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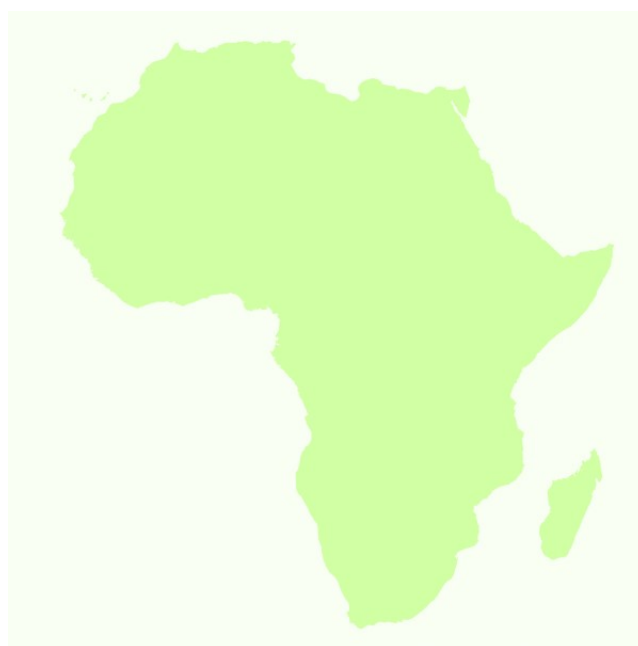
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Lack of semi-skilled workers in Switzerland: Opportunities for Refugees and Migrants?

Raymond Saner and Lichia Yiu

Abstract

This article addresses one of the most debated aspects of immigration namely the question – does welcoming migrants and refugees affect positively or negatively the national dynamics of employment? It offers a policy analysis of the effects of migration and labour market conditions and policies in host countries and discusses opportunities for migrants to enter a host countries' labour markets. The reasons for high migration are known and linked to violence, persecution, human rights violations and persistently high level of poverty in many parts of the world reaching very high levels over the last three years and resulting in millions of refugees and migrants crossing international borders with thousands of lives lost during the dangerous passing of borders and seas. On the other hand, in many European countries, a growing number of economic sectors are being affected by the potential threat of a shortage of semi-and low skilled workers. Taking Switzerland as an example, fewer young people attend professional schools thereby reducing the potential supply of a semi-skilled work force. The future short fall of semi-skilled and low-skilled work force will further increase due to the ageing of the Swiss population which in turn will impact the demand for semi-skilled and low skilled workers. Refugees and migrants could potentially find jobs in segments of the Swiss labour market thereby providing mutually beneficial solutions for all parties concerned that is (a) for refugees and migrants seeking employment and asylum, (b) for the aging population of host countries requiring care delivered by a low and semi-skilled work force and (c) for public and private sector enterprises finding labour for economic sectors in need of qualified and motivated labour force.

Refugee and migrant influx into Europe and Switzerland

The 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, to which nearly 150 states are party, defines a refugee in Article 1 as someone forced to flee their country of nationality due to ‘well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.’ The Convention makes no provision for those fleeing war or generalised violence. However, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees notes that its mandate to protect refugees also extends to those who are unable to return to their country of origin due to ‘serious and indiscriminate threats to life, physical integrity or freedom resulting from generalised violence or events seriously disturbing public order’ (UNHCR Statement on Subsidiary Protection Under the European Community Qualification Directive for People Threatened by Indiscriminate Violence, 2008).

In addition, there are various regional conventions and declarations expanding the definition of refugee to include those fleeing generalised violence, such as the 1984 Cartagena Declaration for Latin America and the 1969 Organisation of African Unity Convention Governing Specific Aspects of the Refugee Problems in Africa. Most states have used this expanded definition to determine the status of asylum-seekers.

However, there are still many difficulties in distinguishing between refugees and migrants. Katy Long (2015:7) notes that mixed migration flows—routes, modes of travel, and vessels shared by both asylum-seekers and other migrants—often make separating the two nearly impossible. In addition, refugees can later become regular migrants, moving in order to find work while displaced. Trying to adopt strict policies based on the differentiation of asylum-seekers and other migrants often leaves asylum-seekers without clearly defined legal status and no access to labour markets, education, and other opportunities. This is currently the case for many asylum-seekers during this current worldwide refugee crisis.

