open think tank network

POLICY KITCHEN

Quo vadis?
Envisioning human mobility for 2050

Partners

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GRASSROOTS THINK TANK AUSTRIA

POLIS 180

In Collaboration with

THE YOUTH CAFÉ

Made possibled by

MIGROS
Pioneer Fund

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Menu

Amuse-bouche

Executive summary One year into the coronavirus pandemic that brought the world to a halt, the Open Think Tank Network's grassroots think tanks partnered with the Kenyan-based youth empowerment organization, The Youth Café, to reflect on the impact of current transformative events on the various forms of migration. Recognizing that the future is unpredictable and with the aim of unraveling the range of possibilities it holds, a methodology to democratize strategic foresight was pioneered. The project engaged over one hundred participants from across the globe in a three-part workshop series and on the innovation platform Policy Kitchen.

This report and an accompanying podcast series are the results of the participatory strategic foresight process. Diverse perspectives on the future of migration and crowd-sourced migration policy actions were ideated throughout the project.

The project team regrouped the ideas into four key avenues for policymaking to set the political course for the participants' visions of the future today, which are the following:

Fair remuneration and inclusive working conditions for all occupations and contributions to society in order to end exploitative working conditions for migrants, increase employment prospects and access to education in host communities by:
- expanding inclusive occupations and remuneration-schemes,
- increasingly subsidizing continuous vocational development and retraining, as well as
- financially acknowledging efforts such as language studies and care work as valuable contributions to society.

Addressing the positive impact of migration on the social and economic challenges of an aging society by taking into account the different experiences and skills that migrants bring to the labor market by:
- establishing a job opportunities database and
- developing a meaningful and comparable skills assessment tool.

Increase the decision-making power of cities and local level actors in migration management by:
- recognizing the significant roles and responsibilities of cities in managing human mobility and giving them more competencies to create sustainable urban development,
- taking into account the views of all actors involved in human mobility and using them to build inclusive, bottom-up governance structures and
- allocating resources to cities and granting them more sovereignty over the establishment of local level residency schemes, visa regimes and resettlement decisions.

Strengthening of urban-rural linkages in the context of climate change resilience and adaptation by:
- abolishing the rural-urban dichotomy and introducing a regional turn in policy action aimed toward climate resilience,
- establishing a network of model regions, which act as innovation incubators and develop urban-rural resilience strategies
- adapting these learnings into capacity building guidelines for other regions to apply to their needs. ●

The Kitchen: Democratizing strategic foresight

Policy Kitchen is a policy crowdsourcing methodology developed by foraus – Forum Aussenpolitik/Swiss Forum on Foreign Policy. It enables a diverse network of thinkers from all around the world to find creative policy recipes to pressing foreign policy challenges. The methodology is built on three components: an online crowd innovation platform, interactive workshops, and a support process to create impact with the best crowdsourced policy recipes. The platform is public and any person, irrespective of background or location, can participate and contribute ideas. To ensure a high level of expertise, we partner with experts and professionals of various sectors (science, government, international organizations, civil society, business, etc.). We encourage and support other actors in using participatory methods in their respective domains to generate innovative forward-looking outputs. The code for Policy Kitchen is available as open source software. Policy Kitchen has been made possible with the support of the Migros Pioneer Fund.

With human mobility being called into question across the world due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the way we move – or do not move – has changed rapidly. This unprecedented situation inspired the Open Think Tank Network (OpenTTN), consisting of grassroots think tanks Agora (UK), foraus (CH), Polis180 (DE) and Ponto (AT), to reflect on the impact of the current transformative events on different forms of migration – and to create a participatory process to look into the future.

Looking into the future is nothing new. Humanity has always tried to anticipate changes, events and other phenomena that could disrupt our normality and force us to adapt, be it in the form of prophecy, mysticism, art, philosophy, fiction or with scientific approaches. Yet, we continue to fail to predict the future, because the future is unpredictable. The Covid-19 pandemic has vividly demonstrated this to many of us.

Traditional forecasting methods tend to extrapolate the past into the future by relying on collected data and observations. While this can be successful in the short term or in an environment consisting of stable conditions, it has become increasingly difficult to find answers or predict the 21st century's complex challenges using these means.

To be able to think about human mobility in all its complexity today, in a world in which change is accelerating and humans as well as decisions are becoming increasingly interconnected, we need to adopt new approaches to think about the unforeseeable and embrace uncertainty. It is important to collectively begin thinking beyond short-term implications and to start exploring and experimenting to eventually find actual solutions to complex present and future global challenges.

This is where foresight comes in. Strategic foresight does not aim to predict the future, rather, it explores the landscape of possible futures and uses perspectives of many alternative futures to make decisions today. Strategic foresight is therefore based on two premises: 1) a singular future does not exist but many possible futures exist; and 2) it is possible to make decisions in the present in order to impact future developments.[1] Strategic foresight is designed to help us deal with volatility and unpredictability while building resilience and anticipatory capacity in the face of inevitable disruptions.

Democratizing strategic foresight

We believe that the future is a common good, therefore everyone should have the right to contribute to shaping our collective future. As grassroots organizations, we have long been seeking to democratize the development of international policy by using innovative crowd-sourcing methods and participatory structures. By making strategic foresight participatory, we give citizens the possibility to collectively formulate preferred narratives of the future, opposing the widely-perceived lack of agency over our future.

From March to May 2021, over 100 participants from around the world collaborated during three different workshops to envision the future of human mobility for 2050. The project team, composed of over a dozen highly engaged volunteers from the four participating OpenTTN think tanks, was dedicated to making the process widely accessible in order to receive diverse perspectives. The team made efforts to bring together practitioners from as many areas as possible, such as science, practice, or policy-making. Geographically speaking, we also had the privilege of partnering with The Youth Café from Kenya. By virtue of all of us being youth organizations, our efforts have been particularly focused on engaging young voices, the demographic of society with rather limited opportunities for political participation, but most affected by the future liabilities created by short-term policy decisions today.

