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# MIGRATION POLICY PRACTICE

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First batch of Syrian refugees takes flight to Germany. © IOM 2013

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# Introduction

**Solon Ardittis and Frank Laczko<sup>1</sup>**

“Labour migration supports economic equality because migrants do not depress wages – nor do they take jobs away. Rather, they foster employment and innovation and make natives more productive.” In his lead article for this issue of *Migration Policy Practice*, Klaus Zimmermann, Director of Institut zur Zukunft der Arbeit (IZA, Institute for the Study of Labor) and winner of the EIB Prize 2013 of the European Investment Bank, outlines his vision for the future of both labour migration and asylum policy in the European Union (EU).

According to Zimmermann, labour mobility is desirable because, in economic terms, it contributes to an optimal allocation of resources – and thus plays a crucial role in generating higher output and welfare. Such mobility ensures a quick adjustment of labour markets, especially at the regional level. Migrants need to have and maintain different talents and abilities if they are to increase their host economy’s growth potential. Furthermore, all developed economies face a strong and increasing excess demand for skilled labour. This is brought about by technological change, population ageing and, in the case of Europe, by a substantial decline in the future native European workforce. These upcoming needs clearly cannot be satisfied sufficiently by the local labour force or by the educational system in individual countries.

With regard to forced migration, the new European Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker, stressed that European core values must also be respected when it comes to asylum policy. The first step must be to agree on a transparent quota system guaranteeing a balanced distribution of asylum-seekers across EU member countries. Countries like Germany and Sweden have accepted above-average numbers of asylum applications over the past years, while France and the United Kingdom have been rather reluctant.

The definition of a “fair share” must account for the economic strength of each country. Another aspect is becoming increasingly important: many of those who come to Europe for humanitarian reasons are endowed with valuable “human capital.” They have good skills and professional qualifications, and – as Germany’s President Joachim Gauck has put it – they are “highly mobile, flexible, multilingual, motivated and willing to take risks.” However, until recently, they have been effectively barred from seeking employment. In line with what many experts have long demanded, Germany has now eased the restrictions on labour market access for refugees. This gives them a chance to earn their own living, to develop their professional skills further and to achieve social integration. The next logical step is to allow qualified refugees to enter into the regular immigration process. According to Zimmermann, the new EU Commissioner for Migration and Home Affairs, Dimitris Avramopoulos, would be well advised to further develop the EU Blue Card Directive along these lines. After all, his declared goal is to “help Europe address skills shortages and attract the talents it needs.”

The second article in this issue of *Migration Policy Practice*, by Richard Lewis (Institute for European Studies at Vrije Universiteit Brussel), discusses the key provisions and implications of the new legislation on forced marriage within migrant communities in the United Kingdom – the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act of 13 March 2014. According to Lewis, while the new Act is certainly popular in political circles which support the view that forced marriage under any circumstances is unacceptable in twenty-first century Europe, only time will tell whether the new law works in practice. In the meantime, the courts will have to wrestle with the circumstances and context surrounding what constitutes coercion and the frequently fine distinction between arranged and forced marriage. One can expect that the new law will clash with cultural norms in the South Asian and other communities. The police service will also have to ensure that family policing training is fine-tuned to deal with these sensitive issues.

<sup>1</sup> Solon Ardittis is Managing Director of Eurasyllum Ltd. Frank Laczko is Head of the Migration Research Division at IOM Headquarters in Geneva. They are the co-editors of *Migration Policy Practice*.

The third article, by Liam Coakley (Department of Geography, University College Cork), draws on data from a recent research project conducted among asylum-seekers living in 14 of Ireland's Direct Provision accommodation centres. This research was commissioned by IOM Dublin and was designed to explore how asylum-seekers who are currently resident in Ireland's Direct Provision system engage with the idea of assisted voluntary return to their countries of origin – an option offered to asylum-seekers currently resident in Ireland as long as they are not already in receipt of a deportation order. The article shows that increased outreach and more proactive information provision are needed at every level of the migration management process in Ireland. There is also a clear need to educate migrants currently resident in Direct Provision about the full range of options available to them and to do so in a more nuanced and cooperative manner than through the simple provision of return information.

The fourth article, by Nnamdi Iwuora (IOM Nigeria) analyses some of the issues raised in the consultative process related to migration and development in Nigeria. The article provides an overview of the development opportunities Nigeria can gain from

properly managing its migration sector, and discusses a range of recommendations on how Nigeria could manage migration better to increase its developmental impact.

Finally, this issue of *Migration Policy Practice* also includes a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section on tracking lives lost during migration. This draws on data from a report released by IOM earlier this year, which provides the first annual global compilation of data on migrant deaths along sea, desert and other migratory routes. The FAQs address, inter alia, key questions concerning the process of tracking migrant deaths, what we know about those who die and why we should count them.

We thank all the contributors to this issue of *Migration Policy Practice* and encourage readers to contact us with suggestions for future articles. **We further invite readers to spare a couple of minutes to participate in a survey which we are launching this month in order 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](#). ■**



## Migration, jobs and integration in Europe

Klaus F. Zimmermann<sup>1</sup>

The key message of this article<sup>2</sup> is that open and flexible labour markets foster growth, development and integration in Europe – and they increase welfare by creating jobs. However, the Single European Labour Market, which has been a European objective for so long, remains a vision. The core challenge in this context is a lack of sufficient labour mobility. This observation is by no means universally accepted, as witnessed by the rise of the welfare migration debate in some of the European countries and the recent vote of Swiss voters against European Union (EU) labour mobility. It is, therefore, important to openly discuss the determinants of labour mobility and to highlight its value for economic prosperity.

For instance, as a clear counterpoint to the prevailing pessimism about Europe and the growing opposition against free labour mobility within Europe, leading European labour economists from 10 different EU countries have recently called on European policymakers to implement a future-oriented agenda for a genuine European labour market without borders (see Textbox 1). This manifesto is available in 12 languages and was first published in May 2014.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, it is particularly important to highlight that it is labour migration – and decidedly not welfare migration – that dominates the current economic reality. This migration also supports economic equality because migrants do not depress wages – nor do they take jobs away. Rather, they foster employment and innovation and make natives more productive. A brain

drain, sometimes feared by sending countries, does not have to happen.<sup>4</sup>

This applies even to the so-called diaspora economies, where ethnic groups live away from home. They provide potentials for economic and political collaboration.<sup>5</sup> This is an especially important finding for Europe, as this continent will face broad-based population decline in many countries not just in the future but already now. Given that, it is a virtue, not some kind of horror prospect, that a much higher level of permanent and circular migration is likely to occur.<sup>6</sup> This is especially true because there usually is a quite remarkable form of self-selection if the labour market is allowed to work as a filter: generally speaking, people who migrate guided by economic conditions are dynamic and eager to work.

### The global context

With the inescapable progress of globalization, and in particular given the advances in human mobility, labour markets are bound to become more integrated. The impending demographic disruptions will set in with full force in the coming years in many countries. Climate change, natural disasters and the rise of the BIC countries (Brazil, India and China) will pose additional labour market challenges. Ethnic diversity will continue to rise in importance, as both an opportunity and a threat – as recent events in Ukraine and elsewhere show. The rise of resources available to the developing world and the strong increase in human capital will generate more opportunities for global mobility.

1 Klaus F. Zimmermann is Director of Institut zur Zukunft der Arbeit (IZA, Institute for the Study of Labor) and Full Professor of Economics at Bonn University.

2 This is a substantially revised version of IZA Policy Paper No. 69, which was based on the acceptance speech for the EIB Prize 2013 of the European Investment Bank (Outstanding Contribution Award). A shorter version has been posted online by the European Investment Bank as “The Mobility Challenge for Growth and Integration in Europe” in: *European Debates*, No. 4, May 2014. The author of this article wishes to thank Amelie Constant, Annabelle Krause, Olga Nottmeyer and Ulf Rinne for helpful comments and suggestions on earlier drafts.

3 The text is available online at: [www.iza.org/working\\_without\\_borders/index](http://www.iza.org/working_without_borders/index).

4 See, for example, Constant and Zimmermann (2013), Zimmermann (1994), Zimmermann (1995), Zimmermann (2005), and Zimmermann (2009). See also the reviews in the *IZA World of Labor* project by Constant (2014) and Peri (2014). An overview about this exciting project is given in Textbox 2.

5 See Plaza (2013).

6 The economic, political and social benefits of circular migration are outlined in Zimmermann (2014a).



All of these factors will eventually require a global reallocation of resources. This will force international and domestic labour markets to undertake major adjustments. The strong demand for skilled workers – along with the fight against extreme economic inequality, the creation of “good” jobs, as well as the increased employment of specific groups (such as the young, older, female, low-skilled and ethnic minority workers) – will need scientific monitoring and evaluation. This is the only way to make sure at the political, economic and social levels that the necessary adjustment processes and labour market programmes can be initiated in due time.

That is the key reason why migration economics is a fast-growing and exciting research area with very significant and rising policy relevance. The following discussion highlights key insights and recent findings from this ever more important field of research and policy advice.

Free trade and open labour markets are determinants of economic welfare. In his legendary 1981 book, US population economist Julian Simon claimed that humans, and thus human capital, are – in his words – “the ultimate resource.”<sup>7</sup> He was also a strong proponent of open and free labour markets. While Simon died much too young in 1998, his vision is still very much alive. Indeed, in this age of information and knowledge capitalism, human capital has become the key driver of economic growth – and it can be optimized globally through migration if it is well-conceptualized and well-managed.

In a recent article, John Kennan uses a simple static model of migration costs to show that the net gains from lifting mobility restrictions around the world would be enormous.<sup>8</sup> China’s strong role in the global market as a magnet for human capital will soon challenge the position of the United States, leaving it to Europe to strengthen its strategy in accessing the “ultimate resource” so as not to fall behind in the race of nations. This is the finding of another recent study.<sup>9</sup> This article stimulates the debate on the optimal use of human capital – and explores some surprising horizons of research. It also suggests that the recently started negotiations about a transatlantic economic zone should not stop with free trade, but involve also labour mobility.

The public debate on European labour markets has been particularly topical in view of the recent elections to the European Parliament. The wide dissatisfaction with the common European labour market plays a significant role in the rising euro skepticism of European citizens. The goal of a common European labour market has not been achieved so far. It is, however, the centrepiece of European integration, and free labour mobility is the most important element of it.

In a recent survey among the 700 Europe-based labour economists of the IZA research fellow network, about two thirds of the respondents agreed that a single European labour market is important for larger economic welfare (Figure 1).<sup>10</sup> More than 70 per cent think that the single labour market has not yet been achieved (Figure 2), and more than 80 per cent find that labour mobility within the EU to be by far the most essential factor for such a market (Figure 3). Labour experts, moreover, consider that a rapid recognition of qualifications, the harmonization of social security systems and the knowledge of several languages to be the three most important factors likely to lead to more labour mobility in Europe.

Christopher Pissarides and Ian McMaster, however, have cautioned against too – optimistic expectations arising from the vision of flexible labour markets.<sup>11</sup> The authors assessed “the extent to which regional disparities in economic prosperity are removed over time by the working of the ‘market system’.” Flexible wages and labour mobility could achieve “an equilibrium with only compensating differentials.” However, data for the United Kingdom lead them to conclude that while the market forces are at work, the processes of adjustment were very slow and “a regional policy that moved jobs to depressed areas – in contrast to relying on the movement of people to jobs – could save society considerable adjustment costs.” The challenge outlined in this article has inspired research aimed at understanding the determinants of labour market forces and appropriate policy measures in a European context.

7 See Simon (1981).

8 See Kennan (2013).

9 See Constant et al. (2013).

10 See Krause et al. (2014) for more details on the survey design and results.

11 See Pissarides and McMaster (1990).

### The beneficial effects of migration

Everybody is aware that labour mobility is desirable because, in economic terms, it contributes to an optimal allocation of resources – and thus plays a crucial role in generating higher output and welfare. Such mobility ensures a quick adjustment of labour markets, especially at the regional level. Migrants need to have and maintain different talents and abilities if they are to increase their host economy's growth potential. The societal fetish for assimilation and the “melting pot” metaphor are both misleading concepts.

It is, therefore, vital to realize that it is not cultural assimilation but cultural integration that is good in an economic context. One may ask whether that is not just a semantic difference, but this is not the case. “Cultural integration” refers to a much more dynamic blending of the identities of migrants, both of the home country and the host country. In a globalized world, such an active blending is bound to increase human linkages – and hence economic opportunities. In contrast, the old standby of “assimilation” captures a far more passive way of combining cultures – primarily by just focusing on blending in.

