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Afghanistan - refugees and migrants who have tragically lost their lives this year are remembered. © IOM 2015

SPECIAL ISSUE

OUTLOOK FOR MIGRATION IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH IN 2016

CONTENTS

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Introduction: Outlook for Migration in the Global South in 2016

Solon Ardittis and Frank Laczko[1]

Welcome to the new issue of *Migration Policy Practice*, which focuses on expected migration trends in the Global South. Much media and policy attention is currently focused on the rise in migration flows to Europe. But how is migration changing in the rest of the world? What are the expected key migration challenges for policymakers in developing countries in 2016? We asked some of the world´s leading experts on migration to try to look ahead and assess how migration and migration policy are likely to change in "their" regions in 2016. Each author was asked to consider three questions:

1. What are the three most important migration policy challenges for 2016 in your region?
2. How are migration flows likely to evolve in 2016?
3. What are likely to be the key migration policy debates?

In the case of Africa, much of the policy attention is currently focused on the flows of irregular migrants from Africa to Europe. Africans constituted about 14 per cent of arrivals in Europe in 2015. Although these flows are relatively modest in size – approximately 150,000 persons, from a population in Africa of over a billion persons – the increase in migration from Africa to Europe attracted huge media attention. Numerous articles portrayed Africa as a continent plagued by poverty and conflict, often giving the impression that most people would wish to migrate if they could. Little mention is made in the media of the growing middle class and increase in economic growth in many Africa countries. In response to the increased flows of migrants from Africa, the European Union has created the Emergency Trust Fund, with a budget of EUR 1.8 billion to address "the root causes of irregular migration and displacement in Africa". The 1.8 billion budget may seem high, but it is small compared with the USD 60 billion remittances sent by migrants to Africa last year.

Since 2015, the price of oil has fallen by 75 per cent. The fall in the price of oil and its likely impact on migration trends is a common theme mentioned by several authors. For most of Asia, the fall in oil prices could be a huge gain and facilitate recovery or spur faster growth within the region. A major policy development in Asia in 2016 is the beginning of the Asian Economic Community (AEC). This will facilitate the full economic integration of 10 South-East Asian countries. This in turn may facilitate the mobility of migrant labour within the region. However, migration *from* Asia to other regions may be badly affected by the fall in the price of oil.

As the Gulf region has become the largest destination area for Asian migrant workers, the fall in the price of oil could seriously reduce the demand for migrants from Asia. There are over 16 million migrant workers from Asia working in the Gulf countries. Migrants account for approximately half of the population of the Gulf countries. Despite efforts by governments in the region to reduce their dependence on migrant workers, the number of non-nationals has grown significantly over the last two decades. One of the reasons why the Gulf countries wish to reduce migration is because of rising unemployment among their own nationals. In recent years, the unemployment rate among Saudi women has risen to 35 per cent.

On the other side of the world, migration patterns are also likely to change in 2016. Thawing relations between Cuba and the United States has led to an increase in the number of Cubans seeking to enter the United States. As many of these migrants make their way to the United States via Central America, problems arose when Nicaragua tried to seal its borders, leaving many migrants stranded in Costa Rica. The United States is the main destination for migrants in the Caribbean region. The recent upturn in the US economy has led to an increase in the number of persons from the Caribbean seeking to move to the United States. For example, a record number of visa applications to the United States were made by Jamaicans in 2015. However, there are growing concerns in Jamaica about the high cost of applying for such visas and the loss of income to Jamaica when applications are rejected. Recent migration trends

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in the Caribbean highlight that migration is a global phenomenon. Although the numbers are small, several Caribbean islands have seen a significant increase in the number of asylum claims from Syrians over the last year and this trend is expected to continue.

The final article in this issue focuses on the regional outlook for migration in 2016 in Latin America. Here the major challenges are similar to those in 2015 – the protection of the rights of migrants, the lack of coherence between migration and other policies, and the need to improve cooperation and dialogue between States. Within South America, it is likely that Chile will become an increasingly important destination for migrants, with more than 100,000 new immigrants expected in 2016. Most of these migrants will come from other countries in South America, highlighting the growing importance of South–South migration.

We thank all the contributors to this issue of *Migration Policy Practice* and invite readers to spare a couple of minutes to participate in a survey which aims to help us identify our readers' profiles, the institutions they represent and their primary interests in our journal. Should you wish to participate in this survey, please **click here**.■

Outlook on migration in Africa in 2016

***Aderanti Adepoju*[1]**

***Migration Policy Practice**: Based on policy and legal developments in Africa in 2015, what are the three most important migration policy challenges for 2016, including labour migration, forced migration and asylum, and migration and development?*

2015 was a year of so-called migration crisis, with over a million asylum-seekers and migrants from Africa, and also from the Syrian Arab Republic, Afghanistan and Iraq, crossing over to Europe and creating a huge humanitarian challenge. It, however, took the tragic death of 800 migrants in the Mediterranean Sea in April to galvanize public and political opinion that prompted the summit between European Union (EU) and African Heads of State in Valletta, Greece, in November 2015, to discuss the challenges of irregular migration flows into Europe.

For Africa, the big migration story of 2015 and remarkably throughout 2016 hovers around the Valletta Political Declaration, the Valletta Summit Action Plan, and the EU Emergency Trust Fund of EUR 1.8 billion for stability and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa. This is a collective response by the EU to the current challenges and complements the existing development aid to Africa to assist the Sahel region and Lake Chad area, the Horn of Africa and Northern Africa – the major migration hubs and migration routes to Europe. In addition, neighbouring countries to these target countries may also benefit from the Fund's projects to address regional migration flows and the challenges related to border crossing.

The Action Plan is built around 5 priority areas and 16 priority initiatives to be launched before the end of 2016. The priority areas, which are also key policy challenges in the migration–development architecture, are: (i) development benefits of migration and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement; (ii) legal migration and mobility; (iii) protection and asylum; (iv) prevention of and fight against irregular migration, migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings; and (v) return, readmission and reintegration.

The African Union (AU) has raised the discourse on migration to the height of its policy agenda. This is reflected in a series of proclamations with the key objective to promote the benefits of migration, improve capacity for migration management and enhance mobility on the continent, as well as address the challenges of irregular migration.

The Africa Union Consultation in Nairobi, on 14–15 December 2015, provided a forum for all 54 AU Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) (for the 20 AU Member States and 6 RECs not invited to Valletta) to discuss the migration agenda and identify key priority areas for immediate action in the short and medium term within the framework of AU policies and programmes.

At the political level, at the 25th AU Summit on 7–15 June 2015, in Johannesburg, a comprehensive range of issues were flagged to be achieved by 2018, notably speeding up the implementation of regionwide visa-free regimes including issuance of visas at all ports of entry for all Africans, the project to fast-track issuance of an African passport by Member States, which would initiate free movement of Africans, as is currently the case of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Others are improving intraregional labour mobility by establishing harmonized mechanisms to ensure that higher education in Africa will enable recognition of credentials that will facilitate transferability of knowledge, skills and expertise. Existing action plans to combat human trafficking and smuggling of migrants are also put into effect, especially the AU Horn of Africa Initiative on human trafficking and smuggling of migrants in direct response to the irregular migration flows within and from the Horn of Africa.

Other initiatives include the AU Assembly Declaration on Migration at the 25th AU Summit in Johannesburg in June 2015, with the theme of "Year of Women Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063"; Declaration of the 1st Diaspora

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Conference on African Migration to Europe in September 2015; and importantly the UN General Assembly declaration of the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015–2024).

The 24th Assembly adopted the Labour Migration Governance for Integration and Development (the Joint Labour Migration Programme (JLMP)) in Africa to facilitate the implementation of relevant policy frameworks on labour migration and the transformational agenda for 2063 towards African integration.

***Migration Policy Practice**: Judging from current and anticipated trends, how are the levels and structure of migration flows in Africa likely to evolve in the course of 2016, for example in terms of types of migration, source countries, and number and profiles of migrants?*

The Valletta Summit clearly stresses the need to assist Africa to stem irregular migration, ease visa regime for students and professionals, and enjoin African countries to be ready to readmit failed asylum-seekers and repatriated irregular migrants. Sixteen projects are to be implemented in 2016 to impact the root causes of migration. These may set the structure and level of migration flows from Africa in 2016 and beyond. It should be noted, however, that the foreseen impact may also be limited in view of the limited allocated fund and time frame for implementing the initiatives, and especially with respect to addressing the deep-rooted causes of migration within and from Africa.

Africans constituted about 14 per cent of arrivals in Europe in 2015. Mixed migration flows from and within Africa is a growing phenomenon that would persist within and outside Africa in 2016. One lesson to be learned from the migration crisis in 2015 and the response by EU countries is the possibility of more migrants using the family reunification route to enter Europe. This is especially the case of the thousands of unaccompanied minors that have already been granted asylum, about 30,000 by Sweden for example. Besides, many of the potential immigrants from Africa's hotspots – Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia – will also exploit the network of established migrants to gain entry into some "soft" countries of asylum, notably Germany and Sweden, unless their current policies are drastically reviewed.

Irregular migration and human trafficking in the Horn of Africa, particularly from Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia, will intensify, for the root causes of this dynamic (i.e. conflicts, governance and climate change) are far from being resolved.

