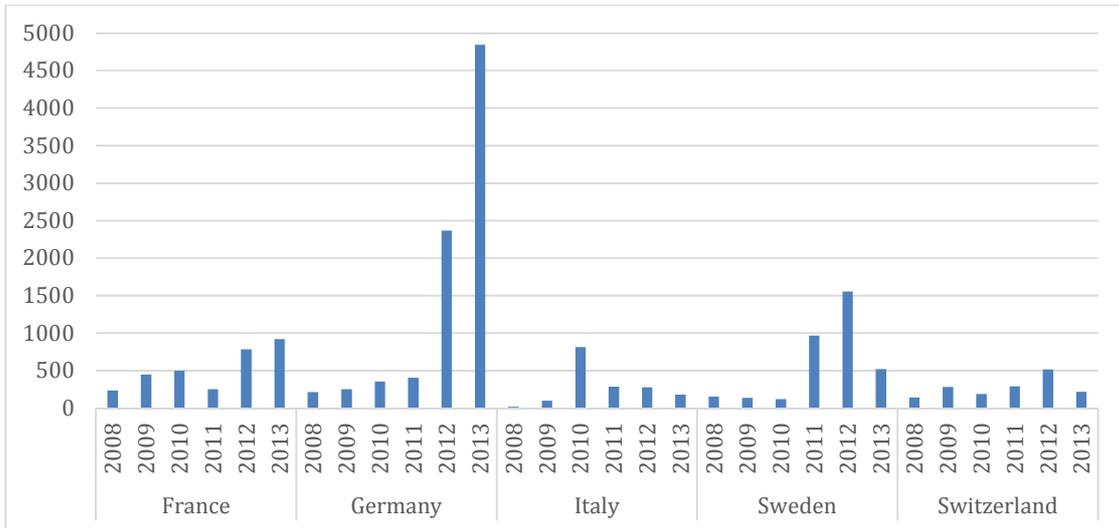
Appendix 4: Interest Mapping



Interest
Mapping.docx

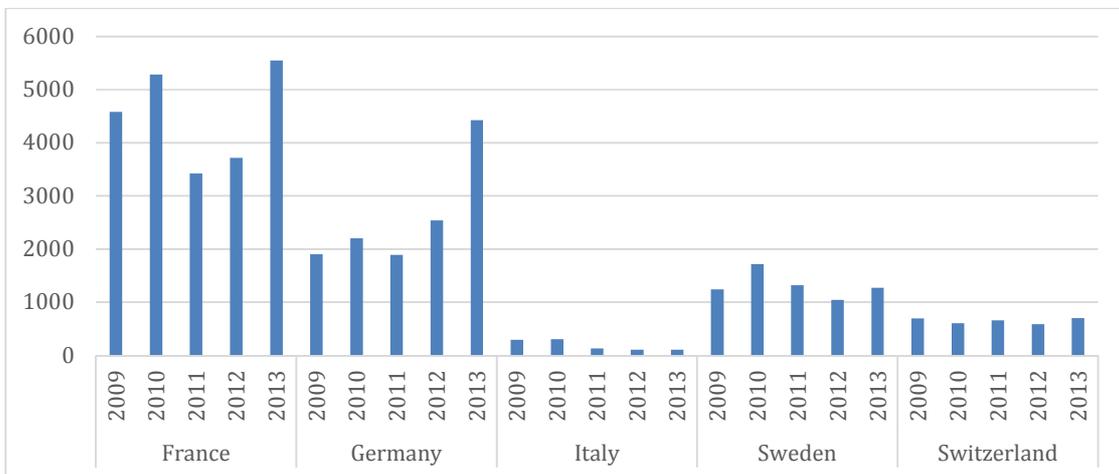
Appendix 5: Asylum Trends in Other Primary Destinations in the EU

Figure 12: Asylum Applications from Bosnia and Herzegovina in Top EU destination countries and Switzerland, 2008-2013