The Development Assistance Committee Temporary Working Group on Migration observed that the end of 2015 saw an all-time high for displacement, with over 65 million people displaced (mostly due to conflict, violence, persecution, and human rights violations). Of these, 21.3 were refugees and another 3.2 were seeking asylum—making nearly 25 million internationally displaced individuals at the end of 2015, a number that will have only increased in the previous two years (Ruaudel, H., & Morrison-Métois, S. 2017:1). The UNHCR reports that more than half of all refugees worldwide come from just three coun-

tries: Syria, Afghanistan, and South Sudan (UNHCR 2016:3). Most refugees are taken in by developing countries; countries who currently welcome the largest numbers of refugees include Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon. However, in recent years Europe has received an influx of asylum-seekers, as well as other migrants.

Since January 2015 the EU-28 has received nearly 3 million (2,858,300) first time applications for asylum. States which have borne the most responsibility for refugees and asylum-seekers (1) are Germany, Italy, Greece, and Hungary (before early 2016, when it closed its borders). In Switzerland, refugee numbers have also increased: since January 2015 Switzerland has received 75,345 first time applications for asylum. It is important to note that Switzerland is part of both the Schengen Area and the EU's Dublin System for processing asylum-seekers and thus works very closely with the European Union on this issue.

The European system for processing asylum-seekers' applications is complex and can often take 18 months or more. The Dublin System, designed to streamline the decision of which country processes an application and thus facilitate its examination, is often an additional barrier due to the complicated nature of its rules and the delays caused by multiple government bureaucracies (Fratzke 2015:18). During the time asylum-seekers are waiting for their official status to be determined, they have no access to the labour markets, no diploma recognition, and are left out of opportunities to contribute and integrate into the local society. In situations such as this, these populations are left extremely vulnerable to human rights abuses.

Current Swiss Labour Market

Labour force participation for those aged 15 or older was among the highest of all OECD countries, reaching 69% in Switzerland in 2016 (the OECD mean in 2016 was 60%). The picture remains the same when only considering the population aged 15 to 64, just below Switzerland's current retirement age of 65. Of this age group, 84% participated in the labour market in 2016, which is the second highest proportion OECD-wide (after Iceland) (2).

(1) According to Eurostat, the database of the European Commission (Eurostat Database, 2017:Asylum and First Time Asylum Applicants by Citizenship, Age, and Sex Monthly Data).

(2) See <https://data.oecd.org/emp/labour-force-participation-rate.htm>

Overall, Switzerland's labour market is doing well. Unemployment has remained below 5%, and real earnings have been growing at a rate of about 0.7% per year since 2000. (Lalive & Lehmann, 2017). General labour conditions are overall positive and this is remarkable against the backdrop of its cultural diversity of its citizens.

In 2015, Switzerland had one of the highest proportions of foreign residents among all nations (i.e. 24.6% of the total population). Only a few other nations, such as oil-producing nations like the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Qatar that employ many foreigner workers from India, Pakistan, Philippines, Nepal or city-states like Luxembourg, had higher numbers of foreign residents. However, it is notable that over 80% of the foreign residents living in Switzerland are from European countries of which almost half come just from France, Germany, Italy, and Portugal. The remaining 20% originate from the rest of the world (Swissinfo CH, 2018).

In Switzerland, the foreign resident population represents more than 25% of the total population. All sectors of the economy, almost without exception, are dependent on a foreign labour force and foreigner workers are each year more numerous. For example, in the second quarter of 2017, out of a workforce of 5.015 million people, the number of employed foreign workers was 1,563,000, an increase of 2.6% over the previous year. (Federal Statistical Office, 2017: Persons in Employment Working in Switzerland).

Dependence on a foreign workforce extends to all levels of qualification from high-skill to semi-and low skilled labour.