The challenge of insurgency still persists in Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, and neighbouring countries in Western Africa and Eastern Africa. The promise to root out Boko Haram from Nigeria by December 2015 was not achieved. Though weakened, the sect continues to kill, maim and displace populations not only in Nigeria but also in Cameroon and Chad. One consequence is the likely increase in the number of internally displaced persons and strain on infrastructure to provide for the needs of vulnerable groups, especially women and children.

The incidence of expulsion of migrants will become widespread, as major destination countries experience economic difficulties well into 2016. At the same time, the triggers for emigration – young population, excruciating poverty, high unemployment and insecurity – will worsen in 2016. In almost all African countries, youth unemployment remains a major development challenge and a trigger for emigration.

***Migration Policy Practice**: What are likely to be the key policy debates around migration policy in Africa in 2016, for example in terms of draft legislation and/or new policy and programme interventions, political milestones (e.g. national or local elections) and public opinion trends?*

The key policy debates around migration would, at the pan-African level, and also in the target countries of the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, Northern Africa and Lake Chad region, revolve around the implementation framework, mechanisms and follow-up of the 16 activities under the Valletta Plan of Action. While Europe plans to provide the EUR 1.8 billion Emergency Fund (yet to be fully realized), African countries would need to enhance their institutional capacity and governance deficit, while ensuring sustainability of efforts, notably capacity to raise their own domestic revenues to provide good governance, and maintain and enhance development infrastructure.

In view of the declining economic fortunes and revenue base of many African countries, including oil-producing African countries, led by Nigeria, remittance-dependent and aid-dependent countries will have to creatively explore remittances as potential source of development and as poverty-reduction strategy. This is the more so since remittances have overshadowed official development assistance and direct foreign investment. With about USD 60 billion in remittance flowing into Africa through formal channels, and much more if added to informal channels of remittances, governments will need to partner with stakeholders to achieve lower transaction costs, thereby also increasing the volume of remittances and exploring the use of diaspora bonds and Africa Development Bank's Send Money Africa project.

The African Institute for Remittances (AIR) has recently established works towards reducing transaction costs of remittances while encouraging countries and migrants to leverage remittances for the socioeconomic development of the continent. The AIR is a focal point for all stakeholders in African remittances, a centre of excellence on African remittances for research, advocacy and private sector engagement. It is also a hub through which technical assistance and capacity-building regarding remittances would be provided to African countries' banks and non-bank financial institutions. The AIR's objective is to develop the capacity of Member States of the AU, remittance senders and recipients, and other stakeholders to implement concrete strategies and operational instruments to use remittances as a development tool for poverty reduction. The clamour for lower costs of money transfers, presently at 9.7 per cent to send USD 200 to sub-Saharan African countries, the highest in the world with a global average of 7.7 per cent, would resonate louder in 2016.

Within Africa, the dramatic erosion of governments' major source of income – that is, oil in major oil-producing countries, which are also major migrant-receiving countries – is forcing governments to pursue stringent economic policy. The impact of inflation and diminished welfare of the working poor is set to intensify in 2016, leading to discontent among the local population that may turn to xenophobic violent reactions against foreigners who may be blamed for their countries' economic woes. As national economies in major oil-producing countries (e.g. Algeria, Gabon and Nigeria) continue to shrink, politicians may once more turn the search light on immigrants as easy scapegoats for all failings of governments to provide jobs for nationals. Towards the end of 2015, Gabon expelled about 700 so-called irregular immigrants, a trend that may persist albeit less dramatically into 2016, even beyond.

Many observers in Africa view with scepticism the import of the Valletta Plan of Action, arguing that it is a veiled policy for deportation of African immigrants and a formal engagement with African countries to be ready to readmit and reintegrate deportees. The Joint Declarations between the EU and the five African countries – Cabo Verde, Morocco, Tunisia (Mobility Partnerships), Ethiopia and Nigeria (Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility) – is also inadvertently seen in this context.

In Africa, 2015 can indeed be tagged season of expulsion of asylum-seekers and irregular migrants within and outside the region. Within the continent, South Africa arrested 1,600 irregular immigrants in May 2015, in the wake of the anti-immigrant xenophobic violence in April that resulted in seven deaths when mobs hunted down migrants from Zimbabwe, Mozambique and other African countries. Rampant youth unemployment of over 50 per cent, poverty and a slowing economy are the triggers for the expulsion of over 800 immigrants, mostly Mozambicans and Zimbabweans.

Gabon also made the news headline when from middle to end of 2015, the country expelled almost 800 irregular migrants from Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal, who were all dumped in Calabar, south-east Nigeria. These and deportations of immigrants from Equatorial Guinea and Congo to the Democratic Republic of Congo are set to continue deep into 2016, even as oil-rich Algeria 3,700 deported irregular migrants to Niger. Cameroon, Chad and Niger deported thousands, as the Boko Haram terrorist attacks spread to these countries. All over the region, the slogan "Africans deporting Africans" resonates louder.

Outside the continent, Saudi Arabia's campaign to detain and deport thousands of undocumented workers culminated in mass expulsion of irregular migrants from Ethiopia, Somalia and Yemen in 2015. In May 2015, Israel planned to controversially resettle – a euphemism for "deport" – Sudanese and Eritrean asylum-seekers and irregular migrants to refugee camps in other African countries, possibly Uganda and Rwanda.

In Europe, Sweden plans to expel 80,000 failed asylum-seekers; Finland also followed suit. Germany is reportedly proposing that Algerian and Moroccan asylum-seekers no longer be put in shelters throughout the country but rather in existing expulsion facilities.

The feeling is widespread among African officials that this trend will intensify in 2016 as one of the priority areas of the Valletta Action Plan relates to return, readmission and reintegration of irregular migrants and failed asylum-seekers, both from EU Member States and associated countries and from African countries of transit and destination. ■

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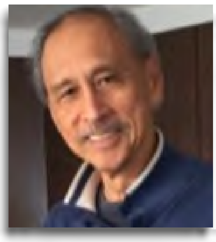

Outlook on migration in Asia in 2016

Manolo Abella[1]

***Migration Policy Practice**: Based on policy and legal developments in Asia in 2015, what are the three most important migration policy challenges for 2016, including labour migration, forced migration and asylum, and migration and development?*

Three developments are most likely to determine the shape of migration in Asia in 2016. The first and most important is how the Middle East destination countries will react and adjust their spending to their lower revenues following the sharp decline in oil prices. The second is how the windfall gains from low-oil prices will translate into faster growth for the oil-importing economies of the region, notably India, China, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The third is how migration pressures will be absorbed within countries such as India, Viet Nam, the Philippines and Indonesia, which are experiencing accelerating economic growth, and in Myanmar, where the opening of the economy may spur return flows from Thailand and Malaysia. The oil-rich States of the Persian Gulf, namely, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman and Bahrain together constitute the most important destinations of Asian migration, hosting today over 16 million Asian nationals, almost all of them on temporary contracts as guest workers. In recent years they have been importing some 2.4 million workers annually from seven Asian countries – India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Indonesia (Shah, 2012).[2] This migration system owes its existence largely to the fortunes made from oil and how such fortunes have been spent to transform what in the past were small village settlements into today's modern metropolises. A large reduction in spending on construction due to declining revenues from oil will no doubt have an important impact on Asian migration flows to and from the region.

For most countries in Asia, the drop in oil prices represents a huge windfall that can facilitate recovery or spur faster growth. With the value of their oil imports now just a third of what they were only a year ago, most countries in Asia should enjoy much lower energy costs, which should boost growth across all sectors, without causing inflationary pressures. China, which in recent years has seen a rapid deceleration of its growth rate, is now the largest importer of oil in the world, averaging some 7 million barrels of crude oil a day. India is the fourth largest consumer of energy in the world, spending over USD 300 million a day for imported fuels in 2014. Even before the decline in oil prices, India's growth rate has hovered at over 7 per cent so the windfall is likely to allow an even faster rate of economic growth. The ASEAN countries are now importing close to 4 million barrels of oil a day so their savings will also be substantial. While the overall global impact of the 75 per cent decline in oil prices since 2015 is still being debated, there is little doubt that the oil-importing countries in the region stand to gain significantly. It will make more viable a wide range of manufacturing activities without requiring government subsidies to energy consumption, reduce the costs of agricultural inputs and raise real incomes across large sections of their populations.

***Migration Policy Practice**: Judging from current and anticipated trends, how are the levels and structure of migration flows in Asia likely to evolve in the course of 2016, for example in terms of types of migration, source countries, and number and profiles of migrants?*

There is of course a downside to the decline in oil prices since most of the Gulf States are likely to start reducing their spending and thus their demand for labour. How this will affect the size of the foreign workforce already in their countries remains to be seen, but it is certain that new admissions will start to decline in 2016 compared with the previous years. Saudi Arabia revenues are estimated to fall from

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2 Shah reported that there were 14.4 million workers from five Asian countries, namely, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka. In 2006–2010, the estimated stock of Asian workers in the member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is as follows: 4.5 million Indians, 2.7 million Indonesians, 2.1 million Pakistanis, 2.4 million Filipinos and 2.7 million Sri Lankans. See: N. Shah, "Labour migration from Asian to GCC countries: Trends, patterns and policies", paper presented at the special symposium on labour and migration in the Middle East, University of Toronto, 16–17 March 2012. Bangladeshis and Nepalese in the GCC probably number another 2 million.