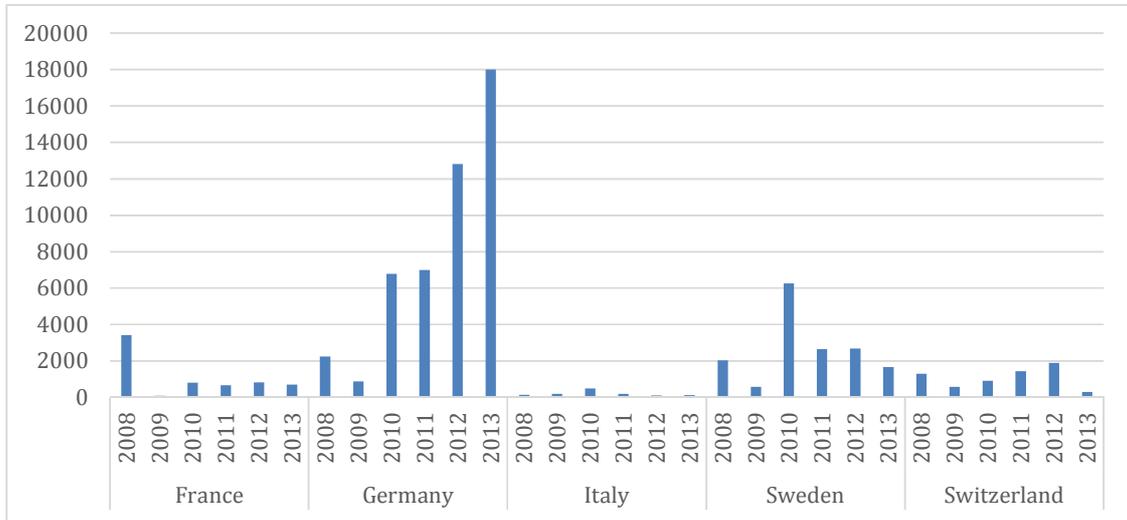
Source: Eurostat

Figure 13: Asylum Applications from Kosovo in Top EU destination countries and Switzerland, 2009-2013



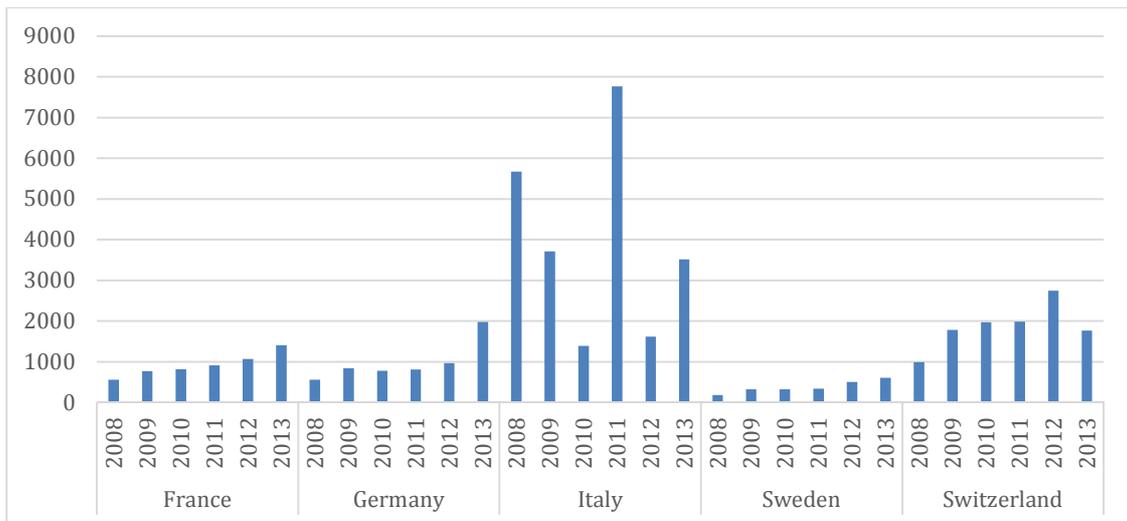
Source: Eurostat

Figure 14: Asylum Applications from Serbia in Top EU destination countries and Switzerland, 2008-2013



Source: Eurostat

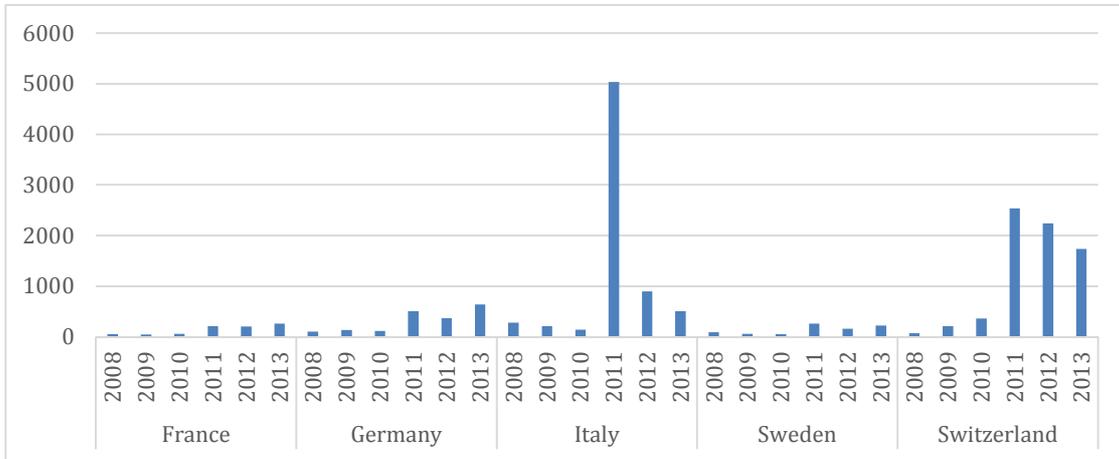
Figure 15: Asylum Applications from Nigeria in Top EU destination countries and Switzerland, 2008-2013



Source: Eurostat

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Figure 16: Asylum Applications from Tunisia in Top EU destination countries and Switzerland, 2008-2013



Source: Eurostat