Box 1

An innovative approach to participatory strategic foresight: personas

The process of facilitating access to collective future migration scenarios, opening explorative spaces, and inspiring thinking about new possibilities of the future for migration experts and interested parties alike, began by creating so-called personas. Personas are an empathy instrument traditionally used by experience designers (UX design). User personas are archetypal users whose goals and characteristics represent the needs of a group of users. The creation of personas helps designers to empathize with the stories, needs and expectations of different people.

Discussing migration from a Western point of view can easily turn into a detached discussion about the journeys of "*others*". To allow participants from all walks of life and any origin to relate to the discussion, we decided to make use of the broader concept of human mobility and created five fictional personas to guide the forward-looking policy design process. In an interactive workshop, together with Kreatives, a design strategy studio in Munich, we brought together elements of experience design, strategy and storytelling to create five fictional personas from different backgrounds and with different needs. To infuse life into the personas, we completed their profiles by imagining behavioral patterns, goals, skills and attitudes.

Maria

Vytautas

Rose

Zabel

An Ca
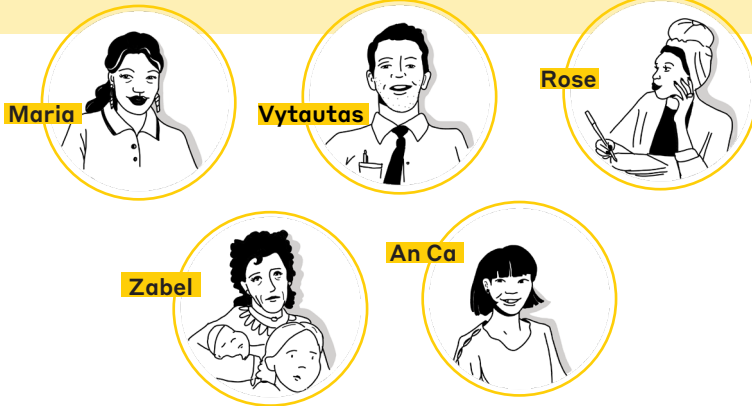
Guided by the detailed profiles of the five fictional personas, we asked a diverse group of over 60 participants to collaborate and explore which drivers of change and megatrends might influence the mobility of the personas. To facilitate reflections on the future in a systematic way, we shared the European Commission's fourteen global Megatrends[2] with the participants. The Megatrends are long-term driving forces that are currently observable and will most likely have a global impact. We also asked participants to reflect on key uncertainties and potential disruptions, as well as highly unlikely

game-changers, and organize these factors following the STEEP approach, which refers to Social, Technological, Economic, Ecological/Environmental, and Political domains. Participants were then asked to rank drivers by likelihood and impact. The results were uploaded to Policy Kitchen, where they could be further refined in preparation for the subsequent scenario workshop.

For the second workshop, we encouraged our participants to challenge the status quo by asking, "What if?". To stimulate creative and forward thinking, participants worked together in small groups to create narratives that emphasized possible structural changes and their consequences for the mobility of one of the five fictitious personas. Guiding questions during this exploratory workshop included: What is the context of migration in 2050? Who are the actors and what happened from now until then? How do changes in the context and interactions between individual drivers influence the choices and decisions of the personas?

This second workshop encouraged participants to give free reign to their creativity, to train their imagination, and to question the underlying assumptions and biases that shape perception and action.

Want to hear our personas come alive? Check out our podcast!

We believe that the future should be co-created by everyone who is willing to take an active role in shaping it. For this reason, we developed a process in which anyone interested could participate, and created a podcast series to make the collective images of the future accessible to a wider audience.

In the second workshop, participants were guided to co-create fictitious personal journeys of human mobility for our five personas. These futures were then clustered and refined by our project team. Together with the podcast production company Tinka media, they were developed into scripts for a podcast series. Each episode offers the opportunity to immerse oneself in a collaboratively-crafted possible migratory future for one of the five fictitious personas in the year 2050. We warmly invite you to take a break from the present and travel with us into the futures space by listening to the podcast. The QR code below will take you directly to Spotify, but you can also find it on various other podcast platforms.

The visions you hear are only a few of the many possible futures of human mobility that were developed for our personas. Would you envision another future for one of our personas? Share it with us, along with any other thoughts and feelings this sound escape may have sparked, in our migration community group on Policy Kitchen.

Creating collective images of the future that provide anticipatory resilience in times of disruption was just as important to us as telling stories of the personas to communicate our insights or foresights to a broader audience. On a personal level, such exercises help to strengthen the individual's consciousness of the multiplicity of possible futures and the individual's agency in influencing them.

Box 3

Workshop Challenges and Learnings

The dialogues presented difficulties, as participants joined the workshops from remote areas with unstable internet connections and English was not the first language for many. However, on a human level, participants demonstrated openness to difference, diversity and a willingness to have a nuanced discussion. Discussing differences is crucial, as it brings to light the different assumptions and perspectives individuals might have when thinking about the future.

Creating a safe space with an open and tolerant atmosphere was of utmost importance to us in the design and facilitation of the workshop. This enabled participants to voice opinions and points-of-view, and share their visions of a possible future. Since no one knows what the future holds, everyone equally has something to say – and to feel; as hopes and fears are naturally attached to different futures.

It is interesting to note that, although we did not limit participants' imaginations to positive visions of the future, the vast majority of crowdsourced visions were positive, indicating a sense of hope and optimism among millennials, who constituted the majority of our participants. Collective positive images are powerful due to their potential to catalyze social change and to overcome cultural obstacles when translated into collective actions in the present.

After rehearsing the possibilities of tomorrow in the previous workshops, our third workshop aimed to identify the actions needed today. Empowered by provocations and insights, we used a targeted diversity approach to include policy makers, experts and anyone thematically interested or curious about our human mobility 'futures approach' during the ideation process. We invited everyone to come together for a three-hour interactive workshop to ideate concrete policy recommendations that provide both fresh ideas and anticipatory intelligence to migration experts, policy makers and practitioners. Our project team clustered and refined the results of the first two workshops to develop three alternative futures that we could then work with in the final ideation session. The outcomes, including alternative futures and forward-looking policy avenues, are detailed below.