The restrictive immigration policy of the Swiss Confederation vis-à-vis workers originating from outside the EU / EFTA area contrasts with the shortage of labour in certain key sectors of the economy. The tertiary sector makes extensive use of this foreign workforce. In the field of health alone, foreigners represent about 33% of the physician community (Hostettler, S., & Kraft, E., 2016:396), while nurses are mostly of foreign origin. There are many reasons for this high proportion of foreigners among health care providers. In regard to temporary versus permanent employment, Swiss men held 20% and foreign workers 12% temporary jobs while 60% of Swiss women and 42% foreign women held part-time jobs. (Swiss Labour Statistics, 2017).

Among doctors there is talk of the enormous resources that must be allocated to train more doctors in Switzerland, but also an increase in the number of specialists to the detriment of other practitioners and

an alarming drop in the number of general practitioners. For the nursing or nursing care professions, it is often the lack of valorisation and the constraints of a difficult trade that explain the under-supply of nursing personnel. Moreover, the latter occupations are mainly occupied by women who, for family reasons, are unable or unwilling to devote themselves to full-time work. In the academic world, Swiss universities must also count on knowledge from abroad to remain competitive with foreign universities and thus enable Switzerland to maintain a high level of education, knowledge and technology (Saner, Yiu, Velebit, 2009). In 2016, 50.2% of professors at Swiss Universities were foreign, and 35.4% of other faculties at Swiss universities and schools of higher learning were of non-Swiss nationality (Federal Office of Statistics, 2016).

In some sectors such as watchmaking, construction or mechanical engineering, foreign labour is often not enough to eliminate the imbalance between labour supply and demand. In the watch industry, the phenomenon is largely due to the industry's success in recent years and the lack of qualified watchmakers in Switzerland. In the field of construction, the lack of labour is largely due to the lack of interest in terms of low income levels and perceived low reputational capital of certain professions. In this case, the most affected occupations are, for example, heating, sanitary plumbing, tinsmiths or ventilation workers.

For other occupations, the absence of a formal training path explains in part the lack of certain professionals on the labour market. For example, the trade of scrap iron is one of the professions for which formal training is lacking. Finally, there is a proven lack of workers holding a higher diploma of competence, e.g. a federal patent, and too few of the semi-skilled workers are sufficiently qualified to aim for career advancements in small and medium-sized Swiss companies.

Temporary labour migration to Switzerland: a precarious situation

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Switzerland, which was then in full economic expansion, attracted more and more foreigner workers, their proportion exceeding 15% on the eve of the First World War. During the inter-war period between WWI-WWII, the world economic crisis motivated the authorities to adopt a first law on immigration, the Federal Act on residence and settlement of foreigners. This law established a system of temporary stays for foreigners and depending on the needs of the market. This is how the various types of residence permits, some of which are still in use today, were in-

roduced (Saner, Velebit & Yiu, 2010, p.5)

For more than half a century, a temporary work permit best characterized the circular migration desired by the authorities. Today it no longer exists. This permit had the specific characteristics of being renewable and being issued for a period of up to 9 months, which obliged the worker to leave Switzerland and return home for a few months. The temporary work permit also did not allow foreign workers to bring their family to Switzerland. However, after ten years of uninterrupted seasonal work in Switzerland, the immigrant worker could be granted an annual full time permit.

However, since 1995, only European citizens can apply for such a permit.

After the Second World War, the Swiss economy experienced an unprecedented period of growth which has been accompanied by an increase in labour demand and a relaxation of the legislation regarding the foreign labour force. Foreigners arrived en masse from southern Europe and especially from Italy.

In the Northern and Western parts of Europe, other countries such as Germany, France, Belgium or the Netherlands also experienced post-war economic growth, which required an ever-increasing number of workers. The Italian Government therefore wished to take advantage of the situation. In 1960, 60% of foreign workers on Swiss territory were of Italian origin. Subsequently, Italy, as early as 1948, was the first country to sign agreements with Switzerland to facilitate the movement of its nationals to work in Switzerland. Spain signed a similar agreement much later in 1961.