USD 164 billion in 2015 to USD 137 billion in 2016. With forecast deficit of SRI 326.2 billion, the Saudi authorities are reported to be considering new taxes and curbing increases in public sector wages and salaries. The Middle East Economic Digest recently reported that the value of contracts to be signed by Saudi Arabia this year will likely fall to USD 140 billion compared with USD 165 billion in 2015, a drop of 15 per cent. Since many projects are still on stream, actual spending in 2016 is expected to drop to USD 223 billion compared with USD 259 billion in 2015. Similar deficits are forecast elsewhere. Kuwait authorities are forecasting a deficit of USD 27 billion for 2015/2016, while their counterparts in Qatar anticipate a fiscal deficit of QR 46.5 billion for 2016.

The Gulf has become the largest destination region for Asian migrant workers. Trends suggest that today there are some 16 million Asian nationals in the Gulf States. These workers are brought in on short-term contracts of anywhere from 6 months to 2 years to work in almost every conceivable occupation, from building skyscrapers to serving as house helpers, driving public buses or cleaning streets, serving in hotels and restaurants or selling in stores, as well as more skilled jobs in hospitals, banking, petroleum refining and teaching in universities. In almost all of the member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Asians today make up the largest component of the foreign workforce, outnumbering by a large margin workers from other regions. It is clear that whatever happens in that region will be the dominant factor shaping future migration flows from Asia. Shah reported that in 2012 alone about 2.4 million workers from six Asian countries migrated to the GCC countries for employment. Given the current situation, it is highly unlikely that such volume of migration to the Gulf States will take place in 2016.

Given a possible decline in spending on construction of anywhere from 12 per cent to 15 per cent in 2016, the volume of contract renewals plus new hires of Asian workers may drop by as much as 300,000 in 2016. The decline is unlikely to be spread evenly across origin countries, with the brunt being felt most by countries that supply construction labour such as the South Asian sources notably India and Pakistan, and perhaps also Nepal. Less likely to be affected, at least in the foreseeable future, are countries supplying domestic helpers notably Sri Lanka, Indonesia and the Philippines. Migrant workers in more skilled occupations, such as those employed in hospitals and the health services sector, banking and finance, telecommunications and professional services, will not be touched. Asian governments are already anticipating some return flows and are under pressure to come up with programmes for reintegration. If one goes by experience, few such programmes will make a difference to the returnees, most of whom will find their own way back to jobs at home or to another one abroad.

How a possible decline in the migrant worker population in the Gulf States will affect the volume of remittances sent home by migrant workers is more difficult to predict. Long-term trends show remittances rising with numbers of migrants but short-term fluctuations depend on other factors such as when migrants respond to catastrophes (e.g. large increase of flows to Nepal after the earthquake) or when expectation of exchange rate changes prompt holding back. In 2015, overall remittances from the Gulf States are estimated to have reached USD 100 billion. India alone received about USD 37 billion. The 2.8 million Indian nationals in Saudi Arabia, most of them workers, are estimated to have sent home some USD 10.3 billion; Pakistanis, USD 4.49 billion; Bangladeshis, USD 3.8 billion; Indonesians, USD 3.3 billion; and Filipinos, USD 3.2 billion. What makes prediction difficult is that experience has been counter-intuitive. In the aftermath of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, most observers expected a large decline in remittances as hundreds of thousands of migrant workers lost their jobs as well as their hard-earned savings kept in banks, but it did not happen. There was instead a small rise in gross remittances. Some studies suggest that migrants tend to send more money home when their foreign currencies exchange at a higher rate at home (i.e. when devaluation occurs). This was noted, for example, in India when a surge in remittances followed the rupee devaluation of about 6 per cent in 2015.

A consequence of the oil price decline that is not difficult to predict is an increase in the number of business establishments in the Gulf States that will no longer be viable as the economies contract. Migrant workers who are the first to be laid off will strive to find other employment to recoup their investments but will be competing in a crowded labour market. Authorities in these countries as well as in their countries of origin will then be faced with growing numbers of migrants who will require financial assistance to return or who will risk being considered “illegal” by violating the conditions of their work visas. A recent survey by the International Labour Organization and the World Bank revealed that Pakistani workers paid on average USD 3,500 for their visas to Saudi Arabia, which is over seven times the average of USD 480 monthly wage they receive, and this does not include other expenses such as for travel and for services of recruiters. Given the huge investments migrants incur to get their jobs, one can only imagine the financial distress facing those who lose them.

Is the region likely to see a repeat of the Korean experience? The Republic of Korea used to be a major supplier of contract labour in the Middle East in the 1970s and up to the late 1980s. Most were construction workers brought to the Gulf States by some two dozen Korean companies, notably Hyundai, which won large contracts to build airports, oil pipelines, ports, highways and other infrastructure all over the Persian Gulf region and all the way to Libya in North Africa. Some 122,000 Korean workers left their country each year in the early 1980s to work in Saudi Arabia, and others found their way to Kuwait and Libya.[3] The collapse of oil prices in the mid-1980s followed by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait led to a sharp decline in construction activities in the Middle East, forcing the return of the contractors and their workers. However, this proved to be a boon to Korean contractors which needed those workers at home where the economy was booming. A similar situation is emerging in many parts of Asia where construction activities are booming, spurred by low interest rates and ambitious government-funded infrastructure projects. An international consultancy firm, Building Radar, forecasts fast growth of construction activities until 2020 led by India and China, as well as by Indonesia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam.[4] All these countries have migrant workers employed in construction jobs in the Middle East, many by contractors from their own countries.

***Migration Policy Practice**: What are likely to be the key policy debates around migration policy in Asia in 2016, for example in terms of draft legislation and/or new policy and programme interventions, political milestones (e.g. national or local elections) and public opinion trends?*

This year signals the beginning of ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), the ambitious programme for the full economic integration of 10 South-East Asian countries with a combined population of 622 million and GDP of USD 2.6 trillion in 2014.[5] This development is expected to lead to even greater inflows of direct foreign investments into the region, as multinationals seek to find a base in a huge and fast-growing market with ample supplies of relatively cheap labour. Over 4 million ASEAN nationals are estimated to be engaged in intra-ASEAN migration, sending about USD 12 billion in remittances each year.[6] Some movements are governed by formal agreements, but much of it is still informal. The removal of barriers to trade should lead to movement of goods instead of workers. More employment opportunities will be created at home as the economies restructure to take advantage of their respective comparative advantages. However, in the immediate short term, it is more likely to lead to more movements of workers across borders due to the superior position of some countries with respect to infrastructure, governance and track record in attracting foreign capital. So far, the AEC does not provide for the free movement of workers, and given the wide differences in per capita incomes among the member countries, this is unlikely to happen for some time. There is so far only agreement for mutual recognition of qualifications in seven professional occupations.[7]

In sum, 2016 is likely to see some redirection of migration flows in Asia, as countries of destination and origin adjust to the redirection in income flows with declining oil prices. Exactly how macroeconomic conditions shaping migration will change over the course of the year is extremely difficult to predict, as there are numerous imponderables in the global economy that will affect Asia including spillovers from crises in other parts of the world. The foregoing is our attempt to seize on already known link between migration and oil prices, and to reflect the experience of past responses of Asian migration to changing economic environment. We have not included any prediction of how the migration crisis in Europe will affect Asian migration since that region has so far not featured as a major destination except for

3 It was reported that over 64,000 Korean workers were employed in Kuwait between 1975 and 1985.

4 See https://buildingradar.com/construction-blog/asian-construction-market-forecast-from-2015-2020/

5 See www.asean.org/asean-economic-community/ and www.asean.org/storage/2015/12/AEC-at-a-Glance-2015.pdf

6 G. Pasadilla, and M. Abella, "Social protection for migrant workers in ASEAN", CESifo Working Paper Social Protection No. 3914, Ifo Institute – Leibniz Institute for Economic Research at the University of Munich.

7 Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) have been agreed by ASEAN countries for eight professions, namely, physicians, dentists, nurses, architects, engineers, accountants, surveyors and tourism professionals, to be free to work in any ASEAN nation after the start of the AEC, 31 December 2015.

relatively small flows of highly skilled workers on the one hand and refugees on another. On the wider scale, the World Bank predicts global GDP to grow by 2.9 per cent in 2016, slightly higher than the 2.4 per cent achieved in 2015. If this forecast is borne out, the decline in migration in some corridors are likely to be compensated by a rise in others, so that overall we may not see a significant change from past trends. ■

A large reduction in spending on construction due to declining revenues from oil will no doubt have an important impact on Asian migration flows to and from the region.

Outlook on migration in the Caribbean in 2016

Joanne van Selm[1]

***Migration Policy Practice**: Based on policy and legal developments in the Caribbean in 2015, what are the three most important migration policy challenges for 2016, including labour migration, forced migration and asylum, and migration and development?*

Joanne van Selm: The challenges facing countries in the Caribbean on the migration policy front will continue to be partly national and regional, and partly grounded in exogenous factors.