All contributions are public on policykitchen.com/group/quo-vadis-envisioning-human-mobility-2050. This policy recipe has been written by a transnational group of individuals, composed of think tank members and challenge participants, maximizing the participatory nature of this report. The project has been rigorously reviewed, both internally and by high-level foresight and migration experts. The full list of project team members, and contributors is presented in the final chapter of this report. ●

Starter: Why envisioning human mobility?

Quo vadis? Where are you going? This question took on a whole new meaning in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. With the spread of the virus, the concept of human mobility changed dramatically. For the first time, people all around the globe were confronted with a multilateral border shut-down. Even those who took freedom of movement for granted were faced with limitations previously unheard of. This unprecedented situation inspired the members of the OpenTTN to partner with The Youth Café to question and reflect upon both the status quo and the many possible futures of human mobility. For that reason, a participatory process to imagine new, more equitable possibilities of human mobility for the future was created. In current migration regimes, passports and citizenship play an essential role in freedoms (of movement, employability, health care access, etc.), or lack thereof, which can be seen as restrictive and inequal for many individuals across the globe.
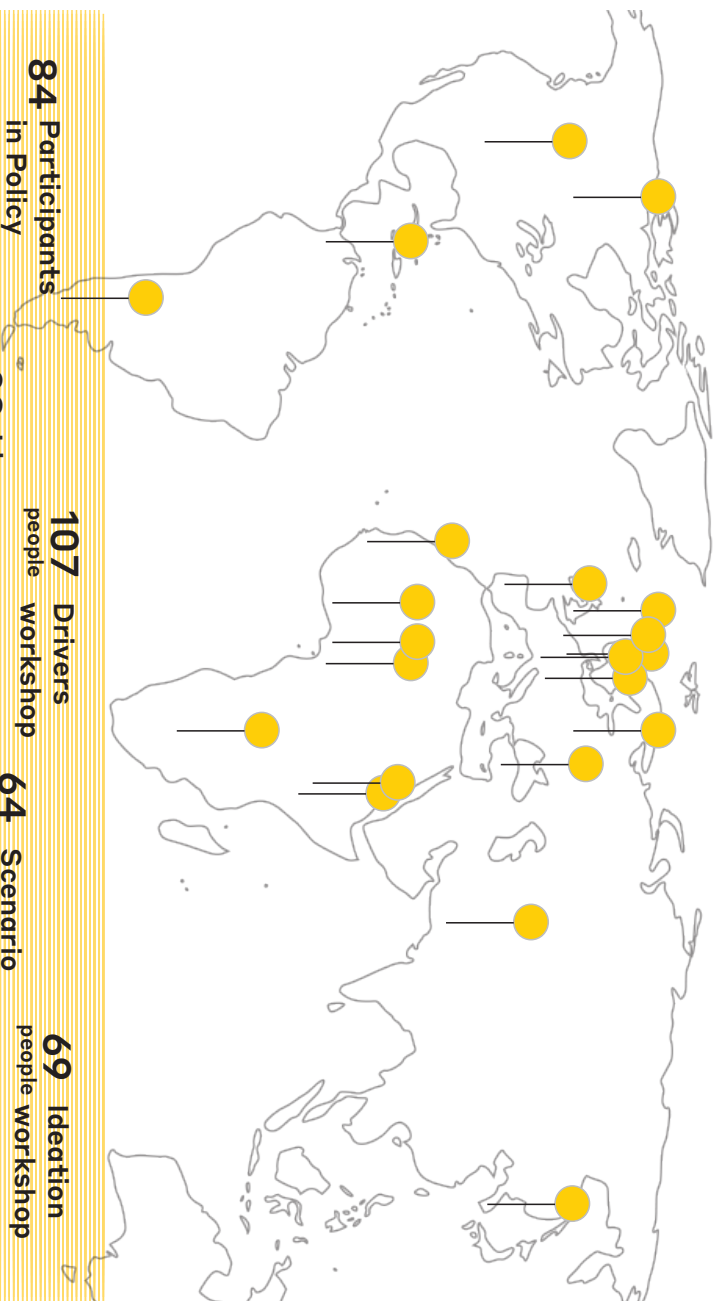
Human mobility encompasses many different forms of movement; migration for education, for work, forced migration and displacement, travel, as well as intra- and inter-state migration. Mobility and societal development have existed hand in hand, and since the rise of globalization and accessible forms of transportation, human mobility has steadily increased. In 2019, prior to Covid-19, the world was hyper-mobile. Historic highs of 272 million people were international migrants.[3] 169 million people were working outside of their land of birth, constituting 4.9% of the global labor force.[4] Over 5 million students were enrolled in education programs in foreign countries,[5] and the world counted 4.397 billion commercial airline passengers.[6] With the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and the closed borders and travel restrictions which followed, the impact on human immobility was felt in every country across the globe.

The pandemic offered unique insights into the efficacy and impacts of different mobility policies, as each country's restrictions were varied. Certain citizenships, as well as socio-economic and work statuses played a role in a person's ability to move. For many, the impact of Covid-19 on their mobility was not just of closed borders and restricted travel, but also of closed universities, paused industries, and changing family responsibilities. The pandemic changed the way many people understood mobility, as something that directly affects them, instead of something to be taken for granted.

Anticipatory governance is a key tool that policy makers use in order to foresee crises and events, their impacts on policy, and to plan accordingly. We wanted to imagine what future challenges and opportunities could restrict or promote human mobility. By taking an anticipatory approach, we are able to envision possibilities outside the usual policy narrative.[7] We aim to use this to our advantage to provide food for thought to policy makers, to prepare them for the unexpected, and to seize opportunities even in challenging futures. Covid-19 will not be the last disrupter to the norms of human mobility; climate change, increased globalization, conflicts and the increase of online work and education will further impact questions of (in)equality and (in)equity globally.[8]

Human mobility is ever-changing, with possibilities for people varying greatly, based on their geographic and socio-economic backgrounds. It is therefore imperative to try to shape the future of human mobility in a more equitable manner. We are convinced that there is no better way to accomplish this than by collectively beginning to think about a more inclusive future now. Find out more about our four core policy avenues: fair remuneration and inclusive working conditions, labor market match-making, local level human mobility governance and rural-urban inequalities in the Main Course! ●

Over 100 participants from across the globe

84 Participants in Policy Kitchen

23 Ideas

107 people Drivers workshop

64 people Scenario workshop

69 people Ideation workshop

First Course: Three alternative futures

Through a series of workshops, we collaboratively envisioned possible futures for our personas, exploring how different drivers and megatrends might influence their life journeys. Our project team clustered and refined the results of the first two workshops to develop three scenarios, or as we call them, alternative futures.[9] These formed the basis of our final workshop, which aimed to identify necessary policy actions for the future of tomorrow, today.