The Swiss authorities adopted all sorts of measures to deter foreign workers from moving to Switzerland permanently. Thus quotas or the policy of the three circles that privileged European citizens to the detriment of nationals of other industrialized countries and countries and developing countries of the South. Consequently, the seasonal circular work permit was abolished and replaced by a policy which favoured European workers and highly skilled workers to the detriment low-skilled workers from non-European origins.

Fixed-term residence permits in Switzerland today

The regulation of foreign workers by the Swiss authorities today consists of the following licences.

As of 2002, the “seasonal,” or “circular,” A permit was replaced by the Permit L (short-term authoriza-

tion) for EU workers or third-country nationals who stayed in Switzerland for a period of less than a year. Non-European nationals are subject to quotas and may extend their stay for a total of two years but on condition that they stay with the same employer. These permits mainly concern the fields of construction, tourism and agriculture. Permits of this type are also granted to persons wishing to undergo training or studies in Switzerland.

Permit B (residence permit) was intended for anyone who is staying in Switzerland for a specific purpose. For EU nationals, a residence permit is granted for a period of up to 5 years, whereas for non-European nationals the period of validity is only one year. For the latter, residence permits are subject to quotas which depend to a large extent on the labour market and the strength of the economy. An extension is granted to a foreign worker if he or she meets certain conditions to be specified by the federal and cantonal authorities in charge of work permits.

Permit C (permission to stay) is granted to nationals of the European Union after an uninterrupted stay of 5 years. However, this 5-year clause does not apply for nationals from newly joined EU member states such as Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia. The establishment permit or permit C is in principle issued to a worker's family when the worker has remained in Switzerland during the period prescribed for obtaining such a permit.

Illegal immigration in Switzerland and its costs

In 2015, the number of illegal residents in Switzerland was estimated to be 76 000, with 86% of those residents engaged in the work force (Morlok et al. 2015, 31, 46). Illegal workers in Switzerland think it is very difficult to find work in the labour market. Hence, the only alternative to this situation has been to work in the black economy which is not sustainable. These people however do not get the same social and financial benefit as the permanently and legally residing members of the population. Moreover, they do not contribute in the same way to the financing of the welfare state.

Undeclared work is not as widespread in Switzerland as in other European countries, but the phenomenon is a real shortfall for the Swiss social insurance system in general. Thus, the underground economy in 2004 was estimated to amount to 37 billion CHF, equivalent to 9% of GNP. For every billion Swiss francs

declared, CHF 100 million could have been used for social insurance (AVS / AI / APG) and CHF 20 million for unemployment insurance (Morlok et al, 2015).

Unskilled labour is essential to the functioning of some sectors of the economy. Illegal workers are often the only ones to accept jobs in agriculture or other sectors such as the hospitality industry. It is impossible to ignore the role these workers play today. Thus, many civil society organisations call for a normalization of their situation. This also holds for refugees without legal papers who often drift away into the black economy.

Ageing societies

Currently, many developed countries are undergoing an unprecedented ageing of their populations. This is the case for Western Europe, some parts of North America, and Japan in particular. In the European Union, for example, 19.46% of the total population is over the age of 64 as of 2016. Countries such as Germany (21.27%) and Italy (22.71%) are now over the 20% mark. Japan's elderly population is particularly large, with over a quarter (26.57%) 65 and older. These figures are made particularly striking when compared with the statistics for the world as a whole: as of 2016, just 8.48% of the global population was over age 64. In fact, the European Union (+ Switzerland) and Japan comprise over one fifth (21.36%) of the world's elderly population, despite making up less than one tenth (8.69%) of the total global population (World Bank World Development Indicators, 2017: European Union, Germany, Italy, and Japan).

The rapid development of medical technology and expansion of services has coincided with increasingly low birth rates in developed nations to create the current demographic 'crises. By 2050, the United Nations World Populating Ageing Report: 1950-2050 (2002:15) estimates that the global population of children will be less than those over 60 years old for the first time in history. However, in many developed nations, the proportion of elderly already exceeds that of children.

