MIGRATION POLICY PRACTICE

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Road affected by a small landslide. Rwanda. © IOM 2017.

CONTENTS

Introduction

Solon Ardittis and Frank Laczko[1]

Welcome to the latest issue of *Migration Policy Practice*. This issue focuses on three key and diverse migration topics: measuring the extent of migration in the Global South, comparing immigrant students´ integration, and migration and identity management questions in asylum cases.

The first article, by David Ingleby, Ann Singleton and Kolitha Wickramage, focuses on how migration is measured in the Global South. The article shows that the scale of migration in the Global South can vary considerably depending on how "developed" and "developing country" are defined. The authors suggest that we need to devise better indicators of development to obtain a more accurate understanding of the changes in the migration landscape in poorer countries, as existing definitions are all flawed.

The authors remind us that migration policies should be based on solid and reliable evidence and an accurate interpretation of this evidence. Taking into account factors such as population size and the extent of forced migration can drastically affect the way in which we look at the scale of migration in the Global South. Simply put, the authors challenge the commonly held view that international migration to and between developing countries is increasing.

The second article focuses on a very different topic: the arrival in Europe of large numbers of refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic in recent years. Maarten Bolhuis and Joris van Dijk discuss how five European countries which received large numbers of asylum applications from Syrians tried to establish the identity of these persons to ensure that they were not security risks. This fascinating study is based on key informant interviews with 43 representatives of immigration authorities, aliens police, intelligence services and the European Asylum Support Office. The study points to the increasing use of new technology and

social media to establish asylum seekers´ identities. However, it finds that in most countries, there have been few sound evaluations of the effectiveness of such measures and proper cost–benefit analyses.

The final article in this issue focuses on policy options for addressing immigrant student achievement gaps. Louis Volante, Don A. Klinger, Melissa Siegel and Leena Yahia examine data generated by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). PISA is a key tool used by policymakers to assess and compare the quality and equity of their national education system against others. By using this data source, the authors are able to compare immigrant students´ educational performance across destination countries. The results of the authors´ analysis suggest that there are significant differences in immigrant students´ educational performance even when adjusting for differences in economic background. The authors call for further research to assess why immigrant educational performance varies significantly across destination countries, even among immigrant students from the same country of origin. ∎

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[1] Solon Ardittis is Managing Director of Eurasylum Ltd. and Frank Laczko is Director of the Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC) at the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Berlin. They are the co-editors of *Migration Policy Practice*.

International migration in the "Global South": Data choices and policy implications*

David Ingleby, Ann Singleton and Kolitha Wickramage[1]

Summary

International migration to and between developing countries (the "Global South") is generally thought to be increasing. We show that this belief stems from the fact that three choices are commonly made when data are analysed: (a) to report migrant counts as absolute figures rather than expressing these as percentages of their respective populations; (b) to use UN DESA's regional rather than the World Bank's economic definitions of "Global South" and "Global North"; and (c) to include refugees and asylum seekers in migrant counts rather than excluding them. This article contends that when discussing the relationship between migration and development, there are stronger arguments for making the opposite choices stated, and that when this is done, the results show a steady decline between 1990 and 2015 in the percentage of the South's total population who are international migrants. This finding has radical implications for migration research and policy, which we briefly describe.

Migration policy needs to be based on solid and reliable evidence, although there are unfortunately many gaps in the quality and completeness of available data in this field. This is why the first objective listed in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration reads: "Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated data as a basis for evidence-based policies." Having such data, however, is not enough: care must also be taken to ensure that they are not selected and presented (whether deliberately or unintentionally) in ways that are misleading. This article argues that the usual ways data on migration in the Global South and the Global North (hereafter, simply "South" and "North") are analysed can give rise to serious misconceptions. We show that different ways of processing the same data can lead to very different conclusions about trends in migration. The data source used here is the 2017 revision of the International Migrant Stock Database by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and covering the period 1990 to 2015. The article focuses on three main issues:

1. However "North" and "South" are defined, their populations are very different; moreover, they grew at very different rates during this 25-year period. In 2015, the total population of "less developed" regions was five times greater than that of "more developed" ones, while population growth since 1990 had been five times more rapid. Comparisons of migration statistics relating to these two areas that take no account of these large differences can be misleading.

2. Various definitions of "North" and "South" are currently in use, which can affect the conclusions reached in ways that are not always known. Perhaps because the inequalities between the haves and the have-nots in today's world are so extreme, it is often assumed that the exact way in which they are measured does not make much difference to the resulting picture. However, as *World Migration Report 2013* has shown (IOM, 2013), different ways of defining these concepts can lead to very different conclusions about migration in the North and South. This article contrasts UN DESA's distinction between "more developed" and "less developed" countries, with the World Bank's assignment of countries into "high-income" and "low- or middle-income" (HIC and LMIC) categories.

3. Lastly, different conclusions result from the decision whether or not to include forced migration (refugees and asylum seekers) in migration counts.

[1] David Ingleby is a researcher at the Centre for Social Science and Global Health at Amsterdam University. Ann Singleton is Senior Research Fellow, School for Policy Studies. Kolitha Wickramage is Global Health Research and Epidemiology Coordinator at the International Organization for Migration – Migration Health Division.

Numbers are mute: they never "speak for themselves." They have to be given a voice by researchers, who decide how to collect, select, order, analyse and interpret them. In terms of absolute numbers, the migrant stock in UN DESA's "less developed" countries increased by nearly half from 1990 to 2015. Much of current policymaking is based on this finding. However, (1) allowing for population growth, (2) defining the "South" in economic terms and (3) excluding forced migration lead to the opposite conclusion: during this period, there was a gradual and continuous decline in the stock. In what follows, we will demonstrate how we arrived at this contradictory conclusion and examine its implications for policy.

The argument put forward here is not that the "growth" view is false and the "decline" view is true. Everything hinges on the way concepts are defined. This article, therefore, serves a double purpose: (1) to argue that the three choices adopted here are easier to justify than the alternatives and (2) to show that, together, they result in the opposite conclusion to the conventional view.

We present our argument using three graphs. In Figure 1, the blue line shows a large increase in the migrant stock in "less developed" countries, expressed in absolute numbers, which has led many to conclude that increasing levels of migration are ceasing to be the prerogative of the Global North, but are also becoming characteristic of the South. This has encouraged optimism about the potential of migration to promote development in poorer countries. What this view overlooks, however, is that the total population of countries classified by UN DESA as "less developed" also increased greatly between 1990 and 2015, to almost the same extent as the migrant stock. If we instead look at the percentage of migrants in the population of these "less developed" countries (red line), we would see that migration declined until 2005 and only increased after then. In 2015, migrants formed a mere 1.8 per cent of the population of "less developed" countries, compared to 11.2 per cent of "more developed" ones.