Our work around the alternative futures was guided by the desire to include as many elements of our participants' visions as possible, while creating accessible scenarios that participants could quickly immerse themselves in during the final workshop.

Each of the alternatives has "good" and "bad" aspects, or in other words, none represent a bad or a good future. All of them need to be considered in equal measure and sincerity, as they might each materialize, to some extent, in about 30 years' time. To reiterate, no single future can be predicted, but a landscape of possible alternative futures must be anticipated and pre-examined to some degree.

The alternative futures listed below were presented to our participants at the beginning of the third workshop:

- Future I: The opportunities of technology in freedom of movement
- Future II: New global compacts for migrant inclusion
- Future III: Climate change as a force in future mobility

Future I

The opportunities of technology in freedom of movement

In 2050, the significant technological advances in the field of data collection, storage and accountability-based surveillance of recent years are established as norm worldwide. The "random" character of mobility rights determined by nationality was contested by quantitative economic and practical considerations, leading to the establishment of a free movement migration regime.

With the rise of new technologies and the wide automatization of traditional areas of work, capitalism has developed into a form of social capitalism. This has brought about changes such as the definition of wage labor being widened to include reproductive labor, contributions to culture, history, philosophy, as well as other previously undervalued areas of work. A Universal Basic Employment (UBE) is in place, rewarding any form of contribution to society financially. This is to protect contribution to and responsibility for society, since a vast amount of work has been automated over the past decades and it is widely assumed that machines and robots will only take over more work.

- For migrants, this means they are rewarded for their pioneering spirit, as they generate value through the sheer act of moving. Accumulating experiences such as understanding and peacefully coexisting in new living conditions/ new cultures, as well as bringing in value with their own cultures, experiences and skills is remunerated. Their learnings can be stored decentrally and "circulated" back to their home country to support "brain exchange" instead of "brain drain".
- For refugees integrating into a new society, UBE means their efforts to learn the new language or volunteer in the neighborhood are appreciated as valuable contributions to society. Integration is facilitated more swiftly as refugees and migrants are more connected with their new environment. Where there used to be a divide between individuals receiving welfare and individuals earning money through jobs, now different ways of contributing to society are being valued and remunerated.

New technologies allowed for standardized and quick security checks to turn into reality. The liberal, rights-based mobility regime grants the same mobility rights for everyone. It is similar to the EU free movement regime of the early 2000s, but it is now applicable worldwide. After the pandemic of the 2020s, health checks and immunity levels have remained a key issue in the collective memory, which is why health checks are the only requirement individuals need to fulfill before moving to another country in this regime.

All in all, technological advancements have been put to use for the public good, leading to a diverse but cohesive society based on peaceful coexistence, including both humans and artificial intelligence-based machines.

Future II

New global compacts for migrant inclusion

In 2050, migration actors are celebrating the achievement of the 2050 Development Goals for evidence-based Fair, Safe, Regular Migration and Dignified Asylum. Irregular migration and humanitarian crises are now marginal, as comprehensive legal labor migration pathways have been added to national constitutions, both for highly-skilled and low-paid workers. National and international migration governance actors now work closely together with actors from the local level. Today, cities are key players in international diplomacy, including migrants who are facilitating exchanges with partnering cities from other regions.

- There are sufficient migration pathways covering labor market needs and individuals alike. There are now many migrants that decide to return and leave again, as there are plenty of opportunities, such as jobcoaching and recruitment programs abroad, as well as simplified visa application processes, including multiple-entry visa options. In fact, temporary and circular migration are now more frequent than the previous prevailing migrant practices of settling for a long period of time in their destination country. Therefore, the process known as "brain circulation", the exchange of skills and ideas due to migration, has also increased. Migrants' perspectives, interests and agency are recognized within the Triple Win Migration & Development Programs Framework, an approach designed to be beneficial for the main three parties involved: the origin state, the migrant and the destination states. This has shown to increase the impact of development programs and has reduced socio-economic inequalities among regions.
- In terms of asylum, the common Responsibility-Sharing System has also learned from regional failures such as the former Dublin System in the EU. The resettlement processes incorporate a more comprehensive set of criteria that are permanently updated and take into account several previously ignored factors (these include linguistic or personal affinities, structural integration prospects and many others). Refugee camps no longer exist and facilitating transparent and dignified relocation support is prioritized by state and non-state actors, including humanitarian corridors in case of events causing sudden displacement.
- Moreover, designated international instruments have been created for environmental/climate refugees and migrants. They now have their own independent UN Agency that ensures professional continuity in spite of domestic or international relocation, as well as international protection.

The policy rationale views human mobility neither as an inherently beneficial process, nor a crisis to be resolved or prevented, but as an age-old reality that can become beneficial when governed in a comprehensive manner.

Future III

Climate change as a force in future mobility

In 2025, international banks have come together to fund The Resilient City to make it climate resilient by 2045. This refers to a transformed urban area based on sustainability and "green" priorities, with zero carbon emissions. While The Resilient City benefits its own citizens, it has led to increased inequalities between those who live in cities and those who live in rural areas. Outside the city, rural communities have not been given the same infrastructure to mitigate climate change and extreme weather events. Research capacities, infrastructure creation and funding have all been devoted to building The Resilient City. The government has introduced regional passports to control dramatically increasing urbanization (that is, internal migration to the city) to ensure that only those most in need are able to migrate.