The key to it all is to focus on the migration of skilled people. This not only fosters economic efficiency, but also creates additional jobs for the unskilled, as well as what one may call the “differently skilled.” It is also good at promoting more equality, as shown by research which finds no negative trade-off between efficiency and equality.<sup>12</sup> Empirical evidence suggests that migrants typically neither take jobs away from local workers nor depress wages, and labour migrants do not typically come to take up welfare benefits.<sup>13</sup> However, social tensions between locals and foreigners may arise if sufficient integration opportunities are not available – or if integration efforts fail.

This argumentation points not only to the particular importance of future research in this area, but also to two further requirements. First, scientists need to make research directly policy-relevant. Second, policymakers should consider researchers as active partners in helping to manage the future – and not some kind of fig leaf or clean-up brigade after policymaking has resulted in a near-complete mess.

### The challenge of labour immobility

Labour inflexibility has been seen in the last few decades as the major determinant of the European employment crisis and the persistent slump of economic growth in Europe. That is why an increase in the geographic mobility of labour has been suggested as a strong instrument to foster faster economic adjustment and growth. It is therefore not too much labour migration, but too little mobility of workers that has been the core of the European migration challenge.<sup>14</sup> Labour mobility between and within countries can be beneficial when employed in a balanced way, but both migration across regions within a country and migration between countries within Europe have been on the decline in some periods over the last decades. Interregional migration has played a much smaller role in adjustment in Europe than in the United States, where it has been an important component of the relative success of the American economy for many years.<sup>15</sup> It is only recently that Europe has become more flexible, while the United States' labour market became less flexible.<sup>16</sup>

Despite these facts and findings, migration remains a controversial and challenging issue in our globalized world. An estimated 3 per cent of the world's population is currently considered to be international migrants. While an exhaustive discussion of the issue is beyond the scope of this article, it should be stressed that the world is the flexibility reserve of Europe – but only in a very limited sense. All developed economies face a strong and increasing excess demand for skilled labour. This is brought about by technological change, population ageing and, in the case of Europe, by a substantial decline in the future native European workforce.<sup>17</sup> These upcoming needs clearly cannot be satisfied sufficiently by the local labour force or by the educational system in individual countries.

Europe as a whole is more and more drawn into a competition to provide the institutional settings for its companies to attract international skilled labour to fill the gaps. However, unlike traditional immigration countries such as the United States, Canada or Australia, Europe has no standing on the international

12 See Kahanec and Zimmermann (2009a) and Kahanec and Zimmermann (forthcoming, 2015).

13 See Giulietti and Wahba (2013).

14 See Zimmermann (1995).

15 See Bonin et al. (2008).

16 See Jauer et al. (2014).

17 See Constant and Tien (2011) for the case of Germany.

labour market for highly skilled people. Concepts like migration, return migration, onward migration and circular migration are the new challenges and phenomena that Europe will rapidly need to learn to deal with this phase of the internationalization of the labour market.<sup>18</sup>

### Causes of regional immobility in Europe

Research on behalf of the European Commission looked into the causes of labour immobility in Europe.<sup>19</sup> The study found that the single largest cause of the lack of mobility in Europe is a lack of language skills. Other major causes are rising female labour market participation and less mobile double-income households; an increase in the homeownership rate; still-existing barriers to the transferability of social security entitlements; insufficient recognition of formal qualifications; insufficient transparency of the European job market and online search engines; and persistent long-term unemployment, which leads to increased relevance of social networks for the individual and cultural barriers.

The study moreover identified a low European annual interstate mobility (1%) in comparison with the United States (3%) and Canada (2%). The following policies to minimize labour market frictions at the national and the transnational levels were suggested:

1. Strengthening the institutional preconditions of mobility on the labour market;
2. Developing mobility-friendly educational policies;
3. Creating effective information and social networks;
4. Easing mobility barriers stemming from the diversity of national social protection and qualification systems; and
5. Extending the knowledge base and evaluating mobility-related policies.

Low European regional mobility was considered to be a major challenge when the euro was created. Clear and effective rules to ensure fiscal stability and sufficient labour flexibility within a unified European labour market would be necessary to make the euro a success for growth and welfare. This should be

very clear by now as the lack of fiscal stability and insufficient labour mobility are important factors behind the euro crisis.

### New freedom of movement for Eastern Europe

Early on in the process of EU Enlargement towards Eastern Europe, a number of research articles have studied the expected size of migration and the impact on natives, migrants and the uses of welfare systems. These studies found that the labour market effects on the natives were negligible. Another volume of research papers will soon be published with recent confirmations of these findings.<sup>20</sup> In this context, migration from the Eastern Partnership Countries to the European Union has also been studied recently.<sup>21</sup>

Germany finally opened its labour market only on 1 May 2011 to workers from those Eastern European countries that had joined the EU back in 2004. After this far too long transition phase, full freedom of movement has reached Germany at last. At the time, the debate in the media predicted another emigration wave of Poles to the West. But as many migration researchers had expected, the expected large emigration did not occur. On 1 January 2014, many European countries finally opened up their labour markets for Romania and Bulgaria. At that time, the complaints about already perceived large losses of highly skilled people were dominant.

Eastern Europeans actually did a big favor for Europe at large. They increased the number of circular labour migrants who were really looking for work – and not for welfare. These motivated people helped make European labour markets more flexible. With the benefit of hindsight, we now know that Germany's policymakers have done their country no favor with their fears of overburdening the German labour market during the transition period of EU Enlargement. Highly skilled workers, who are urgently needed in many sectors of the German economy, voted with their feet and instead moved to countries such as the United Kingdom and Ireland. The economic message is clear: There are unassailable benefits to opening up one's labour market as early as possible for skilled labour.<sup>22</sup>

18 See Constant et al. (2013).

19 See Bonin et al. (2008).

20 See Eichhorst et al. (2011), Elsner and Zimmermann (forthcoming, 2015), Kahanec (2013), Kahanec and Zimmermann (2009b), Kahanec and Zimmermann (2010), Kahanec and Zimmermann (forthcoming, 2015), and Zaiceva and Zimmermann (forthcoming, 2015).

21 See Barbone et al. (2013) and Kahanec et al. (2013).

22 See Kahanec (2012).

Meanwhile, having lost out on the dynamic end of the market due to short-sightedness, the German Government had to contend with plenty of older and low-skilled workers from Eastern Europe. They still continued to migrate to Germany through other channels such as illegal migration or self-employment. Germany's closed-door policy pursued since 2004 therefore produced a double negative effect. Fears of Eastern European workers flooding the labour markets of Germany and other Western neighbors were completely unsubstantiated. Meanwhile, the labour from Eastern Europe with a high productivity potential had long moved to other attractive regions of the world. That is like scoring not just one, but two own goals in a football match.

Traditionally, in comparison with immigration countries such as the United States or Canada, Europe attracts a much larger share of unskilled workers, while a larger share of skilled migrants migrate to those countries. Nevertheless, skilled and unskilled migrants are more present in countries with lower unemployment and better economic conditions, in part due to the attractive economic conditions, and also because they contribute to it.<sup>23</sup> The existing evidence suggests the potential for competition with natives, but hard evidence for this is rare. However, new migrants are much more likely to compete more seriously with low-skilled migrants from outside Europe. A recent example is Polish–German migration in the transition period to free labour mobility during EU Enlargement, where a larger share of unskilled Polish workers generated labour market pressures, not for native Germans but for non-EU immigrants.<sup>24</sup>

### Immigrants in the welfare hammock

Some myths never die. For example, the myth about migrants who only come to use the welfare State as a “hammock.” This stereotype persists despite numerous studies to the contrary. The key finding of two recent contributions to this debate is that the generosity of welfare benefits has no substantial impact on migration in the EU.<sup>25</sup> The studies, which included the experience of 19 European countries between 1993 and 2008, addressed the question of whether national differences in unemployment benefits influenced individual decisions to migrate.

The result could not be clearer: such benefits had no impact whatsoever on intra-EU migration – the correlation was zero. Instead, the study showed that the skill level among EU labour migrants is remarkably high. While in some cases migrants are more likely to be unemployed than natives, this is rather due to ill-designed immigration and integration policies than to generous public benefits.

Recent studies also show that taxes and social security contributions paid by foreigners in Germany exceed per capita expenditure on welfare benefits for the same group by about EUR 2,000 annually.<sup>26</sup> One of the main reasons is the favourable age structure of immigrants, who tend to be young. This is also why we should offer job prospects to skilled young people from other European countries such as Greece, Portugal and Spain, which currently suffer from youth unemployment. The only thing that ought to matter is their readiness to fill the labour shortages that many German employers are experiencing. After all, that is what an advanced, globally integrated economy with a declining population ought to be doing – not to mention that empirical evidence also shows that the employment of each highly skilled immigrant creates up to three additional jobs in low-skill sectors, such as household services.<sup>27</sup>

Why then do these objective facts still generate such emotionally charged opposition? What causes those strong sentiments against immigration, even though the economic benefits of (properly controlled) immigration are obvious? As researchers have shown, the widespread resentment is not just about the fear of losing one's job to a foreigner. It is also about a deeper-seated fear of negative changes in one's cultural and social environment. Whether these worries are real or imagined does not really matter: if we fail to address these concerns adequately, the gap in the minds will widen – up to a point where the term “integration” might evoke a negative connotation.

### Europe's refugee tragedy<sup>28</sup>

In a bold statement before the European Parliament, the European Commission's new President Jean-Claude Juncker stressed that European core values

23 See Zimmermann (1995, 2005).

24 See Brenke et al. (2009).

25 See Barrett et al. (2012) and Giulietti et al. (2013).

26 See Bonin (2006).

27 See Hinte et al. (2012).

28 This section is based on Zimmermann (2014a).



must also be respected when it comes to asylum policy. His words are remarkable in light of the embarrassing performance that Europe has shown on this issue so far. The lack of a coherent refugee policy is dramatically reflected in over 20,000 deaths at the EU's external borders since the early 1990s, as well as in the living conditions of some 1.5 million displaced people who have sought asylum in the EU over the past five years. The result is not only a humanitarian, but also an economic disaster.

The newly appointed EU migration commissioner will be in charge of refugee policy, which was previously divided between five different DGs. While new heads, consolidated responsibilities and strong speeches do not necessarily indicate a genuine change in policy, now is the chance to finally establish a European migration strategy that is no longer based on defence and national self-interest, but on the principle of shared responsibility.

According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the number of refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons worldwide has exceeded 50 million – and is expected to rise further. Many of those who come from countries bordering the Mediterranean are bound for Europe.

Europe certainly cannot absorb all of them. To meet this challenge, the EU needs a fundamentally new way of thinking. The current practice has neither kept people from embarking on a dangerous journey towards Europe, nor has it achieved a fair and appropriate distribution of refugees within the EU.

The first step must be to agree on a transparent quota system guaranteeing a balanced distribution of asylum-seekers across EU member countries. Countries like Germany and Sweden have accepted above-average numbers of asylum applications over the past years, while France and the United Kingdom have been rather reluctant. The definition of a “fair share” must account for the economic strength of each country.

Another aspect is becoming increasingly important: many of those who come to Europe for humanitarian reasons are endowed with valuable “human capital.” They have good skills and professional qualifications, and – as Germany's President Joachim Gauck has put it – they are “highly mobile, flexible, multilingual, motivated and willing to take risks.” Until recently,

however, they have been effectively barred from seeking employment. In line with what many experts have long demanded, Germany has now eased the restrictions on labour market access for refugees. This gives them a chance to earn their own living, develop their professional skills further and achieve social integration. The next logical step is to allow qualified refugees to enter into the regular immigration process.

The new EU Commissioner for Migration and Home Affairs, Dimitris Avramopoulos, is well advised to further develop the EU Blue Card Directive along these lines. After all, his declared goal is to “help Europe address skills shortages and attract the talents it needs.”

In tandem with these initiatives, development partnerships for the labour markets of the sending regions are also needed to create medium-term prospects for refugees in their home countries. Many of them wish to go back home someday.