**Figure 1. Migrant stock in "less developed" countries**
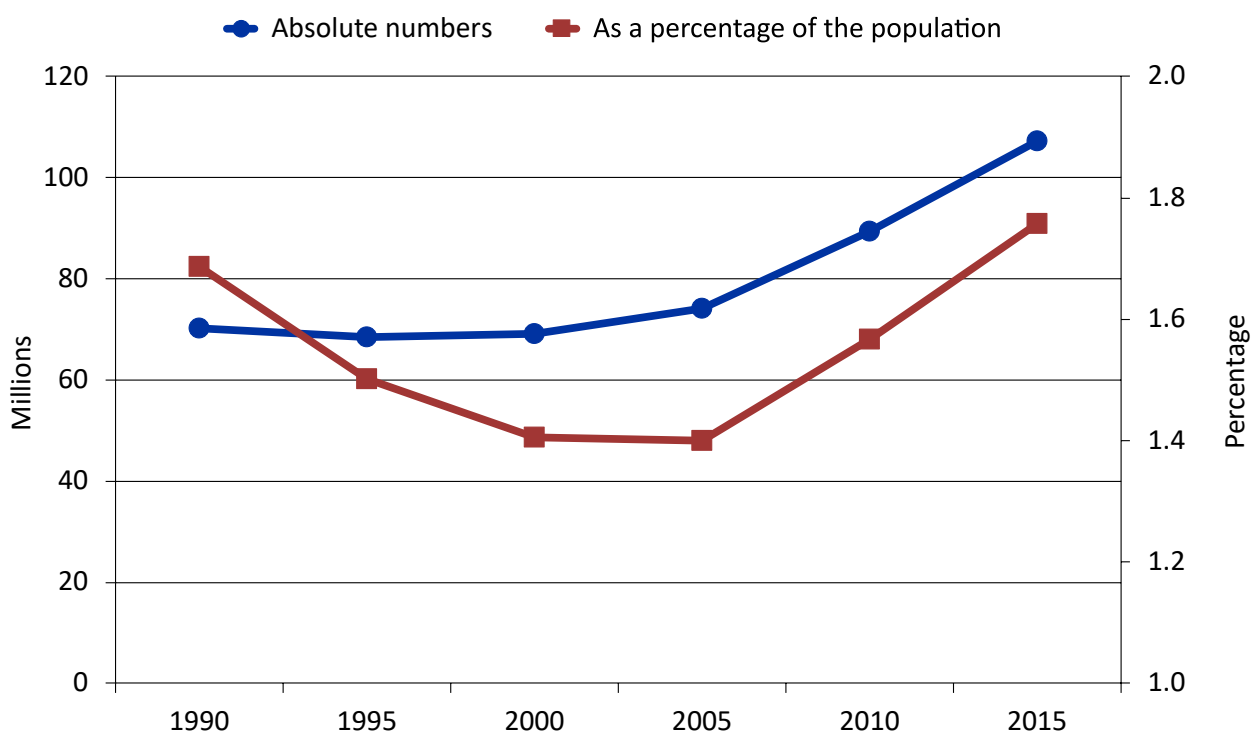
Source: UN DESA, "Table 1: Total migrant stock at mid-year by sex and by major area, region, country or area of destination, 1990–2017", *International Migrant Stock: The 2017 Revision* (United Nations database (POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2017)).

Figure 1 presents data on countries classified as "less developed" using UN DESA's regional criterion, which regards only Japan, Australia, New Zealand and all countries in North America and Europe as "more developed." However, since the criterion was first employed by the United Nations Population Division (UNDP) in 1970, this classification has become increasingly inaccurate. For example, it puts countries such as the Gulf States and the so-called "Asian Tigers" (such as Singapore) in the "less developed" category, despite the fact that they are currently among the most prosperous countries in the world. As already noted in a report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2016:84), it is mainly the inclusion of such HICs in the "less developed" category that gives rise to the impression that migration in the South is increasing – for it is, above all, in these countries that economies have developed rapidly, attracting large numbers of migrants. Looking instead at countries classified by the World Bank as LMICs, and allowing re-classification to the HIC category as a country develops, the percentage of migrants in the population of the South decreases rather than increases overall between 1990 and 2015 (blue line in Figure 2). An increase is only seen between 2010 and 2015.