- Rural communities, previously economically dependent on agriculture are now highly impacted by climate change, both financially and on a very personal level. There has been an increase in internal migration from rural areas to The Resilient City, which is now impacted by a lack of capacity to accommodate the internal migrants. Increased internal migration and frequent extreme weather events have led to humanitarian crises outside The Resilient City.
- Due to regional controls, many citizens are forced to migrate overseas, with the hope of finding better opportunities and universal climate resilience policy benefits. However, the reality is that almost all regions across the globe have to fight with severe consequences of climate change and loss of biodiversity.
- Large communities now live in transit centers just outside the city, where individuals from rural areas await, hoping to be allowed into The Resilient City. In the City, buildings have vertical gardens to cool the surroundings and improve air quality. The city uses net zero fossil fuels, electric cars and fusion power. The government has put safety infrastructures in place, such as dam walls to prevent flooding from rising sea levels, as well as underground networks of tunnels and transport to shelter citizens from heat.

Today, in 2050, cities around the world have adopted the sustainability innovations first piloted in The Resilient City. While carbon emissions are expected to drop spectacularly due to the near-zero carbon emissions of many large cities, region-based passports are slowly but steadily becoming the norm.

   All in all, this future depicts a reality where formerly strong nation-state borders have weakened, but internal physical and socio-economic borders have been instituted, giving birth to neighboring parallel societies of inequalities. ●

Main course

With the three alternative futures in mind, participants ideated numerous migration policy actions, which the project team subsequently regrouped into the following four policy making avenues for local, national and international levels.

The first recommendation proposes actions to achieve both fair remuneration and inclusive working conditions for all occupations and contributions to society. This would allow for migrant workers to be able to make more targeted contributions to society, which in turn are appreciated, appropriately recognised and remunerated. Second, possibilities are outlined to address the consequences of an aging Western population by expanding legal pathways for regular migration routes and by taking into account the different experiences and skills that migrants can bring to the labor market. The third recommendation is to increase local level human mobility

governance, to promote dialogue and initiatives between cities, and to propose, among other things, the introduction of local residency schemes. Finally, building and advancing rural-urban linkages has been recommended, in order to address inequalities, in particular inequalities exacerbated by climate change. The four policy avenues will be detailed below, each by examining the challenges being faced, identifying the policy gaps and outlining the proposed recommendations:

Fair remuneration and inclusive working conditions [10]

The issue: need for more inclusive remuneration-schemes for (all) occupations and contributions to society

One common theme raised by participants who addressed "Future I" were the changes to labor market needs or structures,[11] and the associated challenges and opportunities, particularly in regard to forced human mobility. The main challenges identified are to some degree already present today, but they are likely to be altered or aggravated by technological advances expected in the future, with consequences impacting human mobility. These include:

- *Exploitative working conditions for migrants and lack of employment prospects for locals of the host community.* Where well paid labor is only available to the 'highly skilled', tech-savvy population, job competition between migrants and locals can lead to exploitative working conditions and a negative attitude towards migrants and refugees.[12]
- *Inadequate or no access to education and/or job market for migrants in host countries.* Currently, access to education and/or the job market can be restricted, especially for asylum-seekers awaiting a definite decision on their asylum applications. This not only hinders the integration and mental health of refugees, but can also negatively impact the perception of refugees by the host community.[13]
- *Un- and under-paid jobs and contributions to society.* In many job market sectors, workers are underpaid or even not paid at all; a key example of this is the indispensable realm of care work. Both local populations and migrants can be affected

by this phenomenon, which can lead to financial hardship and increasing social unrest.[14] Compensation scheme approaches that only target refugees or migrants can lead to potential resentment with host communities, therefore, more inclusive and comprehensive approaches must be taken.

Policy gaps

In some countries, it is common practice for asylum-seekers to receive a monthly or daily stipend while awaiting the decision on their asylum status. This payment covers their basic needs, but asylum-seekers are not allowed to enter the paid workforce,[15] which can sometimes be perceived as unfair by the population of the host country. There are many local initiatives in various countries to better connect the local and refugee/migrant population through tandem language partnerships, for example, or to facilitate the integration of refugees through guided volunteering activities.[16] However, these efforts are often disconnected, underfunded and may be unable to get the broader public involved. Therefore, they have limited ability to substantially change negative attitudes and narratives.

The trend of automation, accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, has implications for people's lives and creates an increasing need for accessible retraining opportunities.[17] Continuous professional development and vocational retraining are available to varying degrees in different countries, but they are mostly accessible to those already highly skilled, which further increases inequality. Access is not merely determined by availability, as many people, especially with low-paying jobs and without the safety net of savings, either can not pursue retraining or struggle to complete training while continuing to work. There is evidence that government interventions in this context can have great benefits.[18] However, such policies are not yet common practice globally.

A key focus for the workshop participants was an alternative financial compensation system for all occupations and contributions to society.[19] The recommendations put forward in this chapter are not recommendations to implement Universal Basic Employment (UBE), as UBE is already a clearly defined concept and the participants' ideated policy solutions may differ or go beyond this definition. However, the concept has been an important starting

point for the ideation processes which led to the subsequent policy recommendations.

Recommendations
- *Expand inclusive occupations and remuneration-schemes using a bottom-up approach.* This could entail local pilot projects with inclusive occupations and remuneration-schemes, in which everyone would be financially rewarded for their contributions to society. This includes retraining periods, language learning, volunteering or carrying out care work. Incentives to work in the private sector would persist, as the pay might still be higher and private firms might provide additional benefits. However, many social and financial costs currently associated with inequality and unemployment may be reduced or eliminated through such schemes. Furthermore, especially if the scheme is mainstreamed across many regions and countries, it may positively affect migration for labor. Involving NGOs working with refugees from the start is crucial so that the integration and livelihoods of refugees are considered throughout the process. Cities are also important actors enabling regional projects, brain circulation and research - if there is research and positive examples of successful schemes it might be easier to get funding from the philanthropy sector and for NGOs and cities to start pilot projects. An interesting example of a pilot project, although with an unfortunate outcome, would be that of Riace.[20]
- *Supporting continuous vocational development and retraining (national government level).* E.g. subsidies for retraining within firms or through government funded internships with fair pay. This would not only be for young people, but also people who need to retrain at a later stage in life.
- *Highlight efforts like language studies and care work as valuable contributions to society and remunerate them.* This could be accomplished through government and civil society funding partnerships with organizations who have been trying to create awareness for many years. Rebranding stipends for refugees from *'daily stipend',* or *'Taggeld'* to *'remuneration'* for their integration efforts, in tandem with awareness campaigns drawing attention to the efforts that refugees make in order

to integrate, could contribute to better as well as faster integration of refugees. However, remunerating undervalued contributions to, and work for, society should not represent a condition for minimal financial living support for refugees, asylum-seekers and other vulnerable groups.