Thawing United States–Cuba relations and concerns among Cubans for what that might mean for their special immigration and asylum status in the United States (in terms of the "wet feet, dry feet" distinction, and the access to parole status) make the Cuban exodus a potentially high regional policy priority for 2016. Meanwhile, mixed migration patterns are posing policy challenges to various Caribbean islands, involving labour migration, forced migration and trafficking. Finally, changes in the international banking regime could have major impact on the flow of remittances to the region, which could in turn have important impacts on development.

Cuban émigrés are a very specific group that is going to cause policy challenges for Cuba, the United States, and other countries in the Caribbean and Central American region as the relationship between the United States and Cuba develops over the coming years. Cubans are seeking to enter the United States in ever greater numbers, taking risky boat crossings and making their way over land after first reaching countries in Central America. Tensions have arisen between Costa Rica and Nicaragua, in particular, as several thousand Cubans became effectively trapped in Costa Rica on their way to the United States. Cuba's ally, the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, was detaining and threatening the Cubans, and claiming, for example, that Costa Rica was violating its sovereignty by "throwing" the Cubans into Nicaragua.

At the very end of 2015, an airlift was organized to move the 6,000 Cubans trapped in Costa Rica to the United States, thereby bypassing Nicaragua. However, officials expressed concern that whereas some 40,000 Cubans had arrived in Ecuador (which had offered visa-free entry to Cubans), only 7,000 were known to have entered Costa Rica. The migrants are taking routes via Colombia and Panama, and smugglers and traffickers are known to be exploiting the situation.

In terms of mixed flows, some of the wealthier Leeward Antillean islands such as Aruba and Curaçao have been seeing increasing arrivals of Venezuelans as tourists, transit migrants or asylum-seekers. In some cases, these Venezuelans just want to use their ATM cards, as cash is not so readily available in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, or to buy goods that are now scarce there (including basic commodities such as toilet paper and sugar, and also beer) and then return to their country. Others seek to sell goods or consumables such as fish or frequently illegally imported whiskey, and then in some cases attempt to remain on the islands illegally or to request asylum. These islands, which are constituent countries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, have visa policies that are largely based on a supple approach to tourist arrivals, and do not currently require visas for Venezuelan citizens (although they do for citizens of most Caribbean islands). However, both employment and staying beyond the short term approved for tourism require authorization. Prior to the December parliamentary elections in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, warnings had been voiced on both islands about what the *Curaçao Chronicle* termed a "ticking timebomb" on the borders of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. As those elections were held on 6 December 2015, it is too soon to tell whether the success of the centrist coalition against the socialists will have a significant calming impact on the security fears and political climate; however, the economic turmoil in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela remains, not least thanks to the massive drop in oil prices, and therefore the chances that Venezuelans will seek opportunities through migration are still high. While Aruba's Prime Minister Mike Eman has been clear that his island will respect the rights of and accept refugees, both Aruba and Curaçao have

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seen rising opposition among the populations to the irregular arrivals and stays of Venezuelans. Aruba has imposed cash amounts that Venezuelans must have in hand on arrival to cover the length of their anticipated stay. A petition has been running in Curaçao demanding changes in immigration rules for Venezuelans. This is a situation that is likely to pose some policy challenges in the year ahead.

With the US economy improving, remittances could potentially increase. Remittances are an important source of revenue for individuals and families, as well as a channel for investments and a significant component of GDP, particularly for poor islands. Remittances to the region in 2014 were estimated at well over USD 10 billion. Tourist dollars will also be an important source of revenue, and from these points of view, emigration, diaspora relations and the ease of tourist travel will continue to be key issues for the region. However, changes in the international banking regime could put the important remittance and other payment flows in jeopardy. Regulations on anti-money laundering and on combating the financing of terrorism are having the unintended consequence of shutting down correspondent bank channels, and are, according to a November 2015 World Bank report, having a particular impact on the Caribbean region. Clearing banks are being extremely cautious not to get into difficulties with these regulations, which require thorough surveillance of transactions, due diligence procedures on new customers, maintenance of transaction records and reporting of suspicious activities to national authorities. When major international banks are not sure whether small financial institutions are adhering fully to these rules, colloquially referred to as "Know your customer", they have been closing down correspondent bank facilities, often without notice. This is having a major impact on the transfer of remittances, as well as the ability of small businesses to make payments or receive them for exports, for example, and will require some attention in the year to come.

Migration Policy Practice*: Judging from current and anticipated trends, how are the levels and structure of migration flows in the Caribbean likely to evolve in the course of 2016, for example in terms of types of migration, source countries, and number and profiles of migrants?*

Joanne van Selm: The two main predictable "hotpots" in terms of numerical growth in migration are likely to be Cuba and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, with Cubans moving over sea or via Central America to the United States, and Venezuelans taking the boat journey from the North Coast to the Leeward Antilles. In addition, as the US economy strengthens relative to both its own recent performance and the situation in the Caribbean region, more and more Caribbean nationals are seeking business visas for multiple entries to the United States. The unpredictable element in the Caribbean migration picture is, of course, what might happen in the event of a natural disaster such as an earthquake affecting one or more islands, or political upheaval, which continues to be a scenario most likely to impact Cuba and/or Haiti.

In the 12 months to October 2015, there were 4,300 Cubans intercepted and repatriated while seeking to enter the United States. That was an increase of 600 over the previous year. There was a 118 per cent spike in the number of Cubans seeking asylum at land borders (Miami and crossings with Mexico). Some 40,000 Cubans entered Ecuador in 2015, seeking to make the overland journey to enter the United States via Mexico. Meanwhile, from January to October 2015, 41,000 Cubans entered the United States without a visa – 31,000 overland at the Mexico border, and the remaining 10,000 either by boat or by air to Florida or other states.

The United States serves as a magnet in migration terms for the Caribbean region. As the US economy strengthens, relative both to its own position during the financial crisis starting in 2008 and to the pace of growth in the Caribbean region, nationals of Caribbean islands are seeking legal channels to enter the United States for business or short-term employment opportunities in particular. Visas for Caribbean nationals to enter the United States for business and short-term, work-related opportunities have recently been a cause for concern in Jamaica, for example. Around 159,000 visa applications were submitted to the Embassy of the United States in Kingston in 2015, the highest number in 20 years. Each application for a 10-year, multiple-entry visa is accompanied by a USD 160 fee, meaning that Jamaicans paid a total of USD 25 million in 2015 for US visas. Of these applications, 35 per cent were rejected. The concern in Jamaica was focused on the fact that the money paid to the United States for visa processing (which the United States channels into both the costs of procedures and greater border security) is loss to the Jamaican economy, and equates to twice the amount that parents have been asked to pay in auxiliary fees for public education (a controversial new fee system).

Over the 14-year rule of Hugo Chavez, about a million Venezuelans left the country (3.5% of its population), mostly towards Colombia and other Central American countries as well as the United States. Very little of this migration has been towards the Caribbean nations, although the potential for transit migration through them exists.

There are three other trends to which attention will be paid in the coming year. One is the increasing feminization of migration, with all its impacts on countries of origin at the family and community levels, as well as impacts on countries of destination. Caribbean emigration seems to be in line with this global trend and worthy of attention. Deportation levels from developed countries, particularly the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom, and also other European States, could change over the coming year, particularly as the focus on (irregular) immigration intensifies and as laws and policies could either be tightened or more strictly enforced. Removals of migrants cover not only those who are in violation regarding their immigration status but also those who have been found guilty of crimes to their countries of origin. How these individuals are treated on their return to the country of origin, whether they are included in training and employment programmes (often funded by the deporting country) or serving out a jail sentence, for example, and their reintegration (or otherwise) will need close attention for its societal impacts. Finally, diaspora relations, including the nature and impact of remittances, and potentially the return of qualified investors as employers, or in retirement, could be on an upward trend, and again, worthy of close policy attention.

***Migration Policy Practice**: What are likely to be the key policy debates around migration policy in the Caribbean in 2016, for example in terms of draft legislation and/or new policy and programme interventions, political milestones (e.g. national or local elections) and public opinion trends?*

Joanne van Selm: Although several islands (prominently Jamaica[2] and the Dominican Republic, and also Turks and Caicos, Curaçao and Puerto Rico) have elections in the coming year, none can be anticipated to have a major or immediate impact on migration policy debates in the region. Some do suggest, however, that Puerto Rican migrants to the United States, who gain the right to vote in presidential elections when registered to vote in a US state (though not when in Puerto Rico) could have some influence on the US elections in November 2016.

However, several migration issues will be the basis of debate and possible new policies as well as discussion in public forums. These include migration issues related to extremism; the reception of asylum-seekers and treatment of victims of trafficking in persons; statelessness, particularly of people of Haitian descent; health; investor citizenship; and climate change.

While geographically distant from the events in the Middle East, the Caribbean is not immune to Islamic extremism, and this subject is going to be part of the policy debates in the coming year. Trinidad and Tobago in particular have concerns in this direction: reports suggest that up to 100 nationals of Trinidad and Tobago have already been found to have travelled to the Syrian Arab Republic to train and fight with the Islamic State (IS), and some have been discovered in Turkish refugee camps, too. There is concern in the region that such "homegrown" extremists could bring terrorism to this part of the world, and also concern about the emigration and return of these would-be fighters. Such radicalization is not new among the Muslim population of Trinidad and Tobago. Over the last 10 to 15 years, there have been several instances of Trinidad and Tobago nationals having been found to be plotting attacks, including in the United States (e.g. at the John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York in 2007). There have been concerns that a few extremists have emerged on other islands and travelled to the Syrian Arab Republic; however, there is significant doubt cast on accounts of any other than the Trinidad and Tobago nationals.