These countries are faced with a new problem: how to support a growing elderly population who are living longer and not working themselves (thus creating a high dependency ratio)? The dependency ratio, calculated by adding together the percentage of children under 15 years old and elderly (over 65), then dividing that by the total population and multiplying by 100. Countries with higher dependency ratios place a larger burden on the working population (15-64) to support these 'dependents.' The elderly

proportion of the dependency ratio is expected to increase globally to almost half by 2050, while in many developed countries, it will be as high as 65% (United Nations 2002:18). Many of these nations' social security and welfare programs are under stress to provide adequate resources and care for these individuals. In addition, there is an issue of labour force participation, as many sectors are or will be finding themselves with a shortage of workers necessary to achieve standard or targeted outputs.

In developing countries, the course of ageing has been slower so far, but the problem is exacerbated by the speed at which elderly populations are now growing. Though China's current percentage of elderly people in proportion to its total population is only just over the global figure (10.12% and 8.48%, respectively), according to the United Nations, by 2050 that proportion will have more than doubled, to over 22%—making the growth of China's elderly population faster than any country in history (United Nations 2002:178). At a time when its middle class is still establishing itself and its debt is steadily rising, it will be difficult for China to support its large future population of pensioners.

Switzerland: an aging society

Currently, 18.23% of Switzerland's population is aged 65 and older, amounting to approximately 1,526,391 people as of 2016 (World Bank World Development Indicators, 2017: Switzerland).

Ageing populations are an unprecedented phenomenon that threatens Switzerland and its European neighbours. As the table below indicates using data from the Swiss Federal Statistical Office report « *Les scénarios de l'évolution de la population de la Suisse, 2015-2045* », the total economically active population will increase by approximately 500 000 in the next 30 years. The economically active population is defined as people between the ages of 20 and 64 who participate in the work force, whether employed or unemployed. This relatively modest increase is mostly due to the large projected increase of foreign workers (expected to increase by 39.9%), in contrast to workers of Swiss nationality, whose expected increase is just 0.3% in the next 30 years (FSO 2015:55).

However, the more staggering issue, also outlined in the table below, is the increase in the proportion of people aged 65 and older in relation to the economically active population. In 2015, there were 33.6 persons aged 65 or older in Switzerland for every 100 economically active persons between the ages of 20

and 64. By 2045, this ratio is expected to nearly double to 55.7 elderly persons for every 100 economically active persons.

	Economically active population, in '000	Gross economic activity rate (total population), in %	No. of persons aged 65 and over per 100 economically active persons between the ages of 20 and 64
2015	4872	58.4	33.6
2020	5024	57.4	36.3
2025	5128	56.0	40.5
2030	5208	54.6	46.0
2035	5283	53.6	50.4
2040	5318	52.9	53.3
2045	5328	52.4	55.7

Figure 1 : FSO - Demographic scenarios, permanent resident population

As population ageing continues in Switzerland, the demand for semi-skilled workers will increase. In fact, the secondary and tertiary sectors depend on such a workforce. In Switzerland, a semi-skilled worker is someone who attends a professional school, a general knowledge school or a secondary school in order to receive a skill degree called secondary education.

In order to meet the demand for semi-skilled workers, Swiss authorities have created programs that encourage young people to start an apprenticeship. The campaign “formationprofessionnelleplus.ch” is one of the initiatives launched to address this situation. Despite encouraging outcomes, attendance of vocational training will likely face a sharp decline in the near future. In fact, the number of first year apprentices in 2017 is estimated to be 71 000, significantly lower than compared with the approximately

81 000 first year apprentices in 2008. This decline is predicted based on both population ageing as well as the negative attitudes expressed by younger generations. The lack of prestige and low salary that are associated with apprenticeships are the reasons most often cited for such disaffection.

For many decades, Switzerland has relied on foreign labour to fill the jobs that the resident population could not fill. 5 015 million People were employed in Switzerland in 2017. More than one quarter of this population, 1 563 000 individuals, are permanent resident aliens. Because of the migration legislation, as of 2015 78.5% of foreign workers are from an EU/EFTA member state (Office fédéral de la statistique (OFS), Perspectives de la formation, 2008, p. 24). The majority of the foreign workers migrated from Italy, with the second largest group coming from Germany. This reflects the fact that Switzerland signed agreements on the free movement of people within the EU, which favours European workers within the Swiss labour market to the detriment of workers from outside of Europe.