The issue: insufficient consideration of the positive impact of migrants' diverse experiences and skills to help address the social and economic challenges of the aging population

The increasing proportion of people aged 65+ over the past years raises concerns about how to provide for the growing section of retired citizens (dependents) as they depend on a smaller labor force (workers).[21] One approach to address this challenge is international migration,[22] as it can have a large influence on the size of a population and the diversity of its labor force.[23] However, without an effective economic and social integration policy, migration has a limited effect on the dependents to workers ratio[24]. Indeed, a better integration of migrants already present in host countries, the appreciation of their skills, as well as an effective skills-matching would be more efficient as hosting increasingly more migrants to reduce the future rate of dependents to workers ratio in the ageing societies.

Policy gaps

The effect of economically well-integrated migrants and facilitated legal pathways on irregular migration to Europe is not yet clear. Reducing irregular migration or asylum applications should therefore not be viewed as an indicator or expected outcome of labor migration pathways expansion for low and middle income migrants.[25] Nonetheless, the restrictiveness of open-ended immigration opportunities for low and middle income workers in countries of immigration in Western Europe, North America and South Pacific (New Zealand, Australia) is believed to be a key factor in labor force shortages in these regions.[26] Expanding legal pathways by facilitating safe, orderly and regular labor migration should consequently be viewed as a key migration policy and governance direction for migration policy-makers in the Global North. This should be accompanied by

increased transparency, accountability and inclusive governance orientations in order to prevent exploitation, as well as informality as experienced by economies in the Gulf and WANA (West Asia, North Africa) regions.[27] To bridge the gap between the current, harshly criticized policies and governance dynamics of migration around the world, and to ensure a safe, orderly and regular migration regime which takes into account the many experiences, talents and skills migrants can bring to the Global North and elsewhere, we suggest the following tools among others:

Recommendations

- *Establish a database containing job opportunities in a specific region or economic union (i.e. EU, ASEAN, MERCOSUR, African Union) to facilitate migrants' job searches.* This database would be the responsibility of the local or national government in cooperation with private companies to ensure uniform job descriptions and clear requirements for potential candidates which should enjoy equal treatment.
- *A skills assessment tool should be developed by governments in collaboration with companies to help identify migrants' skills and help them integrate into the labor market more efficiently and effectively, whether in a low or high skilled sector.* Integrating all skill sets can stimulate national development and innovation.[28] One major difficulty for companies when hiring migrants is evaluating their skillset. Hard skills and soft skills are often defined differently in different countries, and migrants do not necessarily have a diploma recognized in the host country. Creating a worldwide comprehensive and uniform assessment tool of hard and soft skills would bring value to the various skills that migrants have to offer. The tool could then match migrants with appropriate job opportunities, therefore contributing to the issue of a diminishing work-force due to aging populations.

Local level human mobility governance

The issue: nation states' sovereignty in migration governance

Today, 56% of the world's population lives in cities, and this trend is expected to continue. By 2050, the urban population will be more than double its current size, with nearly 7 in 10 people living in cities.[29] It is not surprising that the majority of international migrants also live in cities today, and that an even bigger share will be seeking opportunities such as employment, education and improved livelihood in urban spaces in the future. Although the urbanization of migration poses a variety of challenges, it has been widely acknowledged that it can bring significant social, economic and cultural contributions to urban development - if it is managed well.[30]

Local authorities have increasingly become key actors in migration governance, understood as the *'system of institutions, legal frameworks and mechanisms aimed at regulating migration and protecting migrants'*.[31] Local governance actors need to find creative solutions for rapid social change by supporting their communities through innovation.[32] Cities and local authorities therefore have repeatedly called on states and multilateral bodies to better recognize and include them as key actors. Yet, migration governance is a nation state's sovereign prerogative, and there is a tendency not to treat local and regional governments as part of the nation state.[33] The 2018 UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration *'reaffirms the sovereign right of States to determine their national migration policy'*.[34] Our discussions with workshop participants have shown that the supremacy of nation states in migration governance is outdated already – and will be even more so in the envisioned future(s). It does not do justice to the complexity of actors, challenges and opportunities involved in shaping future human mobility.

Policy gaps

Cities and mayors already play an important role in managing migration on a local level. Well aware of their roles and responsibilities in an increasingly globalized and mobile world, efforts have been made through a variety of regional and global initiatives to join together, such as the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)[35] network or the Mayors Migration Council (MMC).[36] These networks

empower and enable cities and mayors with resources, knowledge and connections to engage in migration diplomacy and policy-making at the international, regional and national level. It appears however, that local level actors lack sufficient decision-making power to influence migration governance, especially in proportion to how much they are impacted. Several multilateral declarations stress the importance of ensuring policy coherence across all sectors, levels and types of actors. Cities have repeatedly asked to clarify and recognize their roles and responsibilities and 'set up coordination mechanisms to enable local and regional governments to contribute to migration policy-making within a whole-of-government approach'.[37] According to the workshop participants, the deferral of decision-making power to the local level should be supplemented by a whole-of-society approach. It should not only include local government authorities but strive to build an inclusive migration governance, involving all stakeholders - including migrants.