Figure 2. Migrant stock as a percentage of the population
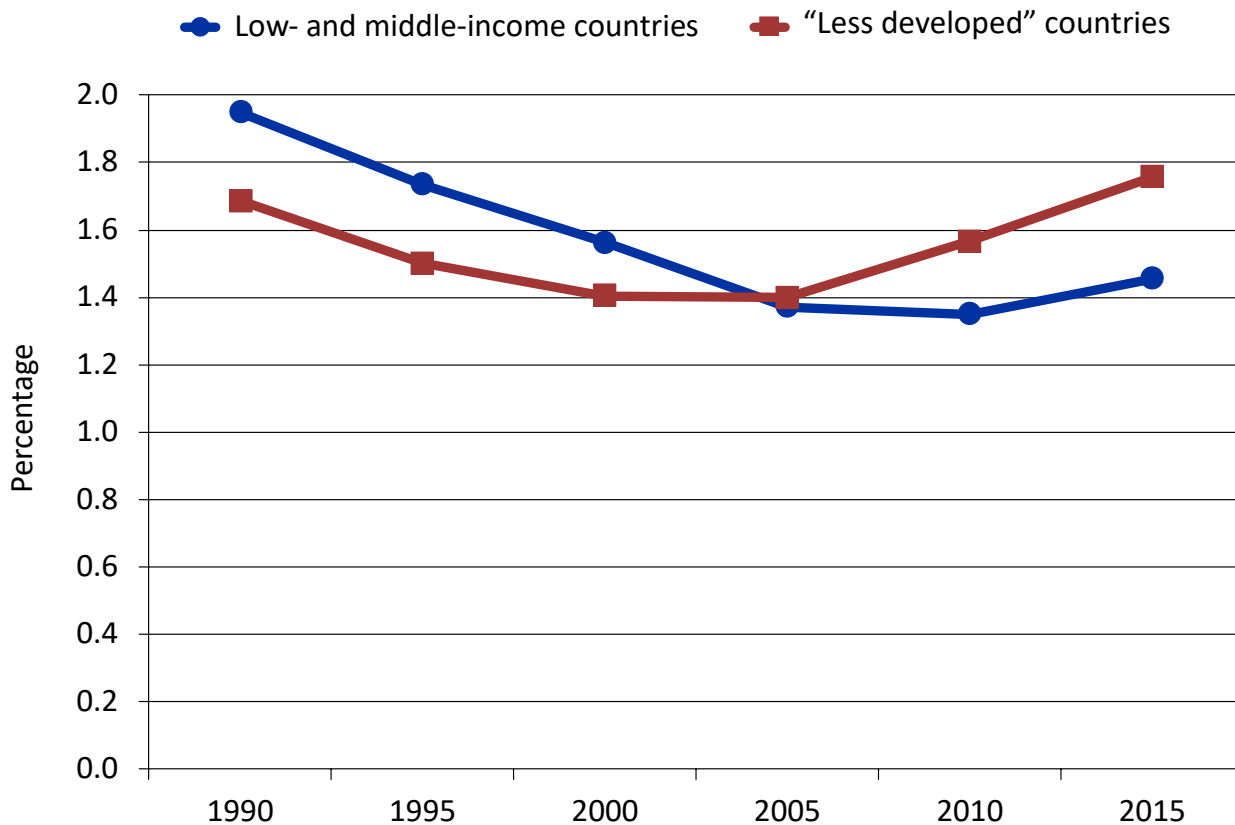
This most recent increase, however, may be misleading. Current discussions about migration policy are centred on how migrants potentially contribute to development, for example by sending remittances to their home countries and helping to relieve labour shortages in destination countries. In this context, it is primarily "economic" migrants, some with family members accompanying them, and students improving their earning potential who are of interest – rather than "forced" migrants, whose main motive is not so much to make a better living as to escape violence and persecution. (Of course, the dividing line between "forced" and "economic" migration cannot always be drawn sharply.) Excluding refugees and asylum seekers from the international migrant stock, which is easily done using Table 6 ("Estimated refugee stock (including asylum seekers) at mid-year by major area, region, country or area of destination, 1990–2017") of UN DESA's International Migrant Stock Database, shows that the increase after

2010 was due only to the recent exceptional growth of forced migration. (Between 2010 and 2015, the global total of refugees and asylum seekers increased by 9.8 million to reach the highest level ever recorded; 86% were hosted in LMICs.) When forced migration is not included, a continuous and steady decrease is visible in the percentage of migrants residing in LMICs (red line in Figure 3). In 2015, the proportion of international migrants in the Global South fell to 1.1 per cent – less than one tenth of the proportion in the North (13.3%).

Figure 3. Migrant stock as a percentage of the population of low- and middle-income countries
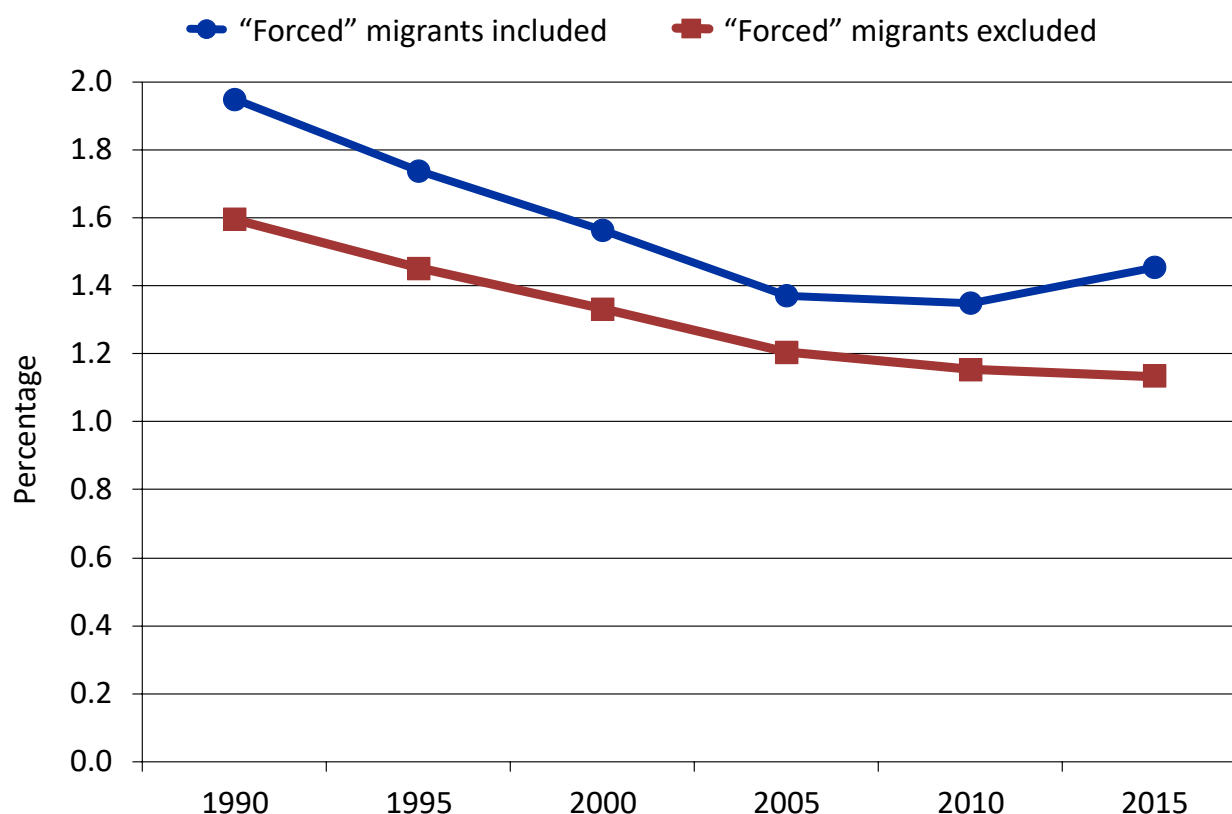
These three graphs show that by reframing the data in three different ways, for each of which strong arguments can be given, the resulting conclusion about migration in developing countries is reversed. Instead of an increase, we see a decline. Meanwhile, the increase in the migrant stock in HICs continues unabated (not shown here). Nevertheless, one important finding about the migrant stock in regions labelled "less developed" by UN DESA remains intact: the fact that there is an increasing number of HICs in these regions has indeed created important new opportunities for migrants.