Focusing on semi-skilled workers, the EU provides two-thirds of the foreign workers in Switzerland. Italy alone counts for one-fifth of these workers, however they will also be the hardest hit European country by the population ageing phenomenon, followed again by Germany. Other major labour suppliers including Spain and Portugal will also face a decline in their local labour force and will be unable to supply the labour market in Switzerland as they have in the past.

Labour needs in Switzerland

While economic stakeholders and particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs) believe that outsourcing their activities can help them be more competitive and lessen the impact of the population ageing, it is difficult to be sure that these measures will be sufficient enough to counter such a drastic demographic change (Saner, Velebit, 2009).

In an attempt to increase the capabilities of outsourcing, numerous initiatives have been undertaken to support professional training programmes in emerging countries, particularly by the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET). The Swiss Indian Chamber of Commerce and the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET), for example, jointly launched an initiative in 2007 to implement a vocational training system in India that would be based on the Swiss training model

and would enable the relocation of a part of the production of the Swiss mechanical, engineering and metallurgy industries. This system offers training to semi-skilled Indian workers and guarantees Swiss SMEs the possibility to hire cheaper semi-skilled workers (Oberson, José, 2008, p. 13-16). However, the process of relocating labour has been widely used for decades and cannot be expanded extensively.

Where most of the workers are needed, in the service sector, outsourcing is rarely an option. In order to counter this issue, authorities have recently launched initiatives to draw people into the health-care positions, such as care assistants and community health assistants.

Another measure taken by authorities has been to reform the pension system in Switzerland. The new system would decrease the dependence of the older generation on the active generation by postponing the age of retirement. In 2004, the Swiss people showed their opposition to a new retirement law and again in 2017, a new attempt by the Swiss government to increase the length of retirement age was defeated by the majority of the Swiss voters. In view of the outcome of the last two votes, it is unlikely that the public opinion will change. Additionally, it is doubtful that this type of reform would be enough to alleviate the labour shortage.

In order to better anticipate the changes in demand and supply of jobs, data on the shortage or surplus of the labour market in each sector and occupation need to be updated and made available. Currently there is no such systematic study in Switzerland partly due to the fact that many parameters must be taken into account to establish a reliable study.

Professor Yves Flückiger, former director of the Employment Observatory of the University of Geneva and now rector of the University of Geneva, mentioned to the authors that data was missing that could be used to conduct studies on labour market's needs. In fact, many factors must be taken into account in order to conduct such a study; for instance, wage rates, at any given moment, and the available amount of manpower. The lack or overabundance of workers can also be resolved at varying speeds depending on the length of training required for a profession and sectoral mobility which in turn depends on the level of qualification required and the skills of people looking for a job in a specific sector at a specific moment. In fact, unemployed people are often ignored by the HR professionals assessing the needs of human capital in their own industry.

Population ageing and labour migration

The effects of population ageing on migration have not been studied sufficiently. Labour migration is not seen as a major tool to fight against the consequences of population ageing. FSO projections emphasize that net migration will be equal to the average balance of the ten last years while it will continue to grow up to 0.3%, which means an increase of 20'000 migrants per year. Projections for Italy and Germany reveal that these countries will need 6'500 and 6'000 immigrants respectively per year per million of inhabitants if they want to avoid a decrease in their population (3). In comparison with these countries, Swiss projections seem more modest (4). These estimates question whether the figures sufficiently take into account such factors as emigration, and if they truly reflect the future needs in human capital.

In each case, statistics foretell a decrease of the Swiss population as well as a decrease of immigration flows of citizens from the EU states due to economic convergence in their own country of origin. These same statistics indicate, however, that migration from non-European countries will remain important in the future. Thus, a decrease of EU workers working in Switzerland would represent a loss for the Swiss economy if the restrictive immigration policy regarding the semi-skilled workers of non-EU origin would be maintained.