Recommendations
- *Situating local level actors at the heart of migration governance.* Given the increasingly significant roles and responsibilities of cities in managing human mobility, local level actors should be situated at the heart of migration governance and be recognized as key actors. They need appropriate decision-making power to rework policies and find new forms of governing human mobility according to their needs. Deferral of political competencies from regional and national to local levels must go hand in hand with building new capacities and allocating budgets for efficient implementation. Since political and legal room for maneuvering is often limited, bottom-up approaches empowering non-state actors at the local level are even more important. Cities in general need more competencies to make decisions, e.g. in terms of providing access to housing, job opportunities and skill exchanges. Appropriate living conditions for people moving to or away from cities are also key to sustainable urban development.
- *Building inclusive, bottom-up human mobility governance.* The concept of migration governance should be redefined and reframed as human mobility governance. This term is more empathetic and forward-looking, putting human beings at

the heart of the movement and taking into account not only challenges, but also the opportunities of future human mobility. Most importantly, future-oriented policy-making needs to take into account the views of all actors involved in human mobility. Official consultations held by states widely use participation schemes. There are, however, other promising forms of democratic decision-making and organization, such as citizen councils or participatory budgeting, where every citizen has a say in how municipal or public budgets should be allocated. It is also worth exploring new, digital forms of participation. Hence, we call for inclusive, participatory processes that define new, agile, bottom-up governance structures which allow them to be fully accountable and transparent. It is imperative to include the voices of migrants, diasporas, civil society organizations and other non-state actors. This helps to rebuild trust and social cohesion between citizens, communities and state actors at the local level. In an interconnected world, local level human mobility governance cannot be siloed. Inclusiveness also means intensifying existing dialogues and fostering new forms of cooperation between cities and local governance actors across the world in order to exchange data, share best practices and tackle global challenges together.

- *Establish local level residency schemes, visa regimes and resettlement decisions.* Cities could use additional decision-making capacities in human mobility governance to create local level residency schemes, a suggestion made by several workshop participants. Regardless of their legal status attributed by the respective nation state, all people living in a certain urban area could enjoy equal privileges granted by their local level residency. If cities were also capable of issuing visas, new travel regimes could be put in place, allowing local level authorities to steer intra and inter state human mobility according to their capacities. This would allow for more targeted inclusion of migrants in cities and more controlled, sustainable urban development. Another idea put forward by workshop participants was to let cities decide resettlement capacity. When having the necessary decision-making power, local level actors could respond more accurately to humanitarian crises and give refugees faster access to much needed protection.

Rural-Urban Inequalities

The issue: Strong rural-urban urban-rural linkages are needed in order to prevent growing regional inequalities in the context of climate change

It is clear that the effects of climate change, such as desertification, land degradation and loss of biodiversity will lead to an increasing number of internally displaced people (IDPs).[38] The Report on the Impact of Climate Change on Migration, published by the government of the United States of America in October 2021 for example states, that, 'migration in response to climate impacts may range from mobility as a proactive adaptation strategy to forced displacement in the face of life-threatening risks. This mobility may occur within or across international borders'.[39] In order to increase the resilience of regions and build their capacity to deal with this emerging issue, strong linkages between the rural and urban areas of these regions are crucial. Urban and rural contexts must form a symbiotic ecosystem to balance the effects of climate disasters and provide a maximum quality of life for the people in the region. Strong rural-urban linkages must be part of regional climate resilience policies in order to reduce or prevent the widening of urban-rural inequalities, which could lead to increased migration flows from rural to urban or urban to rural areas.

Policy Gaps

At the moment, the importance of rural-urban linkages to increase regional climate resilience and regions' capacity to manage increasing internal climate disaster displacement has not been sufficiently addressed in migration and climate adaptation policies. A paper[40] published in 2017 by UN-Habitat, the United Nations agency mandated to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities, acknowledges that target 11.a of SDG 11 ("the urban goal") demands *'positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas'* to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.[41] The paper also acknowledges that the '*development gap between urban and rural areas is still large and urgently needs to be bridged'.[42]* At the moment, the importance of rural-urban linkages is still mainly neglected in climate resilience programs. UN Habitat only

began to treat rural-urban linkages as a thematic area of its own right in 2019, with a publication called 'guiding principles and framework of action'[43]. However, these urban-rural linkages are only implicitly discussed in relation to climate resilience, as strengthening urban-rural linkages is framed as a tool to further sustainable development in general. This is highlighted by the fact that 'rural-urban linkages' and 'climate change' are categorized as two different topics by UN Habitat[44]. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) focuses on "targeted assistance" in order to increase the resilience of farming systems. However, climate resilience does not explicitly take rural-urban linkages into account. Current projects by the IFAD[45] and the Green Climate Fund (GCF)[46] show that rural climate resilience projects still overwhelmingly do not take rural-urban linkages into account. A typical project by the GCF is project FP124[47], which aims at 'improving the resilience of farm and land management practices' in the Knuckles/Amban Ganga highlands and lowlands of Sri Lanka.

Recommendations

- *We recommend a regional turn in policy action aimed toward climate resilience in order to prevent the widening of the rural-urban divide and growing inequalities, which could induce or increase interregional migration.* By rethinking regional hubs, the current rural-urban dichotomy could be abolished. This could be achieved by setting up an inclusive rural-urban stakeholder dialogue, where climate resilience measures are developed and take both rural and urban needs into account. This stakeholder dialogue could also be used to discover potential synergies where cities and the surrounding rural belt could support each other in order to work toward a sustainable future, for example in the area of food security (rural to cities) and infrastructure security (cities to rural) that prevents pressure for interregional displacements.

- *In the first phase, we envision the establishment of a network of model regions, which receive funding from Development Banks and act as innovation incubators developing rural-urban resilience strategies that are fitted to the specific geographic, economic, political and social contexts of these regions.* In order to ensure the active involvement of the regional stakeholders, the amount of funding should be based on the success of strategy

development. The process of strategy development should cover a variety of policy areas which affect the growth or reduction of inequalities, such as social cohesion (between rural and urban communities), the diversification of economies for greater resilience, the establishment of climate resilient and inclusive infrastructures and food systems. The process of strategy development should include all regional stakeholders - from community representatives to NGOs and governmental bodies. An equal representation of urban and rural representatives should also be ensured.

- *In the second phase, regions develop their best practices, i.e. their most effective strategies, into capacity building guidelines. Other regions can select the set of guidelines which best fit their specific needs and can apply for funding in order to become resilient regions themselves.* At the end of phase two, we envision a global network of resilient regions, where the rural and urban parts of a region exist in symbiosis with each other, and in which the inhabitants of such regions feel as little migration pressure as possible and regions are self-sufficient. ●

Dessert: Conclusion

Through this participatory, strategic foresight approach, we have been able to reframe our usual way of forecasting in order to think about the complexities of human mobility. To facilitate access and enable participants from all backgrounds to co-create collective futures, five fictional personas were created and used to guide our forward-looking process.