### Europe's lost generation

There is no bigger challenge for labour economics and society at large than the profound economic crisis in Europe, which has led to a situation where more than 7 million young people under the age of 25 in the EU are now NEET (not in employment, education or training).<sup>29</sup> This is more than just a socially explosive issue. If the young generation turns away in despair from the “European idea,” the entire European project would be at risk of disintegration. Against this background, Europe's top policymakers have rightfully put this issue at the top of their agenda. However, many of the hastily proposed remedies are ill-suited to bring about sustainable solutions. The Youth Guarantee scheme, which seeks to provide all young people under the age of 25 with a job or training opportunity within four months after registering as unemployed, is certainly a well-intended idea. However, it would be an illusion to believe that this guarantee will amount to much more than a mere extension of the present dead-end strategy. New jobs are not created at the push of a button, nor by emergency action programmes passed during political summits. The billions of dollars allocated by EU leaders to youth employment initiatives will result in great disappointment – if policymakers fail to tackle the roots of the crisis.

29 See Cahuc et al. (2013).

After all, we should never forget that Europe's high level of youth unemployment is not a result of the crisis: the level of youth unemployment has risen at the same pace as that of overall unemployment. Hence, the dramatic scope of the issue is a result of the economic crisis in general, paired with the continued lack of structural reforms aimed at improving the labour market situation of the young.

What Europe needs is a common labour market that is characterized by mobility, flexibility and innovative entrepreneurship. These are precisely the areas in which the European Commission lacks the power to force Member States to implement fundamental reforms – all the more importantly must, each individual country be encouraged to do its homework when it comes to solving country-specific problems. France, for example, has created enormous labour market entry barriers for unemployed youth by setting high minimum wages and maintaining strict employment protection. Spain, on the other hand, has lots of university students in the humanities but very few vocational trainees. In Greece, medium-sized enterprises that are willing and able to train young workers are practically non-existent.

Youth all across Europe need solid, practice-oriented training. Some countries like Austria, Germany and the Netherlands rely on a successful dual vocational training system, combining the attendance of vocational schools with hands-on experience in a firm.<sup>30</sup> On the downside, as German firms regularly complain, the much-appraised dual model is also quite costly. This is why the vast amount of money poured into youth employment initiatives should be used primarily to promote investment among Southern European firms which, in turn, agree to create training positions. At the same time, policymakers should provide further incentives to enhance cross-border mobility. Even if few young people actually choose to move to another EU country, those who do, and succeed in the labour market, will be the perfect proof that the "European idea" does offer great opportunities after all – also, and particularly, during the current crisis.

### Looking ahead: Opportunities for enhanced mobility

For all the progress that has been made in Europe in past decades, intra-European labour mobility still leaves much to be desired. In this sense, the current grave economic crisis in countries such as Greece, Portugal and Spain offers a blessing in disguise. People living there, especially younger professionals and skilled workers, do certainly have an incentive to make a move now. Does that imbalance those societies? Do we have to worry in particular about a brain drain that sucks these countries dry of skilled people and thus makes an economic recovery harder to achieve?

Based on arguments discussed in this article, there are three main reasons not to worry. First, people who are moving to other countries such as Germany hail, in most cases, from the ranks of the unemployed. Hence, supply and demand are no longer balanced, not only on a national basis but also on a Europe-wide one. That is a change definitely to be welcomed. Second, people who leave their country of birth are by no means gone forever. In fact, the contemporary trend of migration, properly understood, is best thought of as "circular migration," implying onward or return migration.<sup>31</sup> For example, most of the proverbial Polish plumbers or young Polish professionals who worked in Ireland during that country's boom times never intended to emigrate for good. In fact, many flew in on discount airlines for certain periods and, when not at work or on a project, also continued to live back home. In other words, these people never really left and essentially lived in two countries.

In a world with many fluid and affordable transportation options, ever more people want to stay connected to their place of birth. They do not just want to go back for visits every five or ten years.

The difference from a few decades ago is that now migrants can remain rooted in their place of birth. This is the third main reason for not being over-concerned by the threat of a brain drain: the skills, job experience and contacts gained by migrants in their overseas deployment effectively travel back home or elsewhere with them.

30 See Eichhorst et al. (2012).

31 See Zimmermann (2014).

In short, the world is very different now. If more European, and indeed global, integration is wanted, then it is not just unavoidable but also desirable that many more people from different nations populate Europe. It therefore makes sense – both from an economic point of view and in recognition of living in an increasingly globalized world – to continue on the path of integration, which yields positive results. And such moves towards integration always challenge to do better, to improve and never to rest on what by necessity are at best (temporary) laurels. In short, there is no alternative for any dynamic, growth- and future-oriented economy than to participate actively in developing the EU, including the further development of the euro, into a factor of stability in international financial markets. This critically means that the eurozone also includes the eastern part of Europe, provided that the Member States fulfill the inclusion criteria. ■

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### TEXTBOX 1: Working Without Borders – a Manifesto for Europe's Future\*

The free movement of EU citizens and workers within the European Union is one of the cornerstones of European integration. It is enshrined in the European Treaties. In a free and integrated Europe, there is no place for first- and second-class citizens. And yet, individual Member States and interest groups are currently contemplating to turn back the clock and to restrict citizens' rights to accept jobs wherever they like within the EU.

Even if supported only by a minority within our single European market, we view this development with growing concern. The intent to restrict the free movement of labor as a fundamental right runs against Europeans' well-understood interests for a dynamic and prosperous economy. The calls for restricting this freedom are especially poisonous in the context of the ongoing political debate, aimed as they are to influence the results of the 2014 elections for the European Parliament. A genuine European labor market – one without borders – is also a prerequisite for a functioning single market economy and the stability of the Euro. Without it, growth prospects are hampered – as is any hope for a Europe which manages to balance the laws of supply and demand.

Actively embracing the unrestricted movement of labor has therefore many benefits. Beyond installing a new economic dynamism in the European Union, and helping to overcome serious economic imbalances among EU Member States, it also dampens adverse demographic developments. As a matter of fact, free labor mobility does not end in any welfare seeking migration but serves as a means to better allocate shrinking human capital capacities within the EU.

In short, the free movement of labor can lift all boats, promote economic growth and advance the competitiveness of our countries. This is not the time to turn back the clock. Instead, the moment has come to tackle all existing obstacles that stand in the way of a truly free and integrated European labor market. Only when we make that goal a reality will the core promise of the European Union – to continuously raise the standards of living of all of our citizens, wherever they live – not ring hollow.

To fulfill our commitment, we must strive to take a number of specific measures:

- First, we need to adjust our tax and social security laws where needed – and better coordinate occupational and private pension systems.
- Second, we need to introduce an effective Europe-wide job placement system, so that workers can find opportunities in sometimes far-away places.

- Third, such a system also requires that we have transparent and effective rules to determine the benefits which job seekers are entitled to while looking for work in another EU country.
- Fourth, we must enhance Europe-wide mobility by designing affordable language and relocation services. One critical way to encourage workers to take a chance outside their home country is to enhance exchange programs for trainees and workers, and further boost the successful models of international student exchange.
- Fifth, we must agree on standards that allow the EU-wide recognition of professional qualifications and degrees, so that those which such recognized degrees can seek work wherever they choose to.
- Sixth, we must open our minds to a European Union where even public-sector jobs in any Member State may be filled by qualified candidates from another EU State.
- And seventh, we must do a better and more convincing job about informing EU citizens of the advantages of working abroad and receiving labor migrants at home.

It is, therefore, that we call for an EU Charter that serves as a joint commitment to “Working Without Borders”.

To move the agenda forward decisively and irrevocably, we are ready to support an EU-wide action committee composed of policymakers, representatives from the private sector and academia. We need joint forces to expand the European dream, rather than narrow it down well before it has reached its full potential.

**Signed by leading European labor economists:**

- Tito Boeri, Bocconi University, Milan, Italy
- Pierre Cahuc, CREST-ENSAE, Paris, France
- Werner Eichhorst, IZA, Bonn, Germany
- Juan F. Jimeno, Bank of Spain, Madrid, Spain
- Pawel Kaczmarczyk, Warsaw University, Warsaw, Poland
- Martin Kahanec, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary
- Jo Ritzen, Maastricht University, The Netherlands
- Monica Roman, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania
- Nina Smith, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark
- Alan Winters, University of Sussex, Brighton, United Kingdom
- Klaus F. Zimmermann, IZA and Bonn University, Germany

\* This text is available online at: [www.iza.org/working\\_without\\_borders/index](http://www.iza.org/working_without_borders/index).

## TEXTBOX 2: IZA World of Labor

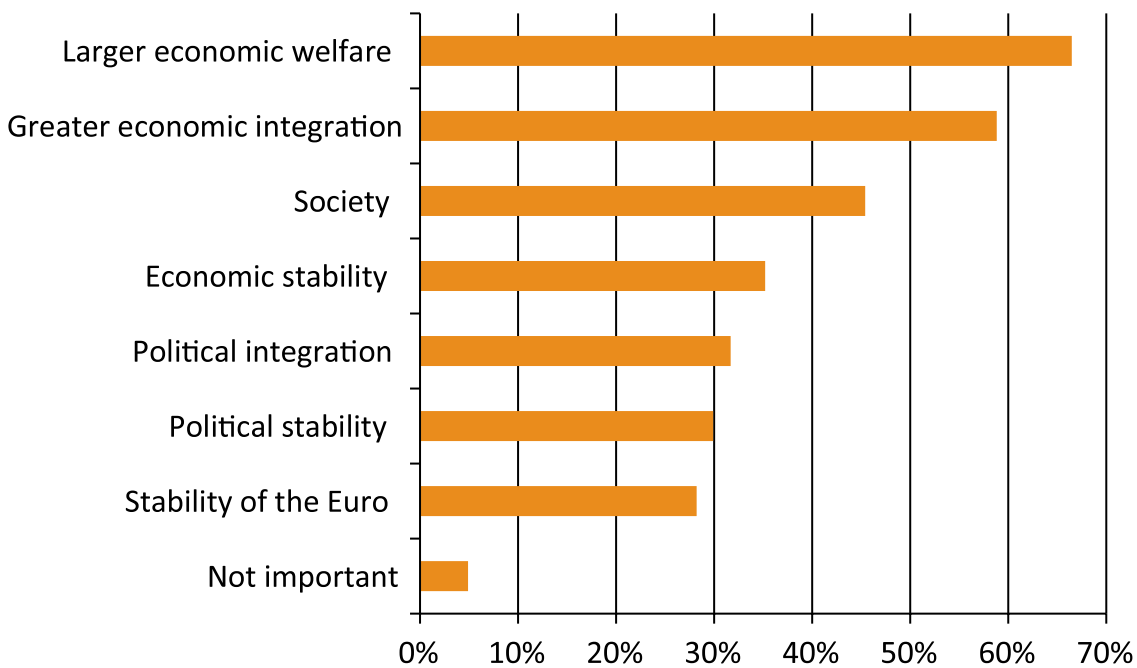
*IZA World of Labor* is a new, freely available information resource aimed at decision-makers interested in labor market economics worldwide ([wol.iza.org](http://wol.iza.org)). It presents research results in a highly topical style to give a comprehensive and concise overview to support informed decision making. *IZA World of Labor* is easily accessible, convenient to read, independent and fact-based. Written by well-known labor economists worldwide, articles are peer-reviewed to guarantee high research standards, quality and reliability. Each contribution provides a complete and unbiased list of arguments based on existing empirical evidence in a clear and digestible format.

The topics covered as part of *IZA World of Labor* range from migration, development, and transition and emerging economies to program evaluation, labor market institutions, and demography, family and gender. It addresses questions related to behavioral and personnel economics, environment, education, and data and methods.