In the long term, population ageing in industrialized countries, demographic growth in developing countries, and an even more globalized world will greatly accelerate international migration flows in general. Some industrialized countries have found that they could take advantage of a South to North migration. For a long time, states such as Canada have signed bilateral agreements with developing countries such as Mexico and the Philippines in order to meet the Canadian demand for unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

Over the years, these programmes have become more sophisticated and complex and have generated positive contributions to both the demanding and supplying countries. Today, the close collaboration

(3) United Nations, *Replacement Migration: Is It a Solution to Declining and Ageing Populations?* New York, Economic and Social Council (Ecosoc), 2001.

(4) In regards to future scenarios (Office fédéral de la statistique - OFS), *les scénarios de l'évolution de la population de la Suisse 2005-2050*, 2006, p. 7, the Swiss population is expected to reach its peak at 8.2 million people in 2036 before starting to decline. For such a population, Switzerland would require about 2'400 immigrants per million inhabitants, which means 2.7 times less than UN projections for Italy.

between Canada and their trade partners demonstrates the effective application of migration rules and procedures (return to country of origin, working conditions in the host country, etc.) (5).

In Europe, countries such as Spain or France are following this lead and are turning to workers from the developing countries to fill labour gaps. Many scholars and politicians interpret these new policies as an instrumentalisation of development aid. Others believe that this kind of collaboration offers new perspectives on the development of both developing and developed countries. While these programmes are in their early stages, they are the sign of a new trend in migration throughout Europe. In order to combat the phenomena of population ageing, Switzerland needs to reassess its migration policy and comply with the UN policy, which argues that allowing increased migration will aid countries to close the gap in their labour market.

Laws and procedures allowing refugees to work in Switzerland

The Swiss Law of Asylum (1998:Art. 43) states that an asylum-seeker is prohibited from working in a remunerative capacity for the first three months after submitting his or her application. If the application is rejected in that three months period, then he or she is forbidden from working in Switzerland for the rest of his or her stay. If the applicant decides to resubmit his or her application, he or she is not allowed to work until the application is approved.

Should the procedure for processing an asylum-seeker's application take longer than three months, the asylum-seeker is permitted to work in a paid capacity in Switzerland.

However, there are various conditions of employment placed upon the asylum-seeker and his or her employer: an employer must specifically request to hire an asylum-seeker, and it must be established that no other Swiss, EU/EFTA national, or foreigner with a residence permit can be found for the job. In addition, individual cantons are able to limit access to work for asylum-seekers to certain sectors only. In Zürich, remunerated work by asylum-seekers is limited to the construction industry, hospitals, homes, institutes, food and drink industries, the hospitality industry, canteens, laundries and dry cleaners, tailors and waste disposal.

(5) Djajic (2008), p. 12-13

Other impediments make it difficult for asylum-seekers to work in Switzerland besides legal barriers. Due to the temporary nature of the status of asylum-seeker, it is difficult for many to establish the impression of stability that many employers require upon hiring. In addition, most asylum-seekers are not fluent in one of the four local languages, which provides another large obstacle to employment.

Once a person is granted asylum, he receives a Swiss residence permit and is entitled to pursue gainful employment on the condition that employers submit a request and follow local wage and working conditions. However, of the more than 25 000 recognised refugees with a Swiss B residence permit, only 4 005 were employed at the end of 2016 (State Secretariat for Migration SEM, 2016:27). In addition, according to the Federal Office of Statistics, the percentage of recognised refugees in 2015 who received social assistance was 80.8%.

There are many social welfare benefits to accepting refugees in the long term. Michael Clemens of the Center for Global Development notes that in the United States, refugees become a net contributor to public funds approximately eight years after arriving (2017); thus in purely monetary terms, a refugee is a positive investment. Country policies that deter refugees from working increase those countries' burdens due to refugees. Again, in the United States, refugees actually pay back about \$21 000 more in taxes than they receive in benefits in the first 20 years (Clemens 2017:1).

