

GERMANY'S MIGRATION REFORMS DESIGNED TO ATTRACT AFRICAN WORKERS

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A more encouraging family policy would be a better alternative to solving the demographic crisis, a

German MEP told The European Conservative.

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Germany's Labor Minister Hubertus Heil (SPD) has announced plans for reforms to the country's migration law to ease the process for skilled African workers to migrate to Germany, [Deutsche Welle](#) reported. However, not everyone in Germany—nor Africa—is so enthusiastic.

Labor Minister Heil believes [the new law](#) will ultimately create a modern working system in Germany and expects it to pass this year to ensure skilled migration to secure the future German labor force, he told *DW* earlier this week. The reforms aim to address bureaucratic hardships and speed up the recognition of qualifications to streamline African migration.

“Germany is a modern migration country,” Heil told *DW*, before pointing out that the average age of Germans is 49, whereas many African countries have figures below 20. “Germany needs skilled migration in the future because of our demographic structure.”

The anticipated German migration reforms reflect the results of past research studies, which indicated that in order to keep up with the demand of the country's labor market, Germany would need more than [260,000 immigrants every year](#), most of them from outside the EU.

However, opposition to these ambitious plans is mounting inside the country, as certain political factions have been putting up vocal resistance to mass migration since 2015, citing concerns about failed integration efforts and the leaders' disregard for the will of the people.

Talking to *The European Conservative*, AfD MEP Markus Buchheit said he believes in alternative solutions to the looming demographic crisis. "If we do need more workers perhaps now is the time to encourage German couples to have more kids. It's an alternative plan that certainly deserves more thought than importing people from very different cultures from around the world," Buchheit told our paper. "Compatibility with German culture should be a priority if we are going to go along the immigration route."

Furthermore, Buchheit said, such important and arguably irreversible questions should never be decided without taking into account the will of the people first. "Germany's whole migration policy should be based on the needs of the German people regarding the skills we need, the culture we expect, and the security we want," the MEP added.

Conservative Germans are not the only ones who feel they might have been left out of the equation. According to *DW*, officials in African countries are increasingly anxious about Europe siphoning off their skilled and educated workers who would otherwise have helped lift their own countries' economies.

Johann Ivanov, the director of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Ghana, for instance, has warned that Germany should not exploit African countries in its quest to tackle its skilled labor deficit. Cooperation should only be pursued for mutual benefits, something that Minister Heil is actively pursuing now during his tour to Ghana and Ivory Coast, but Ivanov is still not convinced. He suggested that Germany should find innovative ways of dealing with its labor crisis instead of weakening the labor force of others. In the long run, Berlin will simply have "to improve [its] problems by other means," he added.