The subject area of migration is headed by Klaus F. Zimmermann (Director of IZA) and deals with issues of national and international mobility, and what migration means for natives and migrants, for sending and receiving countries. Articles in this area feature highly relevant topics such as impacts on wages and employment, brain drain, repeated migration and integration issues. Important contributions include the following articles:

- Do immigrant workers depress the wages of native workers? (Giovanni Peri)
- Do migrants take the jobs of native workers? (Amelie F. Constant)
- The brain drain from developing countries (Frederic Docquier)
- Roma integration in European labor markets (Martin Kahanec)
- Circular migration (Klaus F. Zimmermann)
- Post-enlargement emigration and new EU members' labor markets (Anzelika Zaiceva)

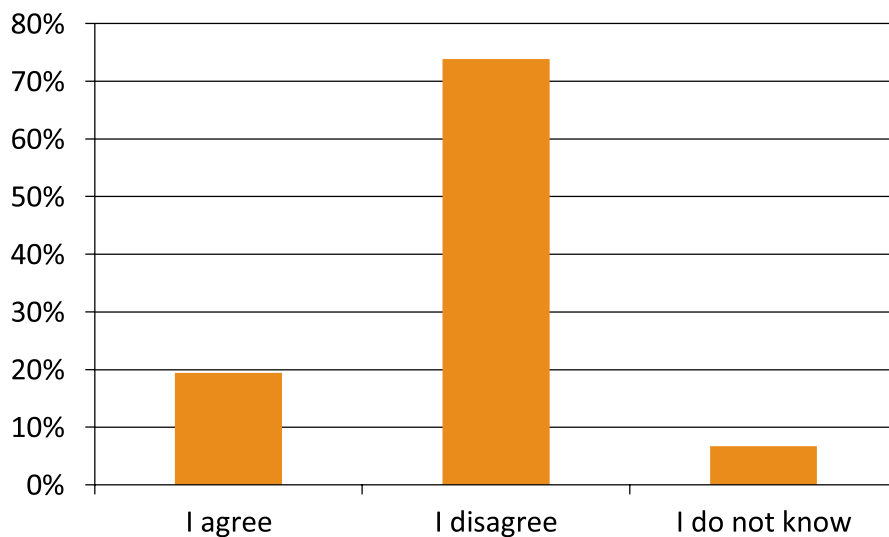
**FIGURE 1: A single European labour market is important for . . .**



Source: IZA Expert Opinion Survey, 2014.

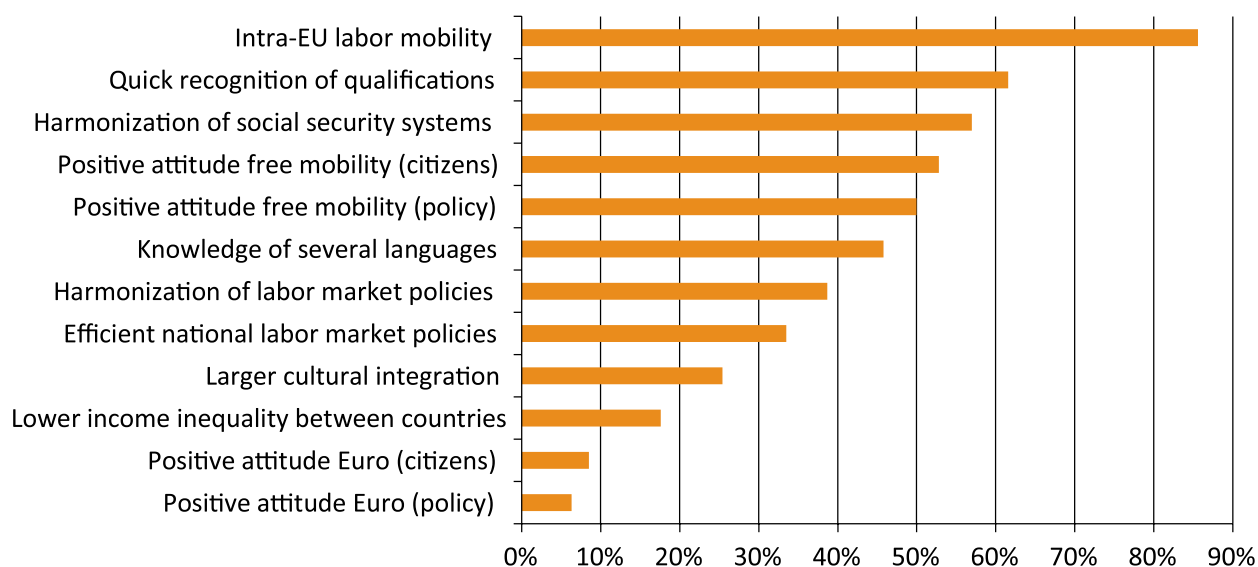
Note: Number of observations: 284 (14 observations correspond to “I don’t know” and “Other, please specify”); multiple responses were possible.

**FIGURE 2: The Single European Labour Market is largely achieved**



Source: IZA Expert Opinion Survey, 2014.

Note: Number of observations: 284.

**FIGURE 3: Essential factors for a single European labour market**

Source: IZA Expert Opinion Survey, 2014.

Note: Number of observations: 284 (19 observations correspond to "Other, please specify"); multiple responses were possible.

**"If more European, and indeed global, integration is wanted, then it is not just unavoidable but also desirable that many more people from different nations populate Europe. It therefore makes sense . . . to continue on the path of integration, which yields positive results."**





## Key provisions and implications of the new legislation on forced marriage within migrant communities in the United Kingdom

Richard Lewis<sup>1</sup>

In the twenty-first century, we tend to think of arranged marriages as unique to Asia and particularly the Indian subcontinent. However, the practice was common in Europe right up to the nineteenth century and is still a custom in aristocratic families, especially royal families. Nor should it be dismissed as “medieval”. Endogamous marriages are frequently more stable than “love marriages”. They reinforce cultural norms and identities in minority and especially immigrant communities. The sharing of cultural norms has a binding effect on couples and avoids conflict within the couple.

However, endogamous marriages also have the negative effect of preventing immigrant integration into the host society. This is very well illustrated in Monica Ali’s 2003 novel *Brick Lane*, where the heroine is trapped in a marriage with an older man. She is unable to speak English and therefore condemned to lead her life exclusively in the Bangladeshi community of east London. She, like many others, is obliged to follow the cultural norms of her group whether she wishes to or not. This particularly affects women in immigrant groups who consider that not following the cultural norms of social behaviour will bring disgrace to their families. Gresch and Sauer (2012) write that the bodies of Muslim women become a battlefield of conflicts over values and identity politics. In terms of prospective marriage partners, this conflict between immigrant community cultural norms and host society norms reaches a culminating point. This is exacerbated by maintaining the myth that immigrants are only in the host country temporarily and to make enough money to live comfortably in their countries of origin. In other words, young people should not expect to live indefinitely abroad and must follow cultural customs of origin in order to prepare them for eventual return.

However, it is clear that major problems arise when such customs clash severely with the norms of the

host society. While arranged marriages with the consent of the couple are acceptable and sometimes even desirable, the imposition of a partner is clearly not. Tomalin (2014) cites sources for a widespread fallacy that all arranged marriages are forced marriages and that this notion is stirred up in British media. It is, however, true that moral pressure can be exercised, accompanied by threats to cut the person off from family resources and inheritance, threats of quasi-imprisonment and/or confiscation of a passport, physical violence, abduction and, in extremis, so-called honour killing. The more the pressure, the less the practice is acceptable.

Grillo (2011) indicates that “families are moral orders in which reciprocal obligations are central. This moral economy of rights and duties . . . changes as there are shifts in personal circumstances or because changes are happening in the wider society. One source of change, migration, puts a great strain on the moral order, obliging all sides to interpret or reinterpret beliefs and practices.” Marriage, says Grillo “constitutes a site where a clash of cultures (presumed or real) is played out.”

However, in liberal Western democracies, the claim that family tradition or culture, or indeed religion, trump democratic values has been roundly rejected. These values are based on widely accepted norms. There are many examples of how the right to choose freely a marriage partner are written into human rights law. Article 16(2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, states that “marriage shall be entered into with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.” This is reiterated in the UN Convention on Consent to Marriage and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. None of the world’s major religions make any claim to control marriage partners although there is strong social pressure to marry within the faith and, in the case of Muslims, for a non-Muslim partner to convert to Islam.

Grillo (2011) cites two contrasting ethnic groups in the United Kingdom. These are Caribbean families where there appears to be “too little family” (absent fathers, little parental control, poor educational outcomes) and Asian families where “there is too much family”

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(pushing children to do well at school, patriarchal control, strong family ties). These descriptions are stereotypes, but there is evidence for the fact that Asian families in Britain make considerable efforts to control whom their children marry. This applies mainly to girls, but boys are also unwilling partners to arranged or forced marriage (Samad, 2010).

Some shocking cases of forced marriage, abductions, honour killings, and other abuse of girls and young women have come to light in the latter years of the last century largely as a result of activist groups working with government authorities. The tragic case of Rukhsana Naz, a 19-year-old Asian woman, who was murdered by her brother while her mother held her down, sparked off a furor in 1998. As a result, the United Kingdom Home Office established a working group to examine and report on forced marriage. The Southall Black Sisters (SBS), named after a South Asian community in west London, along with a number of other groups and individuals, were invited to join.<sup>2</sup> Grass roots movements such as SBS have been instrumental in defending the rights of women and not just regarding forced marriage. In 2003, the Female Genital Mutilation Act came into force, criminalizing the practice not just in the United Kingdom but also in relation to persons that take girls abroad for such abuse.

As a result of lobbying by groups such as SBS, the British Government set up a Forced Marriage Working Group in 1999 to assess the scale of the problem. The resulting report led to a number of actions by government departments, notably the establishment of the Forced Marriage Unit (a joint initiative of the Home Office and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office) to investigate forced marriage claims by the Home Office (Home Office, 2000). A Community Liaison Office was also established to deal with issues relating to individuals entering the United Kingdom or being abducted or lured to leave the country. In all these investigations, it was clear that the issue was more complex than originally thought and involved a considerable number of government departments, schools, health-care workers, local authority welfare and non-governmental bodies – all of which were consulted and included in the conclusions drawn. In addition to this, there was the added complexity of dealing with a highly personal and controversial

matter that goes to the heart of family life, to say nothing of the racial and religious overtones involved.

The investigations of the Home Office on the practice of forced marriage, or where considerable pressures were placed on young women, revealed that the practice was relatively widespread in the United Kingdom's Asian community and although not solely a South Asian issue, a majority of cases that come to light originate in that community. The Home Office reported in 2010 that some 1,600 cases of alleged forced marriage were reported to the Forced Marriage Unit in that year and that an increasing number of young women, and now young men, are coming forward to report attempted forced marriage.

In 2012, the Forced Marriage Unit gave advice in 1,485 cases. Thirteen per cent of the cases involved children below the age of 15; 22 per cent involved 16- to 17-year-olds; 30 per cent involved 18- to 21-year-olds; 19 per cent were cases involving 22- to 25-year-olds; 8 per cent involved 26- to 30-year-olds; and 8 per cent were forced marriages of over 31-year-olds. The oldest victim was 71 and the youngest was just two years old. Eighty-two per cent involved female victims, and 18 per cent were male. The Unit handled cases from 60 different countries, of which 47.1 per cent were from Pakistan (Forced Marriage Unit, 2012).

The consequences of forced marriage can be costly in societal terms both psychologically and materially (Home Office, 2000). Young people who are forced to marry, or think that they might be, are often withdrawn from education, thus blighting their chances of career and income. Self-harm or suicide incidents are not unknown (Hussain, Waheed and Hussain, 2006). The victims suffer physical or mental isolation, possibly due to the lack of local language skills and they find it difficult to disclose the situation to health professionals. Victims may find that they are not only trapped in a marriage to a person to whom they cannot relate but that the liaison is marked by physical or sexual violence. This can pass the trauma on to the children of the marriage whose emotional development is stunted and education affected. Some women feel that the only solution is to run away; those that do so live in fear of what might happen to their children or to themselves if they are hunted down by family members.

Some forced marriages involve family trickery of the most odious kind. Mothers will inform their daughters

<sup>2</sup> See [www.southallblackisters.org.uk/campaigns/forced-marriage-campaign/](http://www.southallblackisters.org.uk/campaigns/forced-marriage-campaign/).

that their grandmother in the country of origin is ill and it is their duty to undertake the visit, which will in any case be a holiday. When they arrive at their destination, the girls find that the real reason for the journey is to marry them off to a man they do not know and who is often very much older. This can happen to children who have not even reached the age of puberty. The girls are isolated without a passport or money in a country which they may never have previously visited, helpless to resist the pressures. When such marriages take place abroad, there are numerous legal consequences that ensue. Some forced marriages may be legally valid until annulled or a divorce has been obtained. The Home Office advises that government departments should not assume that a marriage is invalid because it was forced.

A case study cited in the Home Office leaflet for potential victims of forced marriage is illustrative<sup>3</sup>:

At the age of 15, Maya was pulled out of secondary school by her parents and kept at home. When she was 17, Maya's parents said that they were all going to Pakistan on a family holiday. Maya was excited, as she had not been on a family holiday before and she wanted to see her extended family. However, once there, Maya was forced to marry her first cousin, with threats that if she did not agree, she could not come home. After the marriage, Maya was left in Pakistan for five months, feeling completely betrayed by her parents.