The Caribbean has seen a few arrivals of Syrian asylum-seekers over the last few years. These numbers are unlikely to rise significantly in global terms; however, for the islands in the region, an increase from just a handful or two dozen asylum-seekers to one or two hundred is quite significant. This situation has faced Trinidad and Tobago in the past year, and other islands could also face such increases. The islands generally have limited refugee or asylum legislation in place, and work rather on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) with assistance from local non-governmental organizations. In some

2 The Jamaican election is likely to take place in 2016, but could be called late in the year and actually held in early 2017.

cases, for example, in the Bahamas, detention is often used although not necessarily appropriately. UNHCR is working with the Caribbean nations to develop their asylum systems and to increase access to protection and mechanisms for resettlement. There could indeed be discussion as to whether countries in the Caribbean region could play a (very minor) role in resettlement as a contribution to meeting the protection needs of those impacted by conflict in the region.

Trafficking in persons has both domestic and international facets in the Caribbean region, which is a source, transit point and destination of victims. It remains an underresearched area, and there is a persistent lack of focus on addressing the issue, resulting in low scoring on the US State Department Trafficking in Persons report, which could ultimately have consequences in the financial and other development aid sectors for some island nations. Children are particularly vulnerable in the region, including, but not limited to, Haitians. The Caribbean has many aspects that lend themselves to high levels of trafficking, including wide income disparities, the ease of boat departures and arrivals, and the prominence of the drugs trade and other organized crime. The three-pronged prevention, prosecution of perpetrators, and protection of victims approach has thus far primarily resulted in information campaigns aimed at raising awareness and preventing trafficking, but little has been done either to prosecute or to protect the most vulnerable.

Policy and legal decisions in the Dominican Republic have rendered stateless about 150,000 people born to non-national (the vast majority Haitian) parents over several decades. Although 2015 saw requests from UNHCR and the Member States of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) that the Dominican Republic regularize the situation of these people and restore their rights, what is described by many as a crisis of statelessness remains as we enter 2016. Some people have migrated voluntarily to Haiti, others have been deported; but removal to Haiti will not resolve the situation for many of them, as they are also excluded by Haiti's nationality laws, having been born in the Dominican Republic and often with mixed parentage. CARICOM has issued appeals and warnings to the Government of the Dominican Republic, particularly about their concerns over deportation, but the organization has largely let the United Nations take the lead in trying to find resolution. This situation forms perhaps the most important current policy challenge in the migration field in the Caribbean.

Global and more regional health issues will continue to be a focus of some migration-related debates. Early in 2016, some Caribbean islands, such as Jamaica, have lifted the travel restrictions on visitors from the countries previously affected by Ebola. However, concern for infections travelling with visitors and migrants is not gone. Whereas in 2014–2015 attention was on the mosquito-borne Chikungunya virus, in 2016 all eyes will be on the spread of the Zika virus (also mosquito-borne), and its impact on populations, tourism and the economy. The virus has so far taken its strongest hold in Brazil, where it has been linked to a rise in infants born with microcephaly, and is spreading to some other South American countries. Most Caribbean islands have at this point reported confirmed Zika cases and autochthonous transmission. As regional and international mobility will be the tool for starting up infections on any island, there will be attention to arrivals and onward travels for its impact on the spread of the disease within the zone in which the *Aedis egyptae* breed of mosquito is active. However, efforts to combat the spread of the virus will need to focus on vector elimination and popular awareness, not on migration control. Beyond the local health impact, the biggest effect is likely to be on tourism.

Interest in investor citizenship has increased across the region in recent years, with more and more islands looking into the modalities for offering passports and residency in return for significant financial and business investments. Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, and Saint Kitts and Nevis already offer programmes by which second passports and, in some cases, residency, are available in return for varying levels of investment or donation. Saint Lucia is set to roll out a programme in early 2016, and Jamaica has been studying the model for some time. While the economic benefits to these islands are clear, Jamaica is being cautious for fear of large countries – such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada – imposing tougher visa regimes on Jamaican citizens if they start to offer passports "for sale". This has been a negative outcome for islands such as Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Among those apparently interested in receiving residency and/or a passport in return for investment in Jamaica are reportedly the proposed Chinese investors in the Goat Island logistics hub. Although plans for this hub have not yet been made public, it is a much talked-about project coming on the back of Chinese construction of a major highway linking the tourist centres of the north coast with the capital Kingston on the south coast of the island. Chinese investment in the Caribbean, found on many islands, most notoriously the Baha-Mar project in the Bahamas, remains controversial. While likely to continue in 2016 and beyond, it will remain a subject of heated public debate, particularly for the high levels of Chinese workforce – effectively short- or medium-term immigrant workers in countries with very high levels of unemployment. In Jamaica, roughly half the workforce on the road project was Chinese; in the Bahamas all of the workers on major projects have been Chinese. The Goat Island hub planning will be accompanied primarily by public debate on the environmental impact on these undeveloped wetland habitats, but immigration and employment issues will not be far from view.

The Caribbean nations, particularly those grouped in CARICOM, entered the COP21 negotiations on climate change with a unified agenda, and worked hard for targets such as a limit of 1.5C of warming. The Caribbean region is aware that migration (particularly emigration) would be a likely outcome of climate change and rising sea levels in the region, which frequently cause major weather events including hurricanes. While 2013 and 2014 saw quiet hurricane seasons, October 2015 brought major destruction to the Bahamas, through hurricane Joaquin. Fortunately, the Bahamas could manage the disaster, but less affluent islands might find that difficult. Any major tropical storm would both cause damage to property and some level of (primarily internal) displacement in the short-term, as well as potential loss of life. ■

Whereas in 2014–2015 attention was on the mosquito-borne Chikungunya virus, in 2016 all eyes will be on the spread of the Zika virus (also mosquito-borne), and its impact on populations, tourism and the economy.

Outlook on migration in the Gulf in 2016

Nasra M. Shah[1]

***Migration Policy Practice**: Based on policy and legal developments in the Gulf in 2015, what are the three most important migration policy challenges for 2016, including labour migration, forced migration and asylum, and migration and development?*

Temporary migrant workers and their families constitute about half of the total population of the Gulf[2] countries, numbering about 24.2 million of the 50.4 million inhabitants of this region (Gulf Labour Markets and Migration (GLMM), http://gulfmigration.eu/glmm-database/demographic-and-economic-module/). During the last two to three decades, the number of non-nationals has expanded, despite the host countries' policies to reverse this trend (Table 1). In terms of origin, migrants from Asian countries exceed those from Arab countries, in all the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. India is the largest sender, followed by Pakistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia and the Philippines. A majority of migrant workers in the Gulf are employed in the private sector, primarily in relatively low-skilled occupations such as construction, domestic and service work such as cleaners, porters and helpers. Males are predominant in migration from several countries, while females are predominant in countries that mainly send domestic workers.

In order to fully comprehend the key migration policy challenges in the Gulf, perspectives of the migrant-sending countries and the destination countries in the Gulf must be addressed. In many cases, mechanisms and processes in the sending country may in fact determine the success and welfare of a migrant worker in the Gulf.

While there are peculiarities and differences between specific issues pertaining to sending countries, some general policy challenges common to most of them may be identified. Sending countries are generally pro-emigration and rely on foreign-worker remittances as an important source of earnings. Their general policies are to maintain or increase the level of annual outflows (Shah, 2013a). A general desire to improve the skill levels of migrants also exists, with some countries taking active steps to enhance skills through training programmes. Ensuring protection and welfare of the migrant workers in the host country is another common goal. Issues of protection become especially significant in case of female domestic workers who are employed in private homes, are not covered by the labour laws of the GCC countries and are likely to be more vulnerable to abuse than other workers.

In addition to these common challenges, the ability to continue competing in the Gulf labour market remains a challenge for all sending countries. With the opening up of newer countries of origin (e.g. Nepal and Ethiopia), whose workers may be willing to accept lower wages for the same work performed earlier by nationals of another country, competition for limited jobs is likely to get tougher. This would be especially problematic if oil prices remain low and the Gulf countries begin to downsize their development and other projects. A major consequence of such downsizing may be the return of an unprecedented number of workers who are still in working ages. Such returns would not only put an unexpected strain on the labour market in the country of origin but also would be accompanied by a reduction of remittances needed for supporting the migrants' families and boosting the economy in general. If the return of temporary migrants occurs too suddenly and in very large numbers, consequences for most sending countries would be disastrous, presenting huge policy challenges.

Another challenge for sending countries pertains to the cost of migration borne by the migrant workers. In their efforts to facilitate and regulate the process of labour migration, sending countries have formulated laws, rules and policies, and have set up organizational structures to implement these regulations. Licensed

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2 Gulf countries in this paper include the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, namely Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

recruitment agents perform an important role in these structures, by providing information about jobs and assisting the prospective migrants at various stages until the process is completed. It has been reported from many Asian and Arab countries that migrants pay a much higher recruitment fee than is legally allowed by the sending country government. This occurs because intermediaries (agent in the home country and/or in the host country, and the host country employer who provides a work visa) often charge an exorbitantly high amount for the visa. Prospective migrants often borrow the money needed for migration and may repay a much larger amount than the borrowed amount because of high interest rates. Thus, the net benefit of the move is larger for those workers who did not pay any recruitment fee other than the amount approved by the government. Reducing the recruitment cost to the migrant worker remains a challenge for most sending countries.