All of these conclusions are subject to important reservations about the quality and completeness of existing data. Despite this, as we claim in our longer article, it is difficult to explain away the above conclusions as the result of known shortcomings of the data.

Data on migrant flows would, of course, reflect changes in global patterns more accurately than data on stocks. Many of the migrants present in a given country may have arrived decades earlier: indeed, they may not have arrived at all, but simply have acquired the status of "migrant" because national boundaries have been redrawn. Analysing data on flows would give us more precision, but, unfortunately, the datasets that are currently available are very incomplete.

Implications for researchers

These findings have important implications for migration researchers. Taking population size into account can drastically affect the conclusions reached, as can including or excluding forced migration. Regarding definitions of "North" and "South," even

though the World Bank's purely economic definition of "development" may not be ideal, the potential for being misled by UN DESA's regional one – which was inaccurate even when first introduced in 1970 – is so great that serious consideration should be given to phasing it out.

In fact, UN DESA seems to have never been fully committed to this criterion: it habitually justifies its use as a matter of statistical convenience, adding a disclaimer whenever it is used. Since 2015, the Department has also started disaggregating migration statistics using World Bank's classification of countries. (Paradoxically, however, it does not allow a country's classification to change within a given time series, which can lead to serious distortions).

Using the World Bank's definitions of "North" and "South" is not without its pitfalls, either. This categorization, apart from being based on very narrow definitions (it is operationalized solely in terms of gross national income (GNI) per capita), is by its very nature unstable: a country's GNI can fluctuate rapidly in response to shifts in commodity prices or currency exchange rates. The membership of the high-income group of countries can therefore change from year to year, introducing variance in the results that can obscure underlying trends. "North" and "South" cease to be places and become statistical abstractions. Future work needs to focus on how better indicators of development can be developed, starting with the question of whether they are needed and, if so, what for.

Implications for policymakers

The migration policy implications of the analyses presented here are also important. The growth, in absolute terms, of the migrant stock in "less developed" countries has been hailed by organizations such as IOM (2014) and UNDP (2017), as well as numerous researchers, as a highly promising development. Underlying this enthusiasm is the reappraisal that has taken place during the present century of the significance of migration for sending countries (De Haas, 2005). Whereas twentieth-century perspectives on migration often framed it as a continuing story of exploitation by "the West" depleting developing countries not only of their raw materials but also of their workers, especially better-qualified ones (i.e. "brain drain"), it currently tends to be viewed as a win–win situation with large potential benefits for both sides. In particular, the total volume of remittances that migrants send home is far greater than the total amount of development aid. Viewed in this light, South–South migration can help both sending and receiving countries; migration has come to be seen as a powerful stimulus to development for both. Moreover, if more migrants from the South are staying in the South, the incentive to migrate to the North – where rising levels of immigration are increasingly generating resistance – will be reduced.

Given all this, the conclusion that the percentage of migrants in the population of LMICs shows a steady decline when forced migration is excluded will probably be regarded as unwelcome. In our longer article, we argue that given what is known about the migration–development nexus, such a conclusion should not come as a surprise. Nevertheless, what little migration there is between LMICs could probably be increased, and its benefits enhanced, by appropriate policy measures. Many of the problems that often discourage migration could, in fact, be alleviated by managing the process better – which could be said to be the subtext of the Global Compact for Migration. In the longer article, we discuss several ways in which this might be done, for example, by using policies to create new migration corridors, rather than simply streamlining existing ones, including measures to stimulate the formation of diaspora communities in new destination countries.

However, we also emphasize that the value of analyses at a global level is limited. To obtain useful insights into the dynamics of migration, it is necessary to delve into the particularities of different migration corridors and types of migration, rather than simply dividing the world into monolithic blocks labelled "North" and "South." Notwithstanding this precaution, as long as workers in the field find it useful to produce analyses at a global level, this should at least be done with full awareness of the ways in which tacit assumptions can affect the conclusions drawn. ■

Numbers are mute: they never "speak for themselves." They have to be given a voice by researchers, who decide how to collect, select, order, analyse and interpret them.

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Policy options for addressing immigrant student achievement gaps*

Louis Volante, Don A. Klinger, Melissa Siegel and Leena Yahia[1]

Introduction

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) has quickly become the most prominent achievement measure used by policymakers around the world to judge the quality and equity of their education system. In terms of equity, PISA triennial survey results consistently show a pronounced achievement gap between first- and second-generation immigrants and their non-immigrant counterparts in the areas of reading, mathematics and science literacy. In some cases, immigrant students are more than two grade levels behind their non-immigrant peers – a result that impedes their ability to pursue higher education and ultimately their prospects for economic advancement. However, it is important to note that these performance disadvantages vary significantly across international jurisdictions, underscoring the importance of cultural context, education policies and support and the nature of school systems.

The importance of the cultural context

One of the most notable international trends on this topic is that traditional countries of immigration – such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America, where first- and second-generation students make up approximately 25 per cent of the overall student population – tend to possess favourable immigrant student outcomes.[2] In Western Europe, where the relative share of immigrant students is also significant, immigrant students also tend to perform better when compared to their Eastern European counterparts.[3] Overall, immigrant students seem to have enhanced performance in national contexts that possess a heterogenous student population – a result that also aligns with broader studies of migrant integration. For example, results from the Migrant Integration Policy Index (2015) illustrate that immigrants usually benefit from more equal rights and opportunities in wealthier, older and larger countries of immigration, for example in Western Europe and popular countries of immigration previously noted (namely Canada and the United States).[4] Collectively, the broader literature suggests that critical features of host societies, such as income inequality, inclusion in social welfare provisions, settlement policies, as well as immigration and multicultural policies, all positively influence immigrant student outcomes.

Given these previous results, what options do educational policymakers have at their disposal to enhance immigrant student outcomes? Certainly, the previous features reside outside of their direct control and require policy coordination across multiple sectors, such as finance, health, social protection and immigration, to name only a few. Yet, there are case examples that educational policymakers can draw from to inform the nature and scope of their policies, as well as the provision of supports they offer to students and teachers within compulsory education settings. Indeed, by connecting these cases with the extensive empirical literature in the field, there are some important lessons to be shared.