Once back in the UK with her husband, Maya was not allowed to work and was kept isolated at home. She was not allowed to use the house telephone and her parents confiscated her mobile phone. However, one night she managed to get to the phone and called a friend. She asked him to contact the police, explain what was going on and say that she wanted to leave the house the next evening. The police arrived and escorted her to the police station.

Maya moved into a refuge run by an Asian women's project where she has rebuilt her life and gained a university qualification.

Faced with pressures from within and outside government, UK authorities have taken some important action. In 2008, the immigration rules were changed so that to obtain a visa in order to marry

in the United Kingdom, the minimum age of the applicant had to be 21. This was designed to avoid the worst kind of abuse of bringing minors into the country for marriage purposes (the minimum age for marriage normally being 16).

In 2007, the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act was passed in the United Kingdom. The new law made it possible for the courts to make an order for the purposes of protecting a person from being forced into a marriage or from any attempt to be forced into a marriage, or a person who has already been forced into a marriage. The Act emphasizes that "in deciding to exercise its powers . . . the court must have regard to all the circumstances including the need to secure the health, safety and well-being of the person to be protected and that in ascertaining that person's well-being, the court must, in particular, have such regard to the person's wishes and feelings (so far as they are reasonably ascertainable) as the court considers appropriate in the light of the person's age and understanding."

The 2007 Act defines *forced marriage* as when there is an absence of free and full consent and "being forced" includes coercion by threats or other psychological means. A protection order may contain such prohibition, restriction or requirements as the court considers appropriate for the purpose of the order and may include conduct outside England and Wales and apply to persons aiding, abetting, counselling, procuring, encouraging or assisting another person to force or attempt to force a person to enter into a marriage or conspiring to do so. The protection order may be issued on direct application to the court or in the course of other family (such as divorce) proceedings. Persons in breach of a protection order can be arrested, brought before the court and remanded for medical reports. If contempt of court is determined, then the offender can be sanctioned.

It has been recognized by the various agencies concerned, in particular for the protection of minors, that the law presents many problems of interpretation, as in this assessment by the London Borough of Hillingdon:

There is recognition that the Act brings with it a number of challenges; how to offer ongoing assessment and support for young women and men in an age group which lies on the boundaries between work in child protection and with vulnerable adults. . . .<sup>4</sup>

3 See [www.gov.uk/forced-marriage](http://www.gov.uk/forced-marriage).

4 See [www.hillingdon.gov.uk/media.jsp?mediaid=17442&filetype=pdf](http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/media.jsp?mediaid=17442&filetype=pdf).

The wording of the Act leaves much to the interpretation of the courts in spite of guidance papers issued by the Home Office and the willingness of local government and its agencies on the ground as well as non-governmental organizations involved in the protection of young persons to work closely together. In addition, as acknowledged by the UK Government (Home Office, 2011), there are inadequacies in ensuring compliance. However, the main difficulty lies in the fear of revenge tactics wreaked on the individual or agency involved in seeking the order in the first place. Lying as it does in the domain of family and personal relations, this form of legislation is difficult to enforce in a sensitive and effective manner.

After the passage of the 2007 Act, activist groups pressed for more coercive legislation based on criminal sanctions from the outset. This pressure, supported by Home Secretary Theresa May, persisted in spite of the other numerous criminal remedies relating to assault, kidnapping, and child protection being already available. There were counter-arguments that direct criminal sanctions could actually be unproductive and even contrary to the interest of women (Wilson, 2014). The first of these arguments is that children will be unlikely to act and would be traumatized by criminalizing their parents or relatives. They would also feel culpable even if action is taken by a third party.

Wilson (2014) adds that under the new legislation, the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act, which received the royal assent on 13 March 2014, “not only perpetrators but vulnerable members of a family who themselves face coercion are likely to be criminalized. In addition, breaching a forced marriage protection order will also now be criminalized despite the fact that experience in Scotland, which criminalized such breaches in January 2011, has led to a dramatic fall in women seeking redress. The Scottish experience also demonstrates that it can be impossibly difficult to prove coercion in court. . . .” What women appear to want is more effective support structures. The Ashiana network, a support group, notes that “the risk to women is significantly increased if they pursue legal redress and our experience is that women do not receive sufficient protection while going through the criminal justice system” (Wilson, 2014). Perhaps worst of all, the police are required to intervene in these cases and this can be interpreted as harassment of the South Asian community.

Others, including Secretary May, think that the 2014 Act will send a powerful message that forced marriage is simply unacceptable. Some non-governmental organizations termed the passage of the Act “a historic day and the right move”. The police generally support the new Act because for the first time there is a definition of what constitutes forced marriage.

The new legislation, aside from creating an offence for breach of a forced marriage protection order, enacts that:

1. A person commits an offence under the law of England and Wales if he or she—
  - a. uses violence, threats or any other form of coercion for the purpose of causing another person to enter into a marriage, and
  - b. believes, or ought reasonably to believe, that the conduct may cause the other person to enter into the marriage without full and free consent
2. A person commits an offence under the law of England and Wales if he or she—
  - a. practises any form of deception with the intention of causing another person to leave the United Kingdom, and
  - b. intends the other person to be subjected to conduct outside the United Kingdom that is an offence under subsection (1). . . .

A person convicted of an offence is liable on summary conviction (in a magistrate’s court) to a term of one year in prison or on indictment to five years imprisonment, or to a fine or both. Similar legislation was passed under Scottish law.

The UK Government has backed up the legislation with information campaigns involving local authorities, police services, the judiciary, independent advisers on domestic violence, women’s aid organizations, charities, secondary schools and airport officers. A domestic programme fund was also created to meet the demand for information and assistance.

There still remains the controversy whether the criminalization of forced marriage was the right move and will indeed relieve young people, especially women, of the burden of the anticipation and reality of conflict with the family. There must remain a doubt on that score. The passage of the 2014 Act has certainly been popular in political circles which support the



view that forced marriage under any circumstances is unacceptable in twenty-first-century Europe and that a defence of forced marriage under the banner of multiculturalism of this nature goes against the aim of immigrant integration. Only time will tell whether the new law works in practice and that will probably take several years to determine. In the meantime, the courts will have to wrestle with the circumstances and context surrounding what constitutes coercion and the frequently fine distinction between arranged and forced marriages. One can expect that the new law will clash with cultural norms in the South Asian and other communities. The police service will also have to ensure that family policing training is fine-tuned to deal with these sensitive issues.

The debate about the new Act is still creating an emotional response. The institution of marriage straddles an awkward place between what constitutes the private sphere of family life and the public sphere of protection afforded by society to individuals. Parliament has determined that forced marriage is sufficiently in the public sphere to warrant legislation. It seems likely that this controversial issue will rumble on both in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. ■

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**“The institution of marriage straddles an awkward place between what constitutes the private sphere of family life and the public sphere of protection afforded by society to individuals.”**



## Length of time spent in Ireland's Direct Provision accommodation system, the threat of deportation and the asylum-seeker's ability to think about voluntary return

Liam Coakley<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

In contrast to Ireland's integration strategies, and in spite of the country's very recent and short-lived emergence as an attractive immigrant destination, Irish immigration managerial structures are broadly effective, and are on a par with the equivalent structures operational in many other European contexts.

However, the command and control mechanisms governing the experiences of those who make a claim for asylum under the 1951 Convention have drawn much negative comment.

Ireland's Dispersal and Direct Provision system of accommodation for asylum-seekers is particularly criticized, most especially on foot of its overly restrictive nature. All migrants who come to Ireland in search of protection must submit themselves to this system. While the numbers of asylum-seekers coming to Ireland have declined significantly since the high point reached in 2002, approximately 4,350 people are still housed in this network of asylum-seeker accommodation centres at the end of 2014,<sup>2</sup> many of whom have been residents in the system for many years.

Experiences of life in Direct Provision can vary. Standards of accommodation and local managerial specificities are often highly place-specific but there is, by now, a wealth of information on the difficulties migrants face in these residential settings. Nevertheless, and despite significant pressure from civil society, the current Irish Government remains committed to maintaining this system and this accommodation pattern is likely to continue to structure the lives of many asylum-seekers in Ireland, at least for the foreseeable future.

For some, the period of their lives spent in Direct Provision will end in success and they will be granted the right to live and work in Ireland. For the majority, however, their application for refugee status will end in failure. Success rates among those seeking refugee status in Ireland are very low. Ireland's final sanction against these "failed" asylum-seekers is deportation. Historically, Ireland has not deported very significant numbers of immigrants. Only 298 failed asylum-seekers were deported to their countries of origin in 2012, with a further 120 or so being deported to their countries of origin on the basis of EU removal orders or to another EU State under the Dublin II regulation.<sup>3</sup>

However, as with Direct Provision, this process is seen to be essential to the continued integrity of Ireland's immigration system and is likely to remain in place. Indeed, as recently as 2 January 2013, Alan Shatter, Ireland's Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence, called for an increased emphasis to be placed on the effective enforcement of deportation orders in 2013.

In this way, an often extended period of residence, in what is generally recognized to be a difficult and constrained residential setting, conditions many asylum-seekers' experiences in Ireland and most accept the likelihood of forced repatriation to their countries of origin in the event of their case for protection being adjudged insufficient under the terms of the 1951 Convention. The Irish Government speaks softly but carries a big stick. Asylum-seekers are housed, in what can often seem to be an indefinite manner, due legal process is extended to all, but life is difficult while their case is being assessed, and the threat of deportation structures most of their interactions with the migration management infrastructures in place in the country.

This article draws on data from a recent research project conducted among asylum-seekers living in 14 of Ireland's Direct Provision accommodation centres. This research was commissioned by the International Organization for Migration mission to Ireland (IOM

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2 See [www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/Immigration%20in%20Ireland%20-%202012%20in%20Review](http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/Immigration%20in%20Ireland%20-%202012%20in%20Review).

3 See [www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/Immigration%20in%20Ireland%20-%202012%20in%20Review](http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/Immigration%20in%20Ireland%20-%202012%20in%20Review).

Dublin) and was designed to explore how asylum-seekers who are currently residents in Ireland's Direct Provision system engage with the idea of assisted voluntary return to their countries of origin – an option offered to asylum-seekers who are currently residents in Ireland, as long as they are not already in receipt of a deportation order and favoured by successive Irish Governments as a cost-effective alternative to forced repatriation.

Asylum-seekers' engagements with the idea of voluntary return are seen to be complex and situationally specific, and Irish policymakers are encouraged to appreciate the nuanced realities of many asylum-seekers' desire to seek refugee status in Ireland, but the length of time spent subject to Ireland's migration control apparatus, the operational experience of life in Direct Provision and the reality of forced repatriation are seen to have an enormous impact on these migrants' very ability to engage with the options available to them, and the specificities of the Irish migration control process, rather than empowering people to make decisions about their future direction, is seen to erode asylum-seekers' decision-making competencies and reinforce the tendency to stay put.

### **Difficulties experienced in Direct Provision reinforce the need to remain resident in Ireland**

Even the most steadfast of migrants can feel worn down by life in Ireland's Direct Provision system. An accommodation centre is, as one manager states, "an extremely difficult place to live. The environment is not an ideal environment."

The structured and regimented rhythms of life common in such contexts can deskill a person at the most basic of levels and residents can experience a sense of infantilization while resident in such locations. The reality of what one participant refers to as being "programmed" means that many asylum-seekers show signs of having lost the ability to engage with ideas, laterally. Rose, an immigrant from Nigeria, attests to this feeling when she relates the following story:

"I was talking to a friend, a few days ago. She is a lawyer. She was talking about important and intelligent things you know and I'm like goo goo gaa gaa, you know. We were on the same level together before but now I can't, you can't even give me a book, it's just like a sleeping tablet."

People feel institutionalized and find it difficult to disengage from the system. Kieran, who lives in a male-only hostel in Waterford, puts it very succinctly when he states that his experience of living in Direct Provision has impacted on his ability to function in the real world as "to join society you need time, you need time to join a society and to do things again, you know. While you are sleeping for four years and then you try to move on again – is very difficult."