The transnational, participatory process consisted of three workshops, engaging over 100 participants from across the globe during the virtual sessions and on our innovation platform Policy Kitchen. Participants first scanned the horizon and explored which megatrends, drivers of change and signals could possibly influence the mobility of our personas. They then co-created narratives for the personas for 2050, focusing on potential structural changes and

their implications for mobility. The different scenarios were then aggregated into three alternative futures for our final workshop, where we mapped out four key policy avenues catalyzing actions towards our preferred futures today.

The recommendations were in summary: First, fair remuneration and inclusive working conditions for all occupations and contributions to society, putting forward initiatives such as government-sponsored (re)training, expanding inclusive occupations and remuneration-schemes. Second, greater collaboration on potential cross-border employment opportunities was recommended to create more streamlined and targeted employment for job seekers. The third recommendation called for an increase in local level human mobility governance, the main actor in this being cities. Finally, the development and advancement of rural-urban linkages was recommended, in particular to increase climate resilience.

These recommendations seek to foster dialogue and create linkages among governance institutions and local actors to reduce inequality, become a more inclusive society, allow for a comprehensive remuneration system, and to expand legal pathways for regular migration routes for the purpose of employment. To us, democratizing strategic foresight empowers policy makers to generate more comprehensive and systems-based action items due to more diverse input. We hope that our policy avenues will support and encourage decision-makers in gaining long term perspectives which have the potential to shape the future of human mobility in a more equitable manner.

What's next?
We believe that the true power of strategic foresight can only be unlocked through a continuous participatory process, recognizing that trends and current perceptions of the uncertain future need to be constantly revised.

Help the dialogue continue! Join the migration community group on our crowd-innovation platform Policy Kitchen to continue the discussion about the future of human mobility and to further explore the above-mentioned recommendations. Listen to our podcast series, five collectively developed visions of human mobility for our personas, and share your vision or the thoughts and feelings that the audio escape to the future space triggered in you. Let's connect, collaborate and co-create a future we all want to live in. ●

Chefs

Project team
In addition to the lead authors, the following people made significant contributions to the participatory strategic foresight workshop series:

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Ronya was part of the Policy Kitchen team in the early stages and is now president of Ponto.

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We would also like to thank all participants who were unable to create a Policy Kitchen account due to joining the workshops from remote areas with unstable internet connections, an issue we raised above. ●

The Open Think Tank Network

The Open Think Tank Network (OpenTTN) strives for the creation, development, and cooperation of open-source think tanks around the world. We use crowdsourcing methods and participatory structures to provide opportunities for participation in political debates outside of the traditional fora. We thereby seek to democratize the development of international policy.

All member organizations of the OpenTTN share the common goal of developing constructive, coherent, and future-oriented policy solutions with the objective of fostering a culture of open debate and discussions around highly relevant issues in international affairs.

This report is the result of the cooperation of all four members of the OpenTTN:

Agora
Agora describes itself as the UK's open forum for foreign policy. It provides a platform for people who are knowledgeable and passionate about international affairs. Their aim is to create and grow a community that combines the intellectual rigour of academia with the professional standards of a think tank. Agora supports its members in developing ideas and empowers them to influence foreign policy outside of the conventional channels. It works to produce informed, creative, and pragmatic foreign policy proposals. Through its blogs, briefings, reports, and events, Agora allows a wide range of voices to participate in the key debates on the future of international relations. Agora launched in London in November 2017. agorathinktank.org

foraus
The Think Tank foraus advocates for a constructive foreign policy and an informative dialogue: independent, scientific, relevant. Its non-partisan approach aims to promote an open dialogue and informed decision-making on all aspects of Swiss foreign policy since 2009. The participatory model to which collective intelligence is central, is at the heart of foraus. foraus members formulate scientific-based policy recommendations in the form of discussion papers, policy briefs and blog posts and create spaces for high-level debates. The Policy Kitchen innovation platform and methodology is a project by foraus. foraus.ch

Polis180
Polis180 is a grassroots, open and volunteer-led think tank for foreign and European affairs. Resolutely future-oriented, it aims to make the voices of young people heard in foreign policy debates and to challenge established ways of thinking. At the heart of Polis180's mission are the development of innovative foreign policy ideas and the promotion of dialogue. To achieve this, Polis180 was set up as independent and non-partisan, and strives to work with people of different opinions and diverse personal and professional backgrounds. Since being founded in 2015, Polis has grown over 600 members strong. polis180.org

Ponto

Ponto in Vienna brought a more participatory approach to Austria's think tank landscape. As a melting pot of cultures and positioned at a meeting-point between the «West» and the «East» of Europe, Vienna is a hub for global politics. These facts and the new developments in Austria's national political sphere require a new democratic voice. Ponto's aim is to provide a platform for young people, where relevant issues on foreign policy can be discussed beyond established party lines. The think tank officially launched on May 24th 2018 in Vienna. pontothinktank.org ●

In Collaboration with The Youth Café

The Youth Café serves as a transformative and empowering force capable of showing ways of bringing Africa and the rest of the world closer in a win-win partnership. The Youth Café strives to enrich the lives of young people by modelling and advancing youth-led and rights-based approaches to foster young people's civic efficacy, community resilience, sustainable development, an equitable society, as well as proposing innovative solutions, driving social progress, and inspiring transformative change by utilizing innovative research, policy, and advocacy actions.The Youth Café engages its members in its programs to be able to incorporate youth voices and to date impacted over two million young men and women through their projects. the-youthcafe.com ●

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www.openthinktank.org
www.policykitchen.com/migration

This report presents the outcome of a transnational, participatory strategic foresight process - Policy Kitchen - organized by the Open Think Tank Network and in collaboration with The Youth Café, on futures of human mobility for 2050.

Our bottom-up process, with over 100 participants from around the globe, has produced a wealth of visions. Download our podcast series, narrating possible futures for 2050 for our five fictitious personas that guided our process. By taking an anticipatory approach, we envisioned possibilities outside the usual policy narrative – with tangible results. Our four crowd-sources policy action areas are based on three alternative futures, possible versions of the world in 2050, and set the political course of the preferred futures today. •

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