Education policies and support

One of the most notable findings in the international literature underscores the deleterious effects of stratification and tracking (such as academic versus vocational and university versus college versus apprenticeship programmes). In general, education systems that track students into different schools and/or programmes tend to increase inequities in student outcomes, particularly when this occurs at

1 Louis Volante is a professor at Brock University. Don A. Klinger is the dean of Te Kura Tangata Faculty of Education at University of Waikato. Melissa Siegel is a professor at Maastricht University. Leena Yahia is a PhD candidate at Queen's University.

2 Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2016.

3 European Commission, 2016.

4 Migrant Integration Policy Index, 2015.

a younger age.[5] Not surprisingly, it is students from immigrant backgrounds who are often placed into these vocational schools and/or lower academic tracks around the world. Thus, policymakers need to (re)consider the rationale undergirding stratification and tracking structures in their school system.

Policymakers also need to consider the distribution of resources within their school systems if they intend to ameliorate the performance disadvantage. For example, immigrants tend to be particularly at risk within schools with a concentration of low socioeconomic status (SES) students. In fact, the OECD, which is responsible for the administration of PISA, argues "it is not the concentration of immigrant students in a school but, rather, the concentration of socioeconomic disadvantage in a school that hinders student achievement".[6] This double disadvantage, namely being an immigrant who is in a low SES environment, suggests additional support is required for schools serving this type of student population. Unfortunately, the research also suggests these types of schools are often characterized by lower teacher expectations, inadequate understanding of immigrant groups and inaccurate teacher evaluations, which negatively impact immigrant student achievement and self-concept.[7]

Given that two thirds of students born outside their host country use another language at home, it is understandable that the provision of language support is very important for immigrant students.[8] Indeed, language instruction and associated policies are the most frequently cited issues associated with immigrant student outcomes in the international literature.[9] Immigrant students who arrive at the age of 12 or older and have spent less than four years in their new country are farther behind students in the same grade than their immigrant counterparts who arrived at a younger age.[10] This "late arrival" penalty underscores the necessity of providing more intensive language support to older students, particularly since late arriving immigrants may not be able to catch up to their non-immigrant peers before they apply to higher education settings.

Thus far, the relative importance of tracking/segregation, socioeconomic inequality and language support as critical elements impacting immigrant student outcomes have been emphasized. There are many other characteristics that also impact immigrant student achievement that have not been highlighted, for example, community networks or adult education programmes, to name only a few. It is important to remember that no individual feature, taken in isolation, is likely to positively impact immigrant student outcomes. Education policymakers that delay tracking for an additional year or two or allocate additional resources for late arrivals or low SES schools cannot automatically assume that significant changes in immigrant student outcomes will naturally follow. Rather, it is a constellation of policies that find their expression in a "multicultural friendly" context that is likely to meet with the greatest success. The Canadian context is particularly illustrative of this, in that immigrant students in particular provinces actually possess a significant performance advantage. That is, first- and second-generation immigrant students outperform their non-immigrant peers, who themselves consistently achieve high standards.

The Canadian approach: Accommodation versus assimilation

One of the more interesting features of Canada is that it is the first country in the world to adopt multiculturalism as an official policy and included provisions within its Charter of Rights and Freedoms that essentially protects the rights of minority groups. Not surprisingly, multicultural friendly policies have found their expression in provincial education systems that have shown a preference for culturally sensitive integration approaches to preserve the cultural identities of diverse populations. Such policies are in direct contrast to the assimilationist approach to immigration that existed in Canada before the 1960s. Overall, education policies across Canada tend to underscore a preference for fairly broad accommodations within provincial education systems, and these are further reinforced by teacher education programmes that are themselves highly selective in their admission requirements.

Canada's largest province, Ontario, provides policy guidelines to teachers regarding "Culturally responsive pedagogy", "Antiracism and ethnocultural equity in school boards" and "Ontario's equity and inclusive education strategy". British Columbia developed its

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[5]   OECD, 2014.

[6]   OECD, 2015:8.

[7]   Moosung, Dean and Kim, 2017.

[8]   *The Economist*, 2016.

[9]   Potochnick and Mooney, 2015.

[10] OECD, 2015.

"Diversity in BC schools: A framework" to safeguard against discrimination, harassment and violence. Similarly, Alberta provides a curriculum framework that contains provisions for belonging and identity that underscore its efforts to promote diversity and inclusion in its multicultural and pluralistic society. Across the country, curricular frameworks tend to underscore the importance of pedagogy and curriculum expectations that respect ethnic and cultural diversity. Although curriculum considerations are always context specific, policymakers can and should use best practice examples to inform their own curricular reform efforts.

In addition to curriculum and pedagogy, the allocation of resources within Canada is also geared towards an accommodation approach. That is, funds are typically devoted to where they are needed most and largely reside within the direct control of provincial policymakers. Consider the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), which is Canada's largest and most ethnically diverse school district, where more than 50 per cent of students speak a language other than English at home.[11] Although the province provides per pupil funding of approximately 12,000 Canadian dollars (CAD) for each Ontario student, schools also receive approximately CAD 10,000 per English learner over four years, as well as additional grants, which are particularly beneficial for districts with high percentages of English language learners.[12] Among its many programmes and support, TDSB created the Literacy Enrichment Achievement Program (LEAP) to help immigrants and refugees, who have missed months or years of schooling. The programme is designed to make up two years of academic progress every year so students can catch up with their English-speaking peers within three years.

Collectively, the Canadian context is characterized by funding models and special programmes that underscore a broader commitment to equitable outcomes for immigrant student groups. No doubt, policymakers in other parts of the world will find it especially challenging to secure additional funding for immigrant students given the rise in anti-immigrant sentiment, competing priorities and fiscal restraints imposed by national economic conditions. Nevertheless, immigrant student outcomes in Canada

suggest that integration policies and associated school supports represent good "value for money". According to the OECD, Canada boasts one of the highest achievement levels in the world with fairly narrow gaps between high and low achievers, including those from lower socioeconomic and immigrant status student groups. Given the established association between student achievement and human capital, it makes sense to largely advance arguments for increased resources for immigrant students on economic versus compassionate grounds. Indeed, the authors' previous work notes that the educational success of immigrants is inextricably intertwined with the success of nations.[13]