Residents can come to harbour a sense of wasted years and can despair of ever making good the time spent living in Direct Provision, but people continue to invest of themselves in this difficult environment in the hope of garnering a positive outcome, at some point in the future. In this way, the difficulties experienced along the way do not act as an incentive to give up on their claim for asylum, but rather as an incentive to remain. Certainly, most are loath to opt out, given the difficulties already experienced and the emotional investment already made. In this way, residents are committed to staying within the asylum process and are likely to remain until they are removed from the State. In many ways, asylum-seekers simply stay in the hope that the length of time spent in the system will eventually come to confer residential rights on them. This is an unlikely outcome, in Ireland.

Consequently, while Ireland's Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner maintain that all claims for protection are processed within 12 weeks of being filed, many asylum-seekers have spent a significant number of years resident in an Irish accommodation centre.<sup>4</sup> Most place the blame for this firmly at the door of the Irish authorities.

### **Length of time spent in Direct Provision reinforces the need to stay**

Residents of Ireland's Direct Provision system rail against this length of time they feel they have been required to stay in such a difficult setting. Many can come to see this length of time to be symptomatic of the Irish Government's intent to discourage them

4 See [www.orac.ie/website/orac/oracwebsite.nsf/page/CRSE-8XZGK713241510-en/\\$File/Office%20of%20the%20Refugee%20Applications%20Commissioner%20-%20Annual%20Report%20-%202011.pdf](http://www.orac.ie/website/orac/oracwebsite.nsf/page/CRSE-8XZGK713241510-en/$File/Office%20of%20the%20Refugee%20Applications%20Commissioner%20-%20Annual%20Report%20-%202011.pdf).

from staying in Ireland.<sup>5</sup> One such man, Colm, a Bangladeshi migrant offers the following analysis when he asks:

“Is the government really doing it purposely – making people sick so that they can be willing to go back. Is it a thing? What do you think it is? Because sometimes I start thinking like that. Because they do know. They forget. After the interview. They forget about you.”

People become burdened by ideas of failure as a function of these “wasted” years. As George, an immigrant from the Republic of Moldova states, “there is a failure. You are spending four years and you have done nothing in your life. You are wasting four years actually.” However, rather than acting as a prompt to change their life path and possibly return to their countries of origin, asylum-seekers invariably reach a point where even the thought of a life lived in their countries of origin again (via assisted voluntary return and reintegration) becomes difficult to differentiate from the sense of failure they have.

The Government of Ireland is in a difficult position here. The length of time that migrants experience in the system is, at least in part, a direct result of Ireland’s attempts to create a humane pattern of migration management that extends “due process” to all, but the longer the time spent in Direct Provision, the more difficult it is for the residents to disengage themselves from the system and think about alternatives.

Very many people currently housed in Ireland’s direct accommodation system have simply made too much of an investment in the refugee-asylum process in Ireland in the hope of garnering a positive outcome at some point in the future.

Even the threat of forced repatriation, Ireland’s ultimate sanction against the failed asylum-seeker, does not seem to have a significant impact in this regard. The author has certainly found very little evidence to suggest that the threat of deportation encourages people to engage with the idea of voluntary return. It may be that people subject to an application for asylum may simply not be motivated to think about return until the very last minute,

preferring instead to focus entirely on the prospects of gaining their status in the host country.

### **The threat of deportation does not encourage asylum-seekers to engage with the possibility of voluntary return**

It would be naive to suggest that the Irish State’s use of forced return as a final sanction for failed asylum-seekers will not structure many asylum-seekers’ engagements with life in Ireland, more generally. This is particularly relevant in the context of this research. The presence of a final deportation sanction in the migration control system will fundamentally impact the immigrants’ very ability to engage with ideas of return on a voluntary basis, as the idea of voluntariness has to be subjected to question when it is a choice made against the background of an unpalatable alternative – deportation. As a senior *nasc* worker states, “we’re always very nervous to understand that the voluntary return decision is actually voluntary.” However, just as length of time in the system is not commonly presented as a prompt to return, very few of the people who participated in this research stated that they would consider availing of an assisted voluntary return programme on foot of fears over the possibility of deportation and the author finds very little to support the contention that the presence of a deportation threat impacts directly on individual migrants’ decision to stay or leave.

While people are aware of the possibility of deportation, most seem to adopt a wait-and-see approach and will not actively engage with the idea of voluntary return until it is too late and they have received a deportation letter. As Eddie states, “in hostel we have a poster about IOM, but, no. I tell you, the guys say – ‘OK, I wait.’” While Chris, a Georgian man, states, “let’s see what happens. My personal desire is that before my case is closed here I will close my case myself and go home.” In Chris’s case at least, he is confident in his ability to remain in control of the process and to make appropriate decisions at the opportune time, irrespective of the fact that he and his wife are subject to a legal process in Ireland, but most people simply choose to wait in hope. It would be reasonable to suggest, therefore, that the use of deportation and the simple presence of a voluntary return programme do not promote the idea of return among the people interviewed for this research.

<sup>5</sup> In 2012, the average time an asylum-seeker resident spent in Direct Provision was between four and five years, while a significant number of asylum-seekers were residents considerably longer than this.



## Conclusions

Far too high a proportion of the asylum-seekers who participated in this research are living an institutionalized existence. The vast majority focus entirely on their hopes for a life in Ireland and are very closed to the prospect of return to their countries of origin. In the author's opinion, this does not automatically signal the presence of a strongly held view but rather is likely to be an expression of the individual's inability to engage with options laterally.

Some experiences are seen to prompt individuals to think about the prospect of return, but the difficulties of life in Ireland's Direct Provision accommodation system, the length of time taken to reach a final decision on an application for refugee status and the threat of forced repatriation to the country of origin, as a final sanction for the failed asylum-seeker, are likely not to act as significant push factors, in and of themselves.

Increased outreach and more proactive information provision are needed at every level of the migration management process in Ireland. There is a clear need to educate migrants who are currently residents in Direct Provision about the full range of options available to them and to do so in a more nuanced and cooperative manner than through the simple provision of return information. A wider and earlier engagement with the idea of return would pay dividends, not just for the State but for the individual as well.

Specialist service providers can only do so much in this regard. A far wider-ranging engagement with the idea of return is needed and the national Government must take a leading role. Migrant advocacy organizations have a strong role to play here as well. There is a sense that many of these organizations do not fully embrace the idea of return to the country of origin or the fact that oftentimes return represents a viable option for an individual. A more integrated engagement with return, based on the principles of partnership, would constitute a useful development in this regard. ■

**“The vast majority focus entirely on their hopes for a life in Ireland and are very closed to the prospect of return to their countries of origin.”**



## Migration and Nigeria's development: Towards the post-2015 development agenda

Nnamdi Iwuora<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

In 2013, under the auspices of the United Nations Country Team in Nigeria, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) hosted a national consultation process on the role of population dynamics in the post-2015 development agenda. The meeting focused on three specific issues related to population dynamics: migration, fertility and morbidity. The aims of the process were also threefold: to share knowledge on practices and recent developments in the various thematic areas; to evaluate the implementation of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets in a given thematic area or sector; and to gather the views of relevant stakeholders on thematic priorities that will form part of a new development agenda post the MDGs.

The session on migration was particularly interesting, considering that migration was not seen as a central factor in the initial framework of the MDGs. Although in recent times increasing attention is being paid to the links between international migration and development, understanding of the nature and extent of this relationship is still in its nascent stages. Consequently, the session on migration was quite enlightening, as it showed how migration had been making a crosscutting impact on various developmental issues in Nigeria.

Of interest to policymakers seeking to shape the priority areas of the post-2015 agenda in Nigeria is that the session shed light on how a properly managed migration sector could yield development gains in terms of, among other things, combating poverty and unemployment. Extensive discussions were also held on analysing the factors constraining the country from taking advantage of development opportunities occasioned by migration and the deleterious effect continued mismanagement in the migration sector could have on attaining future development goals.

The general conclusion of the discussions was that migration, depending on how it is managed, will have an increasingly important role to play as a facilitator or inhibitor to Nigeria's development, and the Government, in partnership with other stakeholders, had to devise strategies for harnessing the development potential and mitigating challenges to development occasioned by migration.

Drawing inspiration from these discussions, this article analyses some of the issues raised in the consultative process related to migration and development in Nigeria. It begins by examining Nigeria's migration profile, which raised a lot of concerns about the state of migration-related statistics in the country. An overview of the development opportunities Nigeria can gain from properly managing its migration sector is also examined. Challenges to reaping these opportunities are also discussed. The article concludes with some recommendations on how Nigeria can manage migration better to increase its developmental impact.

### Understanding Nigeria's migration profile

Discussion of Nigeria's migration profile and issues regarding the credibility of underlying data supporting migration statistics in the country cannot be separated. During the consultative process, questions were raised about the inconsistency of available statistics which make it difficult to accurately outline the country's migration profile and to make evidence-based policy decisions in the migration sector.

For instance, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), from existing records, estimated the country's immigrant stock to be 1,127,668 in 2010.<sup>2</sup> However, the current state of existing records calls into question the accuracy of this number. For instance, IOM's migration profile

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2 UN DESA, Population Division, *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revision*, United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2008 (New York, UN DESA, 2009).

of Nigeria highlights that 92 per cent of immigrants in the country come from fellow Member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).<sup>3</sup> At the same time, assessments carried out by IOM Nigeria have shown that only about 40 per cent of ECOWAS immigrants are captured in official records, meaning that approximately 47 per cent of immigrants in the country do not appear on official records.

Further, Nigeria's borders are porous. The Minister of Interior recently revealed that the country has 84 legal border crossing points and an estimated 1,499 illegal entry routes into the country.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, it is difficult to account for entrants into the country. It also makes the country an easy target for irregular migratory movements. The 2013 *Trafficking in Persons Report* by the US Department of State ranked Nigeria as a tier 2 country, highlighting that the country does not adhere to the minimum standards for combating trafficking in persons.<sup>5</sup>

This combination of a lack of consistent immigrant registration and the ample opportunity for irregular migratory movements means that most existing records are not credible and it is arguable that Nigeria's immigrant stock might be much more than officially touted figures.

Emigrant statistics also raise similar questions. IOM estimates of Nigeria's emigrant numbers in 2009 were between 836,832 and 1,041,284.<sup>6</sup> However, statements by the Government regarding Nigerian diaspora highlight that it perceives this number to be much larger. For example, in a recent speech, the Secretary to the Government of the Federation put diaspora figures at 15 million, while the Ambassador to the United States of America has made mention of

4 million Nigerians in diaspora in the United States of America alone.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the lack of consistency in these statistics, which may be due to issues regarding the definition of *migration*,<sup>8</sup> Nigeria's USD 21 billion remittances in 2012<sup>9</sup> support a conclusion that Nigeria has a large diaspora population. Countries with similar remittance figures, for example, Egypt, with USD 21 billion, and the Philippines, with USD 24 billion, have estimated diaspora populations of around 6.4 million and 10.4 million, respectively.<sup>10</sup>

Even though during the session there were questions regarding the consistency of migration data, there is consensus on some elements of Nigeria's migration profile. It is generally agreed that Nigeria remains an important destination, origin and transit country for migrants. Most of the immigrant stock in the

3 IOM, *Migration in Nigeria: A Country Profile 2009* (Geneva, IOM, 2009). Available from [http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/Nigeria\\_Profile\\_2009.pdf](http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/Nigeria_Profile_2009.pdf).

4 V. Ojeme and R. Odiniya, "Nigeria has over 1,499 illegal entry routes – Interior Minister," *Vanguard*, 19 July 2013. Available from <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2013/06/nigeria-has-over-1499-illegal-entry-routes-interior-minister/>.

5 US Department of State, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, *Trafficking in Persons Report 2013* (US Department of State, Washington, D.C., 2013). Available from <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2013/>.

6 IOM, *Migration in Nigeria: A Country Profile 2009* (Geneva, IOM, 2009). Available from [http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/Nigeria\\_Profile\\_2009.pdf](http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/Nigeria_Profile_2009.pdf).

7 Nigeria, House of Representatives, House Committee on Diaspora Affairs, "Anyim: Nigerians abroad remit \$21b in 2012" (2014), available from <http://diasporacommittee.com/index.php/component/content/article/1-homepagenews/133-anyim-nigerians-abroad-remit-21b-in-2012>; *The Guardian Mobile*, "Why Nigeria needs to establish Diaspora Commission, by Envoy," *The Guardian Mobile*, available from <http://www.theguardianmobile.com/readNewsItem1.php?nid=21811>.

