



**African
Economic
Platform**

MAURITIUS, 20-22 MARCH 2017

AEP BROCHURE

THEME 4: FREE MOVEMENT

Every moment of historic growth has generated migrants from different locations. Growth spins the chances for a new life but its distribution, particularly at the early stages of a country's take-off, is uneven and unpredictable. It would have been absurd to propose bombing the boats that were sailing to South America full of migrants escaping the misfortunes of the two World Wars' aftermath. These migrants were seeking better lives. Yet their countries were growing like never before thanks to the Marshall Plan, amongst other things.

Africans seeking new opportunities outside of the continent are a determined lot. They do not accept their fate and are ready to risk their lives. The youngest population of the world sees the developed nations of Europe as beacons of opportunity. For them the destination presents the prospect of personal economic growth which they perceive as unavailable under their current circumstances. The freedom of movement within the Eurozone increases the desire to migrate to the region

In contrast, Africans need visas to travel to 55% of other African countries. Free movement on the continent would entail the implementation of continent-wide visa free regimes including issuance of visas at ports of entry for Africans.

We have to see migration in the larger context of mobility and contextualise this human phenomena so we can construct the solutions for the future. Between now and 2050 Africa will double its population. Even if it grows economically as fast, or faster than the present rates, Africa is likely to generate a much bigger flow of young Africans looking for opportunities in an ageing Europe.

Africa's youthfulness will keep growing while the rest of the world will be ageing. The difficulty of admitting that current state welfare in all ageing countries is unsustainable has led to the most bizarre economic policy proposals. Accepting that there is a



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demographic challenge would imply a vast overhaul of social and political choices to sustain economies. As we all witness the limits of transfer of value from production and labour to knowledge and financial control, we are also seeing the limits of the prevailing economic model. A demographic equilibrium is still essential despite technological progress and productivity gains. Social security or pension funds cannot be contributed towards by robots or intellectual property; they need people, workers, and productive workers indeed. That is why Africa must harness the opportunities that exist and create opportunities to make migration work for the betterment of Africa and not lose out the vast human resource potential looking for opportunities outside of the continent

African leaders need to tackle migration comprehensively. Migration has the potential of bringing significant contribution to the economic growth and human development in Africa if it is tackled in a holistic manner and mainstreamed appropriately in development planning and strategies. It is necessary to mainstream migration into national development planning for economic transformation and jobs