Conclusion

Policymakers around the world are ultimately tasked with understanding why immigrant students who share a common country of origin, and therefore many cultural similarities, are underperforming in their national context. One might naturally wonder why the PISA scores of Turkish-born students in Germany are almost two years lower than those of students in the Netherlands, even after adjusting for different economic backgrounds.[14] Conversely, why does Finland, which has consistently been ranked one of the top achieving countries in the world, have one of the biggest performance disadvantages across the European Union?[15] These examples illustrate that traditional variables associated with student achievement such as parental education or SES cannot fully explain immigrant performance disadvantages, and that cultural context is an important mediator of immigrant student achievement. The authors' cross-comparative work suggests that education policymakers have a range of options and supports, within their direct purview, to help narrow these persistent achievement gaps.[16] ∎

11   See www.tdsb.on.ca/High-School/Your-School-Day/Curricu-
      lum/ESL

12   Cardoza, 2018.

13   Volante, Klinger, Siegel and Bilgili, 2017.

14   The Economist, 2016.

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Policymakers also need to consider the distribution of resources within their school systems if they intend to ameliorate the performance disadvantage.
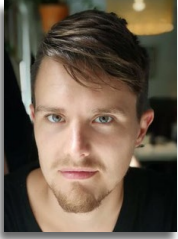
Practices in establishing the identity and screening on national security and exclusion aspects in Syrian asylum cases in five European countries

Maarten Bolhuis and Joris van Wijk[1]

Introduction

The armed conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic that erupted in 2011 has produced a vast number of forced migrants and is considered one of the driving factors behind the high influx of asylum seekers in Europe since 2014. The sudden and dramatic increase in the number of asylum applications – which affected different European countries in different degrees – led to exceptional challenges with regard to the identification and screening of asylum seekers from the Syrian Arab Republic.[2] A first complicating factor was that fake Syrian passports were relatively easily available on the black market and that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant had obtained blank passports, as well as passport printing machines. This meant that European authorities could no longer rely on identity documents to definitely establish someone was actually Syrian. Secondly, Syrian asylum applicants came from an active armed conflict where anti-Western terrorist groups were active, which means that European immigration authorities also had an interest in thoroughly assessing whether they posed a threat to national security,[3] or whether they should be excluded from international protection.[4]

This article discusses how, during the high influx, five European countries (Belgium, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands and Sweden) tried to properly assess the identity and engage in thorough 1F exclusion and security screening in Syrian asylum cases. A selection of noteworthy practices[5] that can be used by actors involved in the immigration process to further develop or redevelop existing approaches and strategies is presented.

The results are based on interviews with 43 representatives of immigration authorities, aliens police agencies, intelligence and security services and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), as well as a review of available academic literature, relevant rules and regulations and available formal and informal policy documents. An extensive underpinning of the applied methodology and more elaborate references and descriptions of the presented noteworthy practices can be found in the recently published report, "Case management, identity controls and screening on national security and 1F exclusion: A comparative study on Syrian asylum seekers in five European countries", commissioned by the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI).[6]

Establishing identity

In addition to the investigation of identity documents and taking fingerprints, the five focus countries increasingly use different and new methods to establish and/or verify an applicant's identity. The nature and scale of the influx from 2014 – in addition to technological innovations – are some of the driving factors behind these developments. Noteworthy practices that could possibly be implemented to improve the establishment and verification of the identity of Syrian asylum seekers or other nationals with similar characteristics are the following.

Social media screening and extraction of data carriers

Countries increasingly use social media research as a method to establish identity, origin and travel route, as well as for screening on national security and 1F exclusion. Respondents had different views on the value of social media analysis. Some highlighted its (potential) value by referring to anecdotal "successes"; others questioned the value by indicating that applicants have by now become well aware that the authorities will perform such checks. In addition to social media screening, the confiscation and extraction of information from data carriers, such as smartphones and laptops, with the aim of establishing the identity is also increasingly used. It is currently a standard practice in the Netherlands (which is even aiming to perform 100 per cent extraction of data carriers in the future), optional in Norway and Germany, while it is not used in Belgium and Sweden. Similar to social media analysis, some respondents indicated data carrier extraction to be useful, while others expressed their doubts.

Special software for social media research

The Netherlands uses a special software that enables staff of the immigration authorities to perform social media research in a safe way. Those performing social media research have stand-alone computers at their disposal, with special accounts, developed by the Dutch National Police in collaboration with a commercial cybersecurity company. In this way, search activities of immigration authorities are not traceable for the government in a country of origin (for instance, should this government monitor an applicant's social media), while staff conducting social media research are not required to search by means of using one's own personal/private profile or setting up a "fake" profile (as has happened in other countries). The development of such a system requires an investment, and staff need to be trained to work with such a system.

Language biometrics software

German authorities have developed a language biometrics software to analyse voice recordings. On the basis of a short statement by the applicant, the software can provide an analysis of the language that the applicant speaks, which is reported to the interviewer. The software can decrease the dependence on interpreters to evaluate the origin of the language that someone speaks, which can be an indication that can verify or debunk a claimed identity. However, concerns relating to the accuracy of the software have been raised in Germany. It has been questioned whether the software can accurately analyse regional, familial or social language variants within dialects or match them to a nationality. As is currently the case in Germany, the system should therefore be used exclusively for the purpose of assisting the decision makers, rather than providing a definitive conclusion about an applicant's nationality.

Automated name transliteration

Problems with uniform spelling of names of asylum seekers across different government institutions may occur, especially when proper documents are lacking and names are not originally written with roman letters. German authorities are currently testing automated name transliteration of Arabic names into the Latin alphabet. Such a tool ensures already in an early phase that the spelling of the name is uniform and unequivocal throughout the process. Furthermore, an analysis of the name may help give hints of the origin of the applicant, and the transliterated name can be matched to a database, and in that way, provide an indication of the country of origin. As it is, name transliteration is mainly a tool to keep the quality in the immigration authority's own systems. If the tool would be made pan-European, it would be easier to identify a person who has lived or already applied for asylum in another European State in the past under the same name, if fingerprints are unavailable.

Coercive measures for the reassessment of identity

Using the coercive measures that it has at its disposal as a police body, the Norwegian aliens police can give applicants who have not presented any documents at the time of their registration a "surprise visit" at their residence, months after they first applied for asylum. During such a visit, the police searches for indications that can verify or debunk the claimed identity. Information that is not available during the registration and identification process that sheds a different light on an applicant's origin may be easier to obtain when an applicant is approached "off-guard". The use of such coercive measures infringes on applicants' fundamental rights, such as the right to a private life, and can lead to uncertainty about the value of an obtained status. For this reason, the legal basis for the use of coercive measures should be clear (for instance, what level of suspicion is needed) and

a court authorization (as is required in Norway) could offer the necessary safeguards. This method can only be used in countries where the police are actively involved in identity checks.