Migration Policy Practice*: Judging from current and anticipated trends, how are the levels and structure of migration flows in the Gulf likely to evolve in the course of 2016, for example in terms of types of migration, source countries, and numbers and profiles of migrants?*

At least three types of trend may be identified: (i) the perceived need to decrease migration of workers and their families; (ii) identifying the reasons for the continued high flows; and (iii) reducing irregular migration.

(i) Perceived need to reverse the upward trend in migration

As reported to the United Nations in 2013, all GCC countries, except Oman, viewed immigration to their countries to be too high and had policies to reduce it (UN, 2013). However, data on the percentage of non-nationals in the Gulf indicates a clear upward trend, posing a direct contradiction to the host country policies (Table 1). In addition to the host countries' general desire to reduce foreign worker dependence, an important reason for the restrictive policies is the rising level of unemployment in several Gulf countries. For example, unemployment among Saudi females age 15–64 increased from 11.8 per cent in 1992 to 35.3 per cent in 2013, although it was much lower among Saudi males (Bel-Air, 2015). An obvious response in the face of the above situation is an inference by host-country policymakers that the high level of unemployment is somehow a result of the large number of foreign workers. In many cases, however, a major reason for unemployment among nationals is their lack of willingness to work in the private sector and in jobs that may be considered socially unattractive and defined as "foreigner's work", especially if such work is low-skilled and low-paid.

Gulf countries have launched various policies to nationalize or indigenize the labour force and consequently the population. A notable example includes the "Nitaqat" campaign for Saudization launched in mid-2011. The main goal of the Nitaqat campaign is to limit the number of foreign workers that firms may hire by providing incentives to firms for hiring Saudi nationals and imposing sanctions on firms that do not comply. Bel-Air (2015) identifies various social and political challenges faced by the Nitaqat campaign, including the continued reliance of nationals on the public sector and the sociopolitical difficulties of regulating businessmen's choices and preferences.

(ii) Identifying the many reasons for failure of restrictive policies

Several reasons, outlined below, explain the failure of restrictive policies. However, this list is not complete. Other factors may provide further explanations for the observed trends.

- Development projects, including construction of buildings, roads, bridges and residential units, continue to sustain a high demand for foreign workers in the absence of indigenous (i.e. national) workers who lack the skills for such work and/or are unwilling to take up such occupations.
- The number of indigenous workers being smaller than required.
- An increasing demand for service sector workers (especially domestic workers) seems to exist. For example, domestic workers constituted 628,406 (26.3 %) of all foreign work permit holders in 2013 in Kuwait (GLMM database, Table MOV 2.2).
- Employers in the Gulf countries seem to bring in a larger number of workers than would be justified in an efficiently performing labour market. These workers are often low-skilled and semi-skilled, and have been referred to by policymakers as "marginal" workers who do not make an optimal contribution to the host country economy. One of the reasons for the above apparent overconsumption of such "marginal"

labour relates to the profit-making possibilities afforded to the intermediaries who arrange the employment of such workers. It is well known that a fairly large amount of visa trading exists in the Gulf, as follows. A migrant worker buys a work visa sold through intermediaries by the sponsor (*kafeel*) who is a national of the host country and is essential for any migrant to be employed in the Gulf. Each employee must have a sponsor that might consist of an individual, a company or an organization. For example, a *kafeel* may procure X number of work visas from the government for a company that he/she plans to establish. The *kafeel* may sell these visas to prospective employees who then work for him/her. Or, the *kafeel* may sell these visas on the market without providing a job to the prospective employee. Sometimes "ghost companies" that exist only on paper may be established with the intent of procuring and selling visas. Selling or charging money (or paying) for a work visa is illegal. Also, working for an employer other than the *kafeel* is illegal. Such work puts the migrant worker in an irregular situation subject to imprisonment or deportation if caught. Yet, the practice of visa trading has been widespread for many years.

- In addition to the formal sector that may arrange the employment of most workers, an active and vibrant informal sector consisting of family members, friends and home-country compatriots have been acting as facilitators in the Gulf labour market. Social networks that successfully arrange the employment are large and often well established. Such networks initiate, support, sustain, and perpetuate additional inflows of their kin and friends. Members of the network are able to procure a work visa, either free of charge or through a yearly payment from a national kafeel, and bring the friend or relative often without the presence of a job. This generates a market of "freelance" workers who are not tied down to a single employer. Such sponsorship, as well as work, is unlawful, but it exists in all Gulf countries.
- Although "temporary" in the sense that a non-national may almost never become a Gulf citizen, migration to the Gulf is often a fairly long-term phenomenon. None of the host countries provides any information on the duration for which migrant workers and their families reside in the host country. Experience, observation and some research suggest, however, that an unknown number of non-nationals have lived in the Gulf for several decades, thus constituting a fairly stable and permanent part of the population. Data on place of birth shows that in the case of Kuwait, for example, 18 per cent of all non-nationals were actually born in the country (PACI, 2014). A recent study on second-generation high school students and employed persons born in Kuwait showed that the mean duration for which their fathers had been living in Kuwait were 30.4 years and 39.9 years, respectively. Also, large networks of relatives were present among both groups; students reported an average of 14.8 relatives and working persons reported an average of 18 relatives who were living in Kuwait though not in the same house (Shah, 2013b).

(iii) Reducing irregular migration and its possible negative impacts

In addition to working for an employer other than the sponsor, as outlined in the previously, other major processes that may result in irregular status include illegal entry into a country, overstaying one's work visa, being employed in occupations not permitted by the work visa or being born to parents with an irregular status. Like all migrant-receiving countries, the Gulf has been home to irregular migrants, whose number is not known. Some data on overstayers from Kuwait indicates that at the end of 2014, the country had 103,154 persons who were residing there on an expired visa (Shah and Kazi, 2015). Saudi Arabia publishes some routine data on the number of apprehensions and deportation, recorded on the GLMM website. However, little published information on irregular migrants of other types is available.

Irregular migration matters for at least two reasons. First, such migration evades effective regulation by the concerned authorities; second, irregular status usually typifies a more vulnerable group that may suffer abuse as a result of such status. Also, irregular migration is likely to be higher among low-skilled migrants, and probably among women, which may add further to their vulnerability. In Kuwait, for example, female domestic workers constituted about half of all irregular workers in 2014. Protection and welfare of migrant workers is an important goal for countries of origin as well as the Gulf countries and minimizing irregular migration should therefore be a shared policy goal, and continues to pose a challenge.

***Migration Policy Practice**: What are likely to be the key policy debates around migration policy in the Gulf in 2016, for example in terms of draft legislation and/ or new policy and programme interventions, political milestones (e.g. national or local elections) and public opinion trends?*

This article has highlighted some of the key migration policy challenges in the Gulf, focusing both on sending and receiving countries. In their efforts to minimize the negative impacts and maximize the benefits of migration for all three actors – the sending country, the receiving country and the migrant – some processes comprising regional dialogue (e.g. the Abu Dhabi dialogue) and bilateral agreements have been reached by different pairs of countries. India has made such bilateral agreements with all six GCC countries.

In the future, the most important challenges for sending countries are to achieve higher development levels that can absorb their growing population and workers are not impelled to seek overseas employment in the face of desperation at home, to improve the skill levels of workers who do migrate, and to carefully monitor their welfare while in the Gulf. For the Gulf countries, the most important challenges are to encourage indigenous workers to diversify their skill levels in order to actually replace foreign workers, and to decrease their dependence on workers defined as "marginal".

In order for this to happen, however, certain deeply imbedded structures, especially those surrounding visa trading, would have to be uprooted and eliminated. Finally, decent work and welfare of the migrant workers should be a high priority for sending and Gulf countries, both because this is socially and morally just and because it has the potential to heighten the gains of migration for sending as well as Gulf countries. ■

Table 1: Percentages of nationals and non-nationals in the GCC countries, 1985–2010 (or later)

	Nationality		Total population
	Nationals (%)	Non-nationals (%)	
Bahrain			
1990	64.21	35.79	484,006
1995	63.14	36.86	558,879
2000	62.46	37.54	637,582
2005	54.54	45.46	888,829
2011	48.93	51.07	1,195,020
Kuwait			
1990	26.89	73.11	2,151,680
1995	36.15	63.85	1,958,794
2000	37.97	62.03	2,217,258
2005	33.17	66.83	2,991,189
2010	32.06	67.94	3,582,054
2013	31.34	68.66	3,965,144
Oman			
1990	81.29	18.71	1,625,000
1995	70.33	25.93	2,214,000
2000	74.02	25.98	2,402,000
2005	73.46	26.54	2,509,000
2013	56.34	43.66	3,855,000

	Nationality		Total population
	Nationals (%)	Non-nationals (%)	
Qatar			
1986	26.72	73.28	373,392
1997	28.27	71.73	536,474
2004	24.13	75.87	798,061
2010	14.30	85.70	1,699,435
Saudi Arabia			
1992	72.63	27.37	16,948,388
2004	72.88	27.12	22,678,262
2010	68.94	31.06	27,136,977
United Arab Emirates			
1985	28.72	71.28	1,379,303
1995	24.36	75.64	2,411,041
2005	20.10	79.90	4,106,427
2010	11.47	88.53	8,264,070

Source: GLMM database, various POP tables, available from http://gulfmigration.eu/glmm-database/demographic-and-economic-module/

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For the Gulf countries, the most important challenges are to encourage indigenous workers to diversify their skill levels in order to actually replace foreign workers, and to decrease their dependence on workers defined as “marginal”.