8 A reason for the large disparity in these statistics might be due to ongoing inconsistencies over the definition of terms such as *diaspora*. The World Bank, for instance, counts only first-generation migrants as diaspora, while the African Union has a much broader definition including, "peoples of African origin living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality." Consequently, the African Union estimates African diaspora to be around 168 million in the Americas and Europe, while the World Bank estimates only 30 million Africans in these regions. IOM defines *diaspora* as "emigrants and their descendants who live outside the country of their birth or ancestry, either on a temporary or permanent basis, yet still maintain affective and material ties to their countries of origin." See: IOM/Migration Policy Institute, *Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development: A Handbook for Policymakers and Practitioners in Home and Host Countries* (Geneva, IOM, 2012), p. 15.

9 World Bank, Migration and Remittances Unit, Development Prospects Group, "Migration and Development Brief 20" (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2013). Available from <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1288990760745/MigrationDevelopmentBrief20.pdf>.

10 The figure regarding Egypt's emigrant stock was taken from 2009 Egypt Consular Statistics as contained in: "Migration Facts Egypt," European University Institute/Migration Policy Centre, 2013, available from [http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/docs/fact\\_sheets/Factsheet%20Egypt.pdf](http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/docs/fact_sheets/Factsheet%20Egypt.pdf); estimates of Philippines emigrant stock are taken from Country Migration Report: The Philippines 2013 (Geneva, IOM, 2013), available from [http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/CMReport\\_Philippines2013.pdf](http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/CMReport_Philippines2013.pdf).

country comes from neighbouring West African and Central African States, and there is a steady stream of emigration from the country as demographic and socioeconomic factors continue to create pressures to search for greener pastures abroad.

Socioeconomic and demographic statistics definitely support the aforementioned statement on emigration. The country's population has been growing on average at 2.75 per cent since 2008. Labour supply outstrips demand and the unemployment rate stood at 23.9 per cent in 2011, with an estimated 54 per cent among members of the labour force under 35.<sup>11</sup> Despite growth rates averaging around 7 per cent annually for the last eight years, the poverty rate is still quite high with 62.6 per cent of the population living below the poverty rate. The country was ranked 153rd out of 185 in the 2013 Human Development Index.<sup>12</sup>

There is also general concord that Nigerian emigrants are widely dispersed, with the the largest stocks found in the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Sudan.<sup>13</sup> Nigeria has suffered brain drain due to the emigration of many tertiary-educated Nigerians, adversely affecting the tertiary sector industries, especially the medical sector. Women increasingly make up Nigeria's emigrant stock.<sup>14</sup>

Migration management in the country is also another area where there were no disagreements among participants at the session. The policy environment for managing the migration sector is weak, although the Government and the international community are making efforts to improve it rapidly in the near future. Nigeria has a draft national policy on migration currently awaiting approval by the Government. In addition, the Immigration Act, which was adopted in 1963, has recently been reviewed and updated

to include issues such as smuggling of migrants. A national labour migration policy has recently been adopted by the Government. A diaspora policy and a national strategy on migration data management are also in the works. These policies will serve as a basis for coordinating the functions of a diverse array of government agencies currently involved in migration management which currently do not coordinate their functions at all or only coordinate in an ad hoc manner.

### What can migration contribute to Nigeria's development?

The issue of remittances and the impact they could have in any future development framework was one of the liveliest discussions during the session. This is not surprising considering, as previously noted, that Nigeria received USD 21 billion in remittances (approximately 8% of national GDP) in 2012. This amount is almost half the total official development assistance to sub-Saharan Africa in 2012, which stood at USD 45.7 billion.<sup>15</sup> This amount is astonishing, considering that it strictly takes into account remittances sent through official channels (most remittances to Nigeria are sent through informal channels) and that the transaction costs of sending money to Nigeria are relatively quite high.<sup>16</sup> Remittances are also Nigeria's second highest foreign exchange earner after crude oil.

Of specific interest to participants at the session was the effect remittances have been having on alleviating poverty. Remittances have played a positive role in poverty reduction, protecting families from economic shocks, fuelling household expenditure, and investments in property, education and health care.<sup>17</sup> Unsurprisingly, the Government is already showing interest in increasing the role and impact of remittances in poverty reduction, and remittances are

11 Nigeria, National Bureau of Statistics, "2012 National Baseline Youth Survey: Final Report" (Abuja, National Bureau of Statistics, 2013).

12 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *2013 Human Development Report: The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World* (New York, UNDP, 2013). Available from <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2013/>.

13 D. Ratha et al., *Leveraging Migration for Africa: Remittances, Skills, and Investments* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2011), available from <http://postfi.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/leveraging20migration-p4-rev-3-31-2011.pdf>; also, see: IOM, *Migration in Nigeria: A Country Profile 2009* (Geneva, IOM, 2009), available from [http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/Nigeria\\_Profile\\_2009.pdf](http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/Nigeria_Profile_2009.pdf).

14 D. Ratha et al., *Leveraging Migration for Africa: Remittances, Skills, and Investments* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2011). Available from <http://postfi.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/leveraging20migration-p4-rev-3-31-2011.pdf>.

15 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, "Statistics on resource flows to developing countries. Available from <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/statisticsonresourceflowstodevelopingcountries.htm>.

16 United States Agency for International Development (USAID), *Remittances, Competition and Fair Financial Access Opportunities in Nigeria* (Washington, D.C., USAID, 2007). Available from <http://www.thedialogue.org/PublicationFiles/NigeriaAMAP%20FSKG%20-%20Nigeria%20Remittances-%20FINAL.pdf>.

17 Olowa, O.W. et al., "Effects of remittances on poverty among rural households in Nigeria," *European Journal of Sustainable Development*, 2(4):263–284 (2013); see also: D. Ratha et al., *Leveraging Migration for Africa: Remittances, Skills, and Investments* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2011), available from <http://postfi.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/leveraging20migration-p4-rev-3-31-2011.pdf>.



bound to play a central role in any future development planning. Strategies mooted to ensure this include mainstreaming remittances into development planning, reducing remittance transaction costs and increased engagement with the Nigerian diaspora.

Increased engagement with the Nigerian diaspora is particularly interesting because of the broader impact this could have on development. As noted above, Nigeria could have a teeming diaspora of anywhere between 1 million and 15 million people engaged in a diverse amount of activities all over the world. Some of these people are highly skilled. Even as at the year 2000, studies showed that 10.7 per cent of Nigeria-trained highly skilled professionals work abroad. In the medical field, 14 per cent of doctors who trained in Nigeria work abroad, with 90 per cent of them in the United States of America.<sup>18</sup> This is a potentially massive loss of skills meant for development that diaspora engagement could address. Beyond remittances, if the Nigerian Government could harness the skills of its diaspora, it could reverse the wheel, turning brain drain into brain gain.

As seen in countries such as India, the potential of Nigerian diaspora to fill professional gaps in areas where the country has shortfalls such as doctors, agronomists and pharmacists, and the potential technological skills and professional know-how that can be tapped from them to push industrialization and other indices of development could have as much impact as remittances.

Encouragingly, the Nigerian diaspora are interested in playing a bigger role in national development. However, the framework for their participation is not yet established. The recently adopted Labour Migration Policy seeks to entrench labour migration into the country's development strategy. This policy, when implemented, will be a framework for encouraging diaspora knowledge and skills transfer through physical or virtual return and for harnessing the potential of remittances through preferential laws. The policy will also provide a framework for protecting the rights of emigrants, especially women, who are increasingly making up Nigeria's emigrant profile. The World Bank illuminated that approximately 30 per cent of Nigerian emigrants are women. This number is likely to increase, as more women take

on the role of bread winners traditionally held by men. Guaranteeing the rights of migrant women is crucial for the country if it is to take advantage of the development potential in migration. Migrant women have been found to send a larger part of their income to their families when compared with men. For instance, in Sri Lanka, 62 per cent of remittances are sent by migrant women. Moreover, migration increases the choices for women seeking paid employment, increasing the number of women who are materially independent, which has a direct correlation with improvements in maternal mortality rates and under five mortality rates<sup>19</sup> – two MDGs that Nigeria disturbingly has not yet met the minimum targets.

Further, the policy will serve as a framework to ensure that labour migration to Nigeria has the desired impact. Immigrants currently help fill labour gaps in the medical industry, the technological industry and the domestic service industry. However, their full potential as facilitators of development is not properly captured. As noted above, many immigrant workers remain unregistered, making them useless for development purposes such as taxation. Many of them in the domestic service industry are trapped in exploitative conditions of labour and are socially excluded further hampering their ability to contribute to national development. A situation where the rights of immigrants are fully protected allowing them to fulfill their professional and personal potential will benefit Nigerian society through not only their tax returns but also the increased economic potential of entrepreneurial immigrants.

The potential for migration to facilitate development in Nigeria is set to increase. The World Bank estimates that remittance figures worldwide, which totaled USD 406 billion in 2012, will jump to an estimated USD 534 billion in 2015, with USD 325 billion heading to developing countries. Nigeria is set to benefit from a substantial portion of this amount. However, the impact this will have on any future development agenda is dependent on adopting the right policies and procedures to overcome current challenges hindering organized and development-oriented migration.

18 IOM, *Migration in Nigeria: A Country Profile 2009* (Geneva, IOM, 2009). Available from [http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/Nigeria\\_Profile\\_2009.pdf](http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/Nigeria_Profile_2009.pdf).

19 E. Usher, "The role of migration in achieving the MDGs," in "International Migration and the Millennium Development Goals," selected papers presented at the United Nations Population Fund Expert Group Meeting, 2005.



### Current challenges to migration and development

The economic situation in the country means that a lot of migratory movements are often desperate. The porosity of the borders also encourages many desperate migrants to migrate under insecure conditions, leaving them exposed to a variety of hazards and exploitative labour conditions.<sup>20</sup> Consequently, many skilled Nigerians desperate to leave the country to earn better wages fall prey to migrant smugglers and human traffickers and find themselves underemployed or, worse still, enslaved in their countries of destination.

Participants at the session noted that Nigerian emigrants working and living under exploitative conditions can contribute nothing to development or poverty reduction. In fact, emigration under insecure conditions is inimical to development and can generate new levels of poverty and vulnerability among households. Most of these able-bodied and skilled Nigerians emigrate as bread winners, carrying the hopes and aspirations of their families, and when they are trapped in exploitative conditions, unable to cater for their families, their families are plunged into new depths of poverty from which most of them are ultimately unable to escape.

At the moment, this trend is set to continue – and probably increase – and will be a major stumbling block in tapping the development potential in migration in the post-2015 development framework. A recent survey on internal migration in the country points to the fact that an increasing number of skilled and educated Nigerian youth (between the ages of 20 and 35) are migrating from rural areas to urban areas, especially the big cities of Lagos and Abuja.<sup>21</sup> This does not necessarily have to be a negative development as urbanization can spur enterprise, social inclusion and innovative creativity. Governments can also benefit from economies of scale during planning for social amenities due to the relative population density of cities. However, without proper planning, spontaneous, increasing migration can lead to the establishment of massive slums in the cities and can put insurmountable pressure on the development resources of these cities, leading to increased poverty and deprivation.

As at the time of writing this article, the latter is increasingly the situation in Nigeria. Many youth are migrating to the cities in search of better economic opportunities but end up in slums still unemployed and further entrenched in poverty. This increases the pressure to emigrate and as noted many of these young people could easily fall prey to smugglers and traffickers.

As highlighted earlier, some immigrants in Nigeria also face exploitative conditions of labour, limiting the impact they have on development. Their situation is exacerbated by the increasing negative perception of “certain” migrants in the country. Nigeria has been fighting an insurgency in the north-eastern part of the country led by Boko Haram, an Islamist terror organization. Due to reported links between Boko Haram and neighbouring countries in the region, there has been an increase in anti-immigration sentiment, especially against citizens of neighbouring countries in the north-eastern region. This has led to regular raids and deportations of nationals of these countries.<sup>22</sup> Some members of the House of Representatives have even mooted building a perimeter fence along Nigeria’s borders.<sup>23</sup>

This increasing “securitization” of migration does not augur well for implementing development-oriented migration policies. Many of the migrants targeted during these raids are itinerant workers, and there has been no concrete evidence linking them to terrorism. As seen in other parts of the world, these sentiments can easily lead to policies that profile certain groups of migrants as terrorists, leading to increased violations of their human rights.