Screening on national security and 1F exclusion

The attention for security and exclusion cases in the immigration process has generally increased in the past years. During the high influx, a major challenge with regard to screening was that the opportunities to assess national security and exclusion aspects were limited due to the high recognition rate, while the scale of the influx made that less time and less experienced staff was available to make assessments of these aspects. Many countries developed new, or strengthened existing structures for information exchange on (potential) national security cases between the immigration authorities and intelligence and security services. The different authorities have provided their staff with various tools to raise and create awareness in relation to assessing aspects of national security and exclusion.

In the process of identifying national security or exclusion cases, relevant actors were confronted with a number of challenges, including the following: (a) determining the right threshold for reporting potential national security cases; (b) providing feedback to caseworkers; and (c) the generally more limited value of information collected through interviews. Respondents indicated that information from social media and data carriers can be very valuable in the context of assessing national security or exclusion aspects, but also that such information is often very difficult to interpret and/or to use as evidence.

Noteworthy practices that could possibly be implemented to improve the screening of (Syrian) asylum seekers in relation to national security and 1F exclusion are the following.

Screening

The Dutch immigration service has introduced a separate "screening" procedure that is carried out in all asylum and family reunification cases, an upfront examination of different aspects including national security and exclusion after the identification and registration phase. Specially designated "screeners" can liaise with "enforcement coordinators" about results from the screening, who can decide whether

a certain case should be referred to the immigration service's specialized units, again possibly after consultation with specialists at these units. The screening is not only limited to national security and exclusion, but also focuses on other enforcement aspects, including indications of identity fraud or human smuggling. This upfront screening makes it possible to take cases that need special attention apart in an early phase. Furthermore, by making the screening a separate procedural step, carried out by designated screeners, the screeners can fully focus on possible indications, rather than having to pay attention to such aspects in addition to other tasks. By training the screeners, they can develop a good sense of how to look for relevant indications, and how to deal with these. The possible disadvantage is that such a system of screening requires capacity that may be unavailable during times of high influx, and it may be too costly to sustain when the influx is of such a nature that enforcement aspects are less of an issue. In the Netherlands, this has been solved by making the deployment of screeners flexible. The screeners do not conduct the screening full time, but also work as part-time decision makers.

Referral format

The Dutch immigration authorities make use of an elaborate referral format to report indications in relation to national security to liaison officers for the intelligence and security services. While the format also contains an open text box, the format forces caseworkers to answer a number of very specific questions, challenging the caseworker to specify the report and think through and interpret what they see more carefully. The format makes reports more uniform and complete and can prevent unnecessary reports. Something to take into account is that if such a format is used to report to intelligence and security services, it should be clear that immigration authorities are actually allowed to share that kind of detailed information from an asylum file.

Oral presentations of potential national security cases

The Swedish immigration authorities have set up a system with contact points for the intelligence and security services in each regional unit. The contact point and the Swedish Security Service counterpart meet at least once a month. Before every meeting, the contact point, who is specialized in national security and exclusion, will explore in the regional unit if there

are cases that might be of relevance to the Security Service. If a caseworker has a case in which he or she believes there is an indication of a national security threat, the contact point and caseworker will meet with the Swedish Security Service representative, where the caseworker presents the case face-to-face. An advantage of this approach is that the caseworker receives direct one-on-one feedback on whether the signal is relevant. The caseworker also receives advice on how to approach a case. Possible disadvantages of this approach are that having caseworkers join in on the contact point meetings requires capacity and may be difficult to sustain in high-influx situations, especially when there are many potential national security cases. Furthermore, if the caseworker receives feedback, it does not necessarily reach the broader organization. In Sweden, the latter disadvantage is dealt with by having the immigration service contact point who is present at the meetings and spread the feedback throughout the organization (through seminars and trainings).

Multilateral information exchange forums

Belgium and the Netherlands have established multilateral forums where multiple actors (such as immigration services, reception organizations, police, intelligence services) can – under specific conditions – share information on cases that potentially affect national security, both on the level of individual cases and on a more strategic level. Such a multilateral forum establishes permanent contacts and the possibility to strategically discuss whether the information exchange takes place in a good fashion. It can make information exchange between the actors more coordinated and structured, which can improve the cooperation between, and commitment of, the different actors. Furthermore, the involvement of a broad range of actors makes it less likely that relevant developments, trends or cases are overlooked, and strengthens the learning capacity of these actors. Signals can be "stacked" and jointly interpreted. It should be taken into account that creating the legal preconditions for exchanging information multilaterally may be challenging. Besides, a multilateral forum is especially useful in countries where a large number of different government-controlled actors are involved.

Specialized unit for social media research

The Swedish and Belgian immigration authorities have specialized teams for social media screening that focus on or assist in potential national security and/or

exclusion cases. Doing social media research in a safe manner requires technical skills, and also language skills (speaking Arabic or Russian, for instance). By concentrating those skills in a specialized unit that assists caseworkers, caseworkers can focus on other tasks that may improve social media screening quality and be more efficient. The safety of caseworkers and the confidentiality of the asylum procedure may be more easily safeguarded if specialists carry out social media research by means of specialized software (see above). A specialized team can arguably also do more advanced research.

Substantiation exclusion decisions on basis of social media

In the Netherlands, the increasing reliance on information from social media and data carriers has led to a different approach as to how exclusion decisions are substantiated. Instead of using information to substantiate that an applicant was a member of a certain organization, the reasoning is turned around: if there is no plausible explanation for information from social media or data carriers (for instance, when an applicant is depicted in a picture in a uniform with a Kalashnikov in his hands, and he has demonstrably lied about this in the interview), that could be enough to substantiate that there are serious reasons for considering someone is guilty of crimes that fall under the exclusion clause of Article 1F of the Refugee Convention. Information from social media and data carriers presents weak evidence; this approach may solve that. However, as of yet, it is unclear whether this way of reasoning is accepted by courts.[7]

Concluding reflections

This study demonstrated that the use of new methods, such as data carrier extraction and social media analysis has increased substantially in the past years, although some countries are hesitant to adopt these methods. It seems that in most countries, sound evaluations with proper cost-benefit analyses of these new methods are not – or at least not publicly – available. This impairs a fact-based and normative debate on whether or not, and to what extent, the implementation of such methods is recommendable.

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[7] Considering the far-fetching consequences of exclusion, commentators have stressed that exclusion decisions should be substantiated with information that clearly indicates the role and responsibility of an individual in alleged crimes.