Outlook on migration in Latin America in 2016

William Mejía[1]

***Migration Policy Practice**: Based on policy and legal developments in Latin America in 2015, what are the three most important migration policy challenges for 2016, including labour migration, forced migration and asylum, and migration and development?*

The main challenges for 2016 are not very different from those announced for 2015. They still concern enforcement of the rights of migrants and other populations that move within the region, linking migration policies with other social and economic policies, and progress in intraregional and South–South cooperation in general (Mejía, 2015).

The first challenge is the maintenance, consolidation and development of advances in freedom of mobility, respect for human rights of migrants and principles of common citizenship that has built the region in its integration bodies (e.g. Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños (CELAC, Community of Latin American and Caribbean States), Unión de Naciones Suramericanas (UNASUR, Union of South American Nations), Mercado Común del Sur (MERCOSUR, Common Market of the South), Andean Community, Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana (SICA, Central American Integration System) and Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM)), under the following circumstances:

- Weakening of the populist governments in the region and trend dominance of centrist political orientations;
- Economic slowdown, with low rates of expected GDP growth in major receiving countries (-2.0% in Brazil; 0.8% in Argentina; 2.1% in Chile; 2.6% in Mexico; and -7.0% in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela)[2];
- Attempt of the United States to impose to its neighbours its own safety criteria in managing migration, seeking to take control of inflows from Mexico and Central America.[3]

The second challenge has to do with the definition of joint courses for the treatment of migrants' irregular transit through the region, considering that in 2015 the governments tried to respond to the three main flows: the Haitians to Brazil; the relatively recent migration of Asians, Africans and Cubans[4] to the United States, driven by traffickers; and the traditional movement of their own migrants, especially Andeans and Central Americans. However, except the first case, where the Brazilian Government proceeded to the issuance of humanitarian visas in Haiti, the other two remain a major challenge in 2016, when surely they will not be resolved. Solving them would require implementing the guidelines on migration policy that have been agreed upon in the region, to which we referred in the previous point.

The answer to the second flow goes beyond the fight against gangs of "coyotes",[5] sometimes traffickers, and should include the definition of a status to protect migrants in transit and enable their safe passage, since any country has real skills to return them to their countries of origin, on the assumption that the circumstances of migrants themselves permit. The year begins with between 5,000 and 8,000 migrants, mostly Cubans, dammed between the borders of Panama and Costa Rica, after Nicaragua did not let them continue their journey through its territory, among other things, citing threat to its security.

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2 See: CEPAL, 2015:63.

3 For example, for the Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity in the Northern Triangle of Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras) for the fiscal year 2016, the US Congress approved USD 750 million, with the application seeking to reduce emigration to the United States. Regarding the role played by Mexico, see: Nazario, 2015.

4 Inflow of Cuban migrants to the United States, estimated at 45,000 per year (Castillo, 2015:10), could decrease as a result of the visa requirement for Cubans beginning 1 November 2015, from Ecuador, a country where many Cubans and immigrants from other continents depart toward the United States.

5 Persons who smuggle migrants in Latin America.

Given that the United States is the final destination of that flow, except for some small percentage of those migrants who go to Canada, and that the United States itself actively contributes to the movement of Cubans, with its "dry feet, wet feet" policy[6] for them, the country should be part of the agreements and not simply wait for the neighbours to take care of their borders. However, it seems unlikely that all involved countries, including Ecuador and Colombia, will engage in the solution.

Regarding the traditional flow, interventions are needed, especially for the migration of unaccompanied minors from Central America, whose number grew again due to family reunification purposes. In addition to actions by countries of origin and transit, it is expected that the United States, as the country of destination, will allow family integration.

A privileged scenario in this respect, where the issue was discussed in 2014, is the Regional Conference on Migration, in which the Central American States, plus the Dominican Republic, the United States and Canada, participated. In South America, it is expected that the full Member States and the associate nations of MERCOSUR will fully implement the Regional Guidelines on the Commitment to the Promotion and Protection of the Human Rights of Children and Adolescent Migrants, which was recently agreed upon (MERCOSUR, 2015)

The third challenge is the current refugee crisis, which is likely to get worse in 2016, due to the escalating conflicts in Syria. Latin America should face this as a regional challenge rather than one that entails individual efforts from States, as has happened in some cases. The region already has a specific instrument for this purpose, such as the "Brazil Declaration: A Framework for Cooperation and Regional Solidarity to Strengthen International Protection of Refugees, Displaced and Stateless Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean" (Cartagena+30, 2014).

In line with this is the declaration of the Heads of State of MERCOSUR on the importance of visa facilitation, quick fixes for recognition of refugee status, resettlement programmes and direct support to care operations victims of displacement (MERCOSUR, 2015).

To advance the response to the challenges discussed, the Fifteenth South American Conference on Migration XV (XV Conferencia Suramericana sobre Migraciones (XV CSM)) has highlighted that the CSM is committed to initiating an assessment of the possible agenda items or issues that can be tackled with other regional consultative processes, particularly with the Regional Conference on Migration (XV CSM, 2015). Similarly, lines of action should be implemented regarding the priority measures on the migrant population, as agreed upon at the Second Meeting of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (CELADE, 2015:111, 116 and 117).

***Migration Policy Practice**: Judging from current and anticipated trends, how are the levels and structure of migration flows in Latin America likely to evolve in the course of 2016, for example in terms of types of migration, source countries, and number and profiles of migrants?*

As the pace of recovery of the US economy continues to be slow, migration control measures remain rigid, particularly in the United States–Mexico border, and the number of deportations continues to increase (and with the level of uncertainty caused by the fate of the migration policy reform proposed by US President Barack Obama), it is expected that in 2016 the flow of Mexicans to the United States will continue to decrease and return of Mexicans to their home country to reunite with their families will continue to grow, which have reached 174,000 and 200,000, respectively, on average annually during the last five years (Gonzalez-Barrera, 2015:11). A similar situation is likely, in lower volumes, for Nicaraguans and Ecuadorians, who have demonstrated similar behaviour in recent years (López and Patten, 2015:91). Although emigration to the United States of citizens from other countries in the region is expected to remain higher than return in 2016, the pace will also continue to be slow.

Looking at the major European destinations, it is predicted that, based on data from the National Statistical Institute of Spain, inflow to Spain of natural-born Latin Americans will grow, which could be between 90,000 and 100,000. Venezuelans would represent the largest group in this migration and women would account for 60 per cent.

6 A US policy in which Cubans who are caught in the waters between Cuba and the United States are considered to have "wet feet" and are therefore sent back home, and Cubans who make it to the US shores can claim "dry feet" and qualify for legal permanent resident status and US citizenship.

The increase will be favoured by the re-emigration of Latin American nationalized Spanish (who make up about 20% of the flow from Latin America to Spain) and eventually by the recent elimination of the Schengen visa requirement for Colombians and Peruvians for short stays. Germany may continue to be a new major destination for Latin Americans, with inflows in 2016 likely to be around 20,000, half of whom are Brazilians and Colombians based on data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Greater dynamism is expected in intraregional migration, with Chile strongly remaining a major destination for Latin Americans, South Americans in particular. It is expected that in 2016 Chile would receive more than 100,000 new immigrants, mostly Andeans. Under these conditions, the country will overtake the United States and Spain as destinations from the subregion. On the other hand, the two countries would bring some tens of thousands of immigrants to Chile.

Argentina will maintain its importance as a regional destination, particularly for Paraguayan and Bolivian workers. However, for economic reasons, some decline in the inflows to the country is expected, but perhaps with the exception of the relatively small group from Venezuela, which has recently shown an increase.

In the case of Mexico, it is expected that in addition to receiving its Central American neighbours, it will continue to establish itself as a destination of medium importance for South Americans (as will happen in Europe with Germany), with the arrival of fewer than 200,000 of them.

Meanwhile, Brazil will continue to attract Haitians, now surely with an important component of family reunification, given the regularization processes concerning them. To a lesser extent, despite its economic difficulties, Brazil will remain a growing destination for workers from the region and beyond, for example for the Spaniards.

Finally, the signing of the peace agreement between the Government of Colombia and the rebel group Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC)), scheduled for the first quarter of the year, could begin in 2016 a process of mass return of Colombians who emigrated to other countries due to conflicts. Some researchers estimate that about 400,000, located especially in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Ecuador, would go back to Colombia.