The irony of this increasing stigmatization of certain migrants in the country is that the Nigerian Government has increasingly been involved in some high-profile diplomatic spats with other countries over increasing stigmatization and mistreatment of Nigerian emigrants in many countries. The negative rhetoric surrounding certain migrants in Nigeria should be curbed by the Government because it is not only detrimental to development but it also does not acknowledge the current plight of many Nigerian

20 C. Ukwu, “Illegal migration – Nigeria still losing its youth to the infamous adventure,” *Leadership*, 7 July 2013.

21 B.A. Oyeniyi, *Internal Migration in Nigeria: A Positive Contribution to Human Development* (Brussels, ACP Observatory on Migration; Geneva, IOM, 2013).

22 For example, see: S. Ebegbulem, “300 illegal immigrants rounded-up in Edo,” *Vanguard*, 12 July 2013; also, see: A. Aminu, “Jigawa: Immigration repatriates 387 illegal immigrants,” *Daily Times*, 10 July 2013.

23 J. Ameh, “Illegal aliens: Reps advocate fencing of borders,” *Punch*, 26 April 2013.

emigrants who face stigmatization and social exclusion in many countries and are appealing for recognition of their rights as migrants.<sup>24</sup>

It is possible for a well-managed migration sector to contribute to a country's security. However, systems that overemphasize migration control have not proved to be particularly effective. The generally accepted best practice is to manage migration in a manner that balances facilitation and control of migrant movements while providing protection to vulnerable persons. Through technological interventions and standardized immigration procedures, border and entry controls (including internal controls) that facilitate the movements of migrant workers and vulnerable persons can be established while controlling the movements of suspected criminals. However, a major challenge in the region remains the lack of standardized identification documents, which has really hampered efficient entry and internal controls and adversely affected the garnering of migration-related data.

A point that was continuously reiterated during the session is that the inability to generate reliable migration data represents a fundamental challenge to Nigeria in reaching its potential regarding migration-related development. Evolving a migration management system that can improve the impact of migration on development will depend on accurate migration data that can be used to design development policies. For instance, a country needs to understand the trends in its migrant flows, including the number of immigrants and emigrants, skill sets, gender and so on, to be able to establish a labour migration policy that will allow for job placement in other countries.

As highlighted earlier, currently, there is a dearth of credible migration data for development planning. A variety of government agencies generate raw data on different aspects of migration. However, the process of gathering, analysing and disseminating this data is largely uncoordinated. A strategy that lays the foundation for coordination between migration data-generating agencies, outlining the roles of each of these agencies in producing migration data, will have to be in place before migration can play a central role in future development agendas.

### Contemplating the way forward

The general conclusion from the consultative process was that in Nigeria, just like in other parts of the world, migration is increasingly impacting development. Despite not being a central factor in the MDGs framework, it is clear that migration will have a major role to play in any future development framework. As highlighted previously, its impact could be crucial in, among other things, alleviating poverty, spurring entrepreneurial innovation, and improving sexual health and reproductive rights. However, realizing the desired impact of migration on these issues will require migration being factored into broad development planning in a systematic manner that will allow for development-oriented migration policies. The post-2015 development framework presents such an opportunity. However, before this can happen, certain policy and procedural structures have to be put in place to facilitate migration's impact on development. Below are some recommendations:

- The Government, as a matter of urgency, should adopt and implement the various migration-related policies currently awaiting government approval, especially the National Migration Policy. These policies, which extensively cover various issues intertwined with migration management, will lay the foundation for improving the policies related to remittance transactions, diaspora knowledge and skills transfer, protection of migrant rights, and generation of migration-related data.
- The abovementioned migration policies are also crucial for the organization and coordination of international labour migration. The Government has to look into the possibility of bilateral and multilateral labour migration agreements that will provide emigrants and immigrants a safe and organized way to migrate. Such policy should be evidence-based and should match Nigerian skills to foreign jobs and vice versa in a way that facilitates knowledge creation, skills transfer and so on.
- Overall border and entry controls have to be improved. There is a need to devise new strategies for patrolling the country's porous borders, including increasing the number of mobile border patrol units, increasing the quality and frequency of training for border guards, and providing border management information systems at border crossings.

24 For example, see: H. Irfan, "Murder sparks India-Nigeria diplomatic storm," *Al Jazeera News*, 10 November 2013, available from <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/2013/11/murder-sparks-india-nigeria-diplomatic-storm-201311109531844644.html>.

- Key to this is lobbying and advocating the standardization of travel documents at the regional level where the ECOWAS Freedom of Movement Protocol already allows for movement across borders for citizens of Member States. Standardization of travel documents will also improve data gathering at border crossings and internal control mechanisms.
- The Government has to pay increased attention to the root causes of migration, especially rapid population growth and widespread poverty. These structural elements have forced many people to migrate under very risky conditions. Socioeconomic policies that are based on human rights and are also gender-sensitive go a long way in mediating demographic dynamics, like population growth. Policies that put Nigeria's poor at the centre of the country's current steady growth will also increasingly make migration a matter of choice rather than necessity.
- The increasingly negative perception of certain migrants has to be combated with increased sensitization about not only the tenuous link between migration and terrorism but also the positive contributions of migrants to national development. The rhetoric by some government and media outlets that advocate increased securitization of migration is counterproductive to development and does not acknowledge the plight of many Nigerian emigrants who are undocumented, without rights, and are stigmatized all over the world.
- The plight of internal migrants must also be paid equal attention. Policies and programmes especially designed to cater to the needs of people that live in slums, especially unemployed youth, should be developed. The living conditions of people in slums and their access to health care and other social amenities has to be systematically included in government development strategies. ■

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# FAQs on tracking lives lost during migration

*IOM Research Unit, with support of Media and Communication Division*

In October 2013, over 400 migrants lost their lives in two shipwrecks near the Italian island of Lampedusa, and the treacherous and too often fatal journeys of migrants crossing the Mediterranean became headline news. Sadly, this is a global phenomenon: on migratory routes around the world, nearly 5,000 migrants have died so far this year, and at least 40,000 have lost their lives in the past 15 years.

Deaths have more than doubled since last year, and in the Mediterranean, where numbers have surged, they have more than quadrupled, from an estimated 700 in 2013 to over 3,200 in 2014. In September 2014, IOM released a 200-page edited volume – *Fatal Journeys: Tracking Lives Lost during Migration* – the first annual global compilation of data on migrant deaths along sea, desert and other migratory routes.

The following FAQs draw from this report and address, among others, key questions concerning the process of tracking migrant deaths, what we know about those who die and why we should count at all. Note that some data have been updated here since the publication of the report to reflect additional deaths. To access the full report, please [click here](#).

## Questions

1. **What are migrant border-related deaths?**
2. **Where does IOM get its data?**
3. **Who is counting migrant deaths?**
4. **Why do we only have estimates? Is this really capturing all those who have died?**
5. **Is there any example of good data collection?**
6. **Why are deaths so much higher in some regions than others?**
7. **Who are the people dying? What can the data tell us?**
8. **What role does smuggling play in migrant deaths?**
9. **What's going on in the Mediterranean? Has the rate of death increased?**

10. **Why are governments not collecting and publishing data?**
11. **Why should we count migrant deaths?**
12. **How can we stop deaths?**

## Q1: What are migrant border-related deaths?

**A1:** There is no internationally standardized definition of what constitutes a border-related death, and there are various ways the concept can be understood and applied. Some organizations collecting data stick to recording deaths that occur near the external boundaries of States during the process of migration. Others follow a definition similar to what Leanne Weber and Sharon Pickering have referred to as the “functional border,” which extends beyond the physical parameters of a nation State and includes all sites at which border functions are performed.<sup>1</sup>

The functional border concept accommodates the notion of “de-territorialization of borders” – the increasing detachment of national boundaries from sovereign territory. We can see this in the creation of migration zones and buffers that extend beyond territorial boundaries, and more remote methods of border control through visa policy and refugee determination processes. Furthermore, border control can be enforced by various actors, both State and non-State. For those illegally residing in a country, the border may remain present through exclusion from many of the State’s social and legal protections. Extending even further, conditions of illegality may contribute to situations of social and economic marginalization that lead to additional vulnerabilities.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, we can see how the border may extend far from the traditional conception of physical boundaries. When counting deaths attributable to borders, at what point does one draw the line? Should deaths

1 For an in-depth discussion of the functional border, see: L. Weber and S. Pickering, chapter 1, *Globalization and Borders: Death at the Global Frontier* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

2 L. Weber and S. Pickering, *Globalization and Borders: Death at the Global Frontier* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).



in detention, through efforts to evade deportation, or due to exploitative working conditions, among others that occur at “internal borders,” be included, or should counts stick to deaths that occur at the physical perimeters of States and during movement to these borders?

IOM’s figures correspond to deaths occurring at the external borders of States or during migration towards an international destination. This approach is chosen because deaths occurring at physical borders and while en route represent a more clearly definable category. When including fatalities more indirectly associated with border control and migration, it becomes difficult to determine where to limit counts and issues of comparability between sources remain. In the future, IOM may expand the count to include deaths in detention and during deportation – likely recording them in a distinct category from those occurring during migration.

## Q2: Where does IOM get its data?

**A2:** Although IOM has, at various times, reported on incidents involving deaths, attempts to systematically record the numbers of migrant fatalities around the world did not begin until January 2014. IOM gathers this information from a variety of sources. Primarily, data are collected through scanning media. This is the primary method for tracking deaths in the Mediterranean, for instance, where incidents are well covered by the press. Additionally, information may be obtained through field offices and contact with survivors and relatives of those missing in shipwrecks, as well as local authorities. Still, other data are gathered from the United States Border Patrol, medical examiner offices along the US border, NGOs and civil society groups, UNHCR and others. IOM is continually looking for ways to improve access to information through partnerships with NGOs and researchers, and collaboration with governments.

## Q3: Who is counting migrant deaths?

**A3:** No organization at the global level is currently tasked with collecting information on migrant deaths occurring in border regions. National governments tend not to publish data on border-related deaths, and very few release data regularly and systematically. An exception is the United States Border Patrol, which releases annual data on deaths along the country’s south-west border.

Although there is a long way to go to improve data on migrant deaths, there are a considerable number of civil society organizations, academics and humanitarian groups working on this issue at the local and regional levels.

Some prominent NGOs tracking deaths include UNITED for Intercultural Action and Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos de Andalucía (APDHA) (Spain) in Europe, which use media reports to compile counts of deaths; in the United States several organizations have partnered with medical examiner offices to track deaths and identify remains, including Humane Borders, the Colibrí Center for Human Rights and Coalición de Derechos Humanos, which also works with the consular offices of Mexico and other origin countries. Various humanitarian groups record information on deaths, such as the Arakan Project, which works on human rights issues concerning the Rohingya, as well as the Society for Humanitarian Solidarity, which runs coastal patrols along stretches of Yemen’s coasts receiving migrants from the Horn of Africa. Projects run through universities include the Border Crossing Observatory out of Monash University in Melbourne, which maintains a database of deaths, and the Binational Migration Institute, based at the University of Arizona. International organizations publishing estimates of deaths often gather information from their field offices, or through partnerships with local humanitarian organizations. Media outlets and journalists involved in tracking deaths include the *Arizona Daily Star*, The Migrants Files project and Fortress Europe. In the United States, some medical examiner offices along the south-west border also investigate and publish data on border deaths – most notably in Arizona. See the annex of *Fatal Journeys* for a list of sources.

## Q4: Why do we only have estimates? Is this really capturing all those who have died?

**A4:** There are inherent challenges involved in tracking the deaths of irregular migrants and even the best counts will have gaps; an unknown, and likely considerable, number of deaths are not accounted for in IOM’s global count nor in the regional counts of other organizations. There are a number of reasons why data on migrant deaths are so poor – several are inherent to the nature of irregular migration, while others relate to the methods of data collection and sources of information utilized.

Firstly, deaths of irregular migrants are difficult to account for because they occur during journeys on which a primary objective is to avoid detection. This objective is integral to why data are so hard to come by. Deaths often occur on routes through remote areas, selected with the aim of avoiding detection. The tough ecologies of land passages can mean that remains may be quickly destroyed by arid climates and wild animals, lost in crevices or swept down rivers. Those remains that are found may be at such an advanced state of decomposition that it is impossible to obtain even basic demographic information on the deceased. When deaths occur at sea