Apart from questions relating to effectiveness and cost-efficiency, the application of these methods also leads to all sorts of legal, normative and ethical questions that are currently hardly (publicly) discussed. This, too, is a reason to properly evaluate such new methods.

Secondly, different countries have, over the course of the past years, initiated different projects to improve case management and screening. Digital tools developed for that purpose, such as the transliteration tool discussed above, may also prove interesting for immigration authorities in other countries. Rather than developing or acquiring these tools independently from each other, such tools could be co-founded and possibly co-developed in-house or in public–private partnerships. It may, in this regard, be fruitful for European immigration authorities to team up, possibly with the assistance of EASO.

Finally, there is a need for international guidance on national security issues. Participants to the study believed that it would be useful to have an international forum to exchange practices and experiences not only on matters of exclusion,[8] but also on national security. While more contact has been established internationally on this topic in recent years, a forum is still lacking. Although matters of national security – unless they also relate to exclusion – are not part of the asylum procedure, EASO is considered the most suitable actor to coordinate such a forum. ■

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> **During the high influx, a major challenge with regard to screening was that the opportunities to assess national security and exclusion aspects were limited due to the high recognition rate.**

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[8]   In 2017, EASO launched the EASO Exclusion Network; see www.easo.europa.eu/easo-exclusion-network-0

Publications
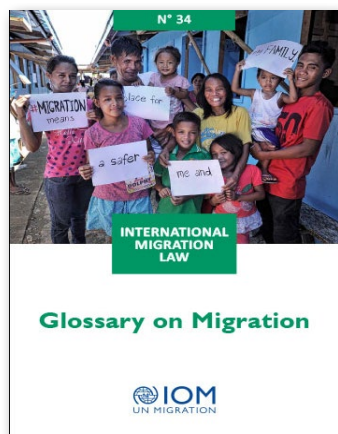
International Migration Law N°34 - Glossary on Migration
2019/249 pages
ISSN 1813-2278
English

The IOM Glossary on Migration is an accessible and extensive collection of definitions of migration-related terminology. It is designed for a broad range of actors engaging with migration at the international level. It also provides some insights on regional and national practices.

The purpose of this Glossary is to develop a common understanding and consistent use of migration and migration-related terms based, whenever possible, on international standards. Creating uniformity in language is an important starting point in migration discussions to ensure an accurate understanding and coherent exchange of information among actors working in the field of migration.

This updated version of the Glossary reflects recent developments in the use of migration-related terms, drawing definitions from a wide range of reliable sources or reflecting IOM's understanding of migration-related concepts.

The safety of your trip: Tips for Safe Migration
2019/28 pages
Armenian

During their migration project, migrants may face problems, especially when they are in an irregular situation or when they lack knowledge and information about their rights and responsibilities.

This guide aims to raise awareness among Armenian labour migrants and contributing to reduced risks exploitation, trafficking and unfair labour practices, thus making their migration project safer.

The guidance is prepared within the framework of IOM Armenia's project, "Strengthening Armenia's labour migration management capacities towards enhanced protection of the human rights of migrants and good governance", funded by the British Embassy in Yerevan.

## La movilidad humana en la agenda climática de las Américas: Necesidades y Oportunidades
2019/94 pages
Spanish

En los últimos años, la comunidad internacional ha realizado grandes progresos para integrar la migración por motivos ambientales en marcos estratégicos globales, como los procesos relacionados con la Convención Marco de las Naciones Unidas para el Cambio Climático, el Pacto Mundial para una Migración Segura, Ordenada y Regular y el Marco de Sendai para la Reducción del Riesgo de Desastres. Estos avances reflejan una mejor comprensión de la migración relacionada con el medio ambiente y el cambio climático y de las necesidades de las poblaciones afectadas.

En paralelo, los países de las Américas también han avanzado en la incorporación de referencias a este tipo de movilidad humana en marcos estratégicos y políticas nacionales. Sin embargo, sigue siendo necesario promover una mayor coherencia de las políticas públicas y el desarrollo de intervenciones concretas que den respuesta a los desafíos existentes.

A través de la revisión de fuentes documentales, esta publicación determina el estado de integración de las referencias a la movilidad en los marcos climáticos e identifica una serie de oportunidades para realizar avances concretos en este ámbito.
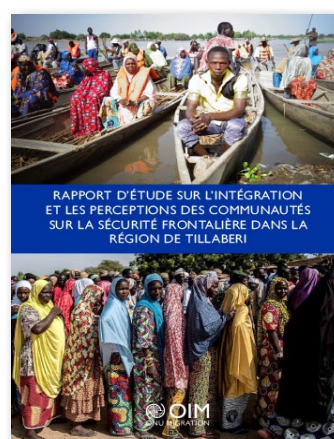
Rapport d'étude sur l'intégration et les perceptions des communautés sur la sécurité frontalière dans la région de Tillaberi
2019/138 pages
French

Situé au coeur du Sahel, le Niger s'étend sur une surface de 1,270,000 km2 dont trois quarts sont désertiques. Le pays partage des frontières internationales avec sept pays voisins : la Libye au Nord-Est, le Tchad à l'Est, le Nigéria et le Bénin au Sud, le Burkina Faso et le Mali à l'Ouest et l'Algérie au Nord-Ouest. Les 5,690 km de frontières internationales du Niger, poreuses et insuffisamment contrôlées, constituent un risque majeur pour les autorités du Niger en charge de la sécurité de la population et de l'intégrité du territoire.

L'objectif de la présente étude, financée par le bureau du contre-terrorisme du Département d'état des États Unis, est d'analyser la perception des communités sur la sécurité et la gestion des frontières dans la région de Tillabéri, ainsi que le rôle des autorités en charge de la gestion des frontières dans les mécanismes préexistants de réponse aux déplacements massifs de population. La région de Tillabéri, située au Sud-Ouest du Niger en plein cœur de la région du Liptako-Gourma, est caractérisée par une stabilité socio-économique fragile et la menace sécuritaire particulièrement concentré sur la zone des trois frontières. L'absence de contrôle efficace aux frontières a été un facteur déterminant dans la prolifération et la circulation de groupes criminels et terroristes, qui parvienne à incursionner la région et commettre des exactions. L'Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations (OIM) au Niger œuvre au renforcement des capacités des autorités nationales et locales et à l'engagement durable des communautés en matière de gestion des frontières, afin de créer les conditions d'une migration humaine et ordonnée.

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