Migration Policy Practice*: What are likely to be the key policy debates around migration policy in Latin America in 2016, for example in terms of draft legislation and/or new policy and programme interventions, political milestones (e.g. national or local elections) and public opinion trends?*

Attention to the challenges of transit of migrants will result in an important debate, which had its formal beginning at the end of 2015 when Cubans got stranded at the border between Costa Rica with Nicaragua. With this incidence, arguments of national security and the rights of migrants, as well as the shared responsibility of countries of origin, transit and destination, will be addressed.

In Mexico, with greater involvement of civil society and the academia, transit of migrants also will lead to discussions. A key issue will be the contradiction between the Government's frequent statements in favour of the rights of migrants and their repressive actions against them.

In the south, debate on immigration laws will continue, with Brazil and Chile seeking to replace their current laws, which are based on national security criteria, corresponding to the period of dictatorship. The two countries wanted to end 2015 with those new laws, but in Brazil the Parliament failed to pass the bill, while in Chile the Government is still working on the bill that it intends to submit to Congress earlier this year, after a major consultative process in 2015.

Considering the statements of the most recent CSM, Regional Conference on Migration and Summit EU-CELAC in 2015, although it is not likely to occur, there should be broader regional discussions on issues such as migration management, promotion and protection of the human rights of migrants, and the migration–development nexus to provide an in-depth understanding of the declarations agreed upon at these meetings and of the new directions for joint action of different stakeholders (inter-State, inter-agency, inter-non-governmental organization, interacademic, etc.) towards realizing these declarations, particularly the challenges previously mentioned.■

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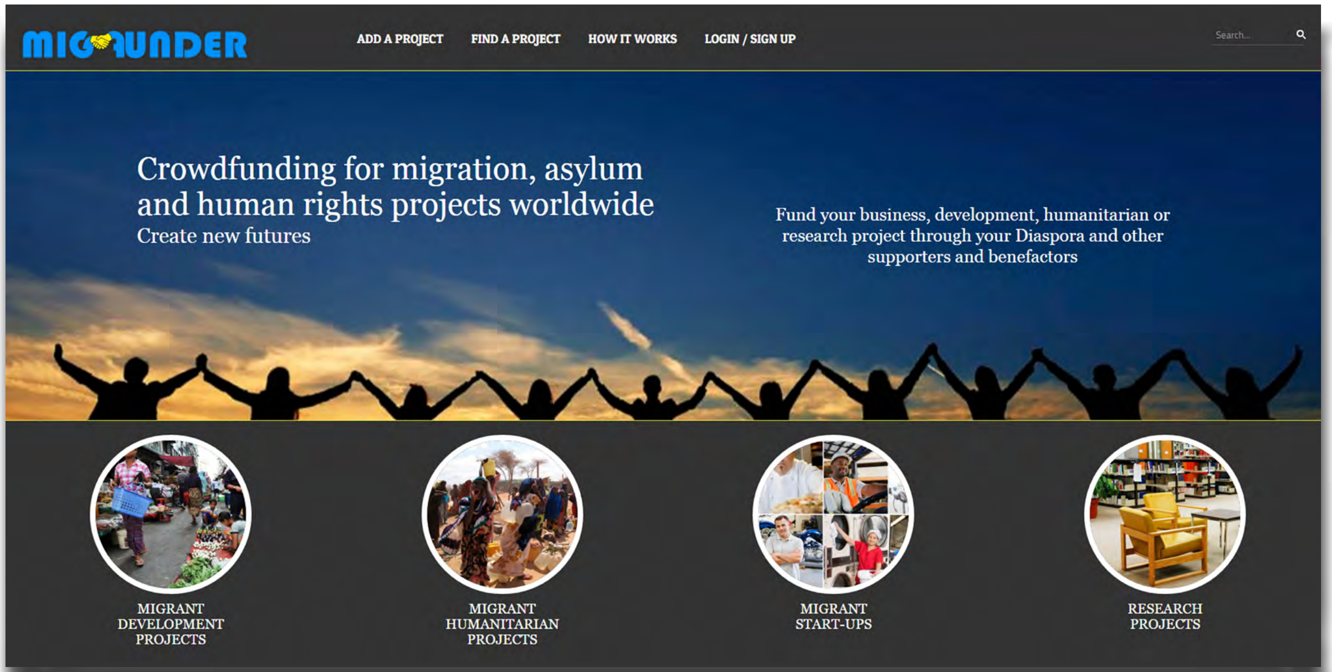

Crowdfunding is an increasingly popular and successful mechanism to generate funding for worthwhile projects and initiatives.

MigFunder (www.migfunder.com/), the first and only crowdfunding platform dedicated solely to migration, refugee and human rights initiatives worldwide, was launched one month ago.

The platform caters to migrants looking to create (or grow) their businesses abroad or in their countries of origin, as well as to migrant organizations, public agencies, non-governmental organizations, and individuals looking to launch a development or humanitarian initiative in support of immigrant and refugee communities worldwide, or a research project/ conference in the field of migration, asylum or human rights policy.

This is a pioneering initiative that will contribute potentially to reducing the effects of budget cuts and underfunding in major refugee, migration and human rights programmes around the world. MigFunder was established by a group of European migration policy experts, including former senior government officials, reputable researchers and IT developers, who set out to extend the facilities and benefits of a crowdfunding platform to the specific needs of immigration, refugee and human rights affairs worldwide.

MigFunder targets, primarily but not exclusively, members of the diaspora who are willing and able to support viable business projects from their compatriots, as well as development, humanitarian and research initiatives in the countries of immigration or origin.

Current campaigns on MigFunder originate from organizations such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Doctors of the World, the Migrant Offshore Aid Station (MOAS), Business in the Community Ireland and Quist Solicitors, among others. Most are concerned with the current refugee crisis.

For any further information, or to submit a campaign, please contact
Solon Ardittis (sardittis@migfunder.com) or Don Ingham (dingham@migfunder.com).

Publications

Building Better Futures: Canada and IOM

2015/56 pages
English

Canada and IOM's partnership is global in focus, diverse in thematic focus, and inclusive a growing number of Canadian stakeholders. This publication offers an overview of major areas of cooperation, and highlights key achievements and landmark steps in the evolution of our joint work. From facilitating the orderly migration of refugees and migrants to Canada to humanitarian and development programming, IOM and Canada have made significant strides since Canada joined as a Member States in 1951.

10 Years of IOM in Myanmar (2005–2014)

2015/28 pages
English

This publication provides an overview of the activities and achievements of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Mission in Myanmar since its establishment in 2005. Working with the Government of Myanmar, IOM provides support to migrants and their communities in the areas of health, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian response, migrant protection, labour migration and research. This publication also includes success stories in reducing risk and vulnerability and supporting safe migration.

The Middle East and North Africa: Annual Report 2014 (Arabic)

2015/72 pages
Arabic

In 2014, significant flows of migration to, through and from the Middle East and North Africa continued unabated. Ongoing conflict, economic stagnation, and political turmoil were main drivers of migration, though motives for movement remain complex. Irregular migration – especially for vulnerable or under-protected people such as unaccompanied minors, women and sexual minorities – exposed migrants to an array of risks as they attempted to attain physical safety and economic stability.

The 2014 annual report on IOM's work in the Middle East and North Africa is organized thematically, reflecting the areas of work carried out by the organization: emergency and humanitarian operations, migrant assistance, border management, support for migration policy, labour migration and human development. Migration health is a cross-cutting area of work reflected in multiple sections. The report also includes a section on research and publications, as well as a data analysis section which presents a comprehensive breakdown of persons who have befitted from IOM activities in the Middle East and North Africa in 2014.


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2015/8 pages
English

Environmental migration is inevitably linked to the question of land for several reasons: (a) environmental and climate change reduces the amount of habitable land; (b) more land is needed to accommodate those who leave such areas; and (c) land policies are decisive factors in determining people's resilience at places of origin, as well as successful establishment at destinations. In Kenya, land tenure insecurity is a major factor of vulnerability to environmental change.

Based on a review of Kenyan land legislation for the Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Evidence for Policy (MECLEP) project, this policy brief analyses the ongoing land reform process in Kenya, and its potentials and shortcomings that contribute to the management of environmental migration, as well as mitigate pressures to migrate. This two-pronged approach is in line with Kenya's National Climate Change Action Plan but impaired by current delays in implementing the policy objectives of the Kenyan Constitution and the New Land Policy. The author recommends accelerated efforts in this direction and to incorporate measures to mitigate land tenure insecurity in disaster management frameworks.

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The purpose of this survey, which can be taken anonymously, is to help us identify our readers' profiles, the institutions they represent and their primary interests in our journal. The survey's responses will contribute, in particular, to adjusting and improving, as appropriate, *MPP*'s content and style, and thus the reader's experience.

Should you wish to participate in this survey, please **click here**.

Thank you.

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- Not exceed five pages and be written in a non-academic and reader-friendly style.
- Cover any area of migration policy but discuss, as far as possible, particular solutions, policy options or best practice relating to the themes covered.
- Provide, as often as applicable, lessons that can be replicated or adapted by relevant public administrations, or civil society, in other countries.

Articles giving account of evaluations of specific migration policies and interventions, including both evaluation findings and innovative evaluation methodologies, are particularly welcome.

To discuss any aspect of the journal, or to submit an article, please contact:

- **Solon Ardittis** (sardittis@eurasylum.org); and
- **Frank Laczko** (flaczko@iom.int)