Refugees' access to the labour market is crucial for ensuring economic and cultural integration. In some instances, refugee employment can have positive, multiplier effects. For example, Syrian refugees in Turkey have invested nearly \$334 million into the Turkish economy, creating more than 10 000 Syrian businesses with an average of 9.4 workers each (Clemens 2017:1). And one of the common worries, that refugees will displace citizens in the job market, is generally unfounded: native workers who are displaced, according to Clemens, usually end up in higher-paying and higher-skill jobs.

But countries must actively choose to incorporate refugees into their economies by giving them true access to the labour markets and creating conducive right to work (Clemens 2017:1) policies. In states in which there are large barriers to entry for refugees, they are likely to remain social burdens and have difficulty in rising to become positive contributors to social welfare and public funds. Nearly all refugees will initially receive social assistance; however, it is up to the individual country to decide to create opportunities (via the removal of obstacles) for these refugees to enter into gainful employment and begin paying taxes. With correct policymaking that facilitates the inclusion of refugees into the national work-

forces, the refugee crisis, in the words of German car manufacturer Daimler's CEO Dieter Zetsche, could turn out to be the foundation for the country's next economic miracle (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 2015).

Conclusions

A growing number of Swiss companies have difficulties recruiting semi-skilled workers. This problem will be exacerbated in the coming decades due to population ageing. Several measures have been adopted to overcome the problem, but the use of foreign workers certainly remains one of the fastest and most effective measures to bring balance to the situation. Companies and the Swiss authorities are aware of the role that refugee and migrant workers could play for the economy however, Swiss policy toward migration is based on advocating full employment for Swiss citizens. As a result, the legislation, which restricts the admission of foreign workers, does not create the means to meet the demand for semi-skilled workers.

In light of the fact that the threat of population ageing is occurring in numerous industrialized countries, migration at the international level will be disrupted and Switzerland will not be spared. Immigration should not be seen as the only solution to the problem and a good migration policy is difficult to propose and to get accepted by a majority of the citizens. However, the impact of the situation on the labour market will hopefully convince the authorities to explore new models of labour migration and to provide more opportunities to refugees to enter the Swiss labour market.

A new policy passed by the Federal Administration consists of providing a pre-apprenticeship training opportunity to refugees with asylum status in Switzerland. The pre-apprenticeship programme consists of a 2 year pre-training which allows a young refugee to learn one of the national four languages and acquire basic skills in one of the main - industrial or service sector. Once these basic skills have been acquired by the refugee, he or she can more easily succeed in entering and completing a full apprenticeship programme which in turn increases the likelihood that the Refugee-apprentice can find sustainable employment in the Swiss labour market.

On 14th July 2019, more than 190 countries agreed to a global compact on migration and to promote safe and orderly migration and reduce human smuggling and trafficking culminating lengthy negotiations

on the often contentious issue . The Global Compact for Safety, Orderly and Regular Migration is not legally binding and is to be formally adopted at a ministerial meeting in Marrakesh, Morocco, on Dec. 11-12. 2018

However, no international convention exists yet which would give guidance to countries as to what they can and should not do in regard to their treatment of migrants and also in regard to what countries should undertake in cooperation with each other to bring order into the increasingly chaotic field of the labour markets in developing and developed countries. Such a convention would also provide guidance as to what transition countries should and should not undertake in regard to illegal trafficking of migrants originating from their soils.

Multilateral Diplomacy is also needed to create a multilateral convention for refugees along the examples of the UNHCR Refugee convention and the Geneva conventions and their Additional Protocols which form the core of international humanitarian law that regulate the conduct of armed conflict. The new global compact treaties on refugees and migrants expected to be concluded by fall of 2018 could create new opportunities to rethink current asylum and migration policies.

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- In regards to future scenarios (Office fédéral de la statistique (OFS), *Les scénarios de l'évolution de la population de la Suisse 2005-2050*, 2006, p. 7), the Swiss population is expected to reach its peak at 8.2 million people in 2036 before starting to decline. For such a population, Switzerland would require about 2'400 immigrants per million inhabitants, which means 2.7 times less than UN projections for Italy.