

# EU Purple Card

One answer to immigration and  
the demographic winter

Campaign Proposal  
futureEU Initiative  
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Team 54

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Europe faces a looming crisis of an aging population and a significant shortage of workers, with implications for healthcare, infrastructure, and the economy. Recognizing this urgency, I propose a proactive "massive immigration management plan" focused on low-skilled economic migrants. Central to this strategy is the introduction of a Purple Card scheme, similar to the Blue Card for high-skilled workers, granting holders the right to work and reside in EU countries. My approach prioritizes informing Europeans of the benefits of immigration, ensuring a human-centered perspective, and enhancing security and transparency. By addressing labor shortages, this initiative not only supports economic growth but also ensures the sustainability of pension systems for future generations.

"It is flu season, hospitals are congested due to medical personnel systemic shortages. As usual, your 80-year-old parents are staying home to minimize risks. You help clean the house while awaiting agency feedback on hiring a domestic worker after an 18-month wait. On your way back, you take the longer route since the shortcut has been under construction for the last 5 years. Apparently, the needed engineers and workers seem to be unfindable..."

## INTRODUCTION

If this scenario isn't familiar yet, it could be your new-normal by 2050. Projections see a declining and aging Europe where average age is 47 (IMF, 2020), there are 22 to 44 million workers less than those needed (Kenny and Yang, 2021), an old age dependency ratio of 56.7% (Eurostat, 2021). **Low-skilled workers are a key part of this system.** While fertility policies are failing to reverse the trend, the 2023 EU immigration policy reforms miss the opportunity to address the demographic winter cooling down climate change in the old continent.

Upcoming immigration security-focused policies disregard key EU rights, while also ignoring a proactive solution to the quivering European labor market. The latest EU barometers show immigration as Europeans' first concern (Eurobarometer, 2023). But forget what you heard before: **Europe needs more migrants, not fewer.**

# STRATEGY

I shift the narrative from crisis-framing to opportunity framing. **I propose a "massive immigration management plan" addressed to low-skilled economic migrants.** To make this possible, I suggest incorporating unskilled workers under EU competence. International migration flows to Europe are expected to grow due to both a fast-growing, young population in Africa searching for job opportunities and increasing migration resulting from climate displacement.

Hence, I believe Europe should be equipped to face the challenge while taking advantage of the benefits.

## **My strategy will include:**

- Informing Europeans of the benefits and returns of larger immigration flows
- Ensuring a human-centered perspective, with migrants' needs and rights at its core
- Keeping security and transparency at the heart of immigration policy
- Reducing the number of people coming to Europe illegally, ideally addressing human rights violations, and cutting costs for hotspot management and asylum seeker evaluation (by providing workers' residence VISA alternatives)
- Connecting low-skilled workers with employers in Europe

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Currently the EU has a Blue Card Scheme to encourage high skilled workers immigration. I propose a similar mechanism for low-skilled workers. **I call it the Purple Card.**

## ***Which benefits for the card holders?***

Following European principles of social equality and human dignity, this visa should allow, like Blue Card holders, the ability to work, enter, re-enter, and stay in the territory of the EU country issuing the card, access social security services, and request family reunification, among other privileges.

## ***How would it work?***

The EU should enable low-skilled workers to **apply** for a Purple Card **from their own country**, online or through EU Member states embassies.

Applicants would undergo first, administrative screenings by European authorities. Second, skill checks by European employers. Online procedures (via a specific platform) should be preferred, but offline procedures (through local EU representative institutions) should be viable.

Admissibility should follow a priority system combining EU countries' needs (age, work experience, language levels) and applicants' vulnerabilities and desires (gender, objectives).



## TARGET AUDIENCE

Reaping the benefits of this proposal will mainly be employers and entrepreneurs. The demographic shift will lead to shortages of labor in numerous low-skilled sectors such as agriculture, construction, and hospitality, which are difficult to fill with local residents. Without immigration, a contraction in these sectors (and consequently in GDP) is inevitable.

Today's youth and future retirees will also benefit from this policy. In most European countries, current pensions are paid with current taxes. These systems already show clear signs of long-term unsustainability: immigration seems the only feasible solution as migrants' social contributions outweigh received individual benefits. (Council of Europe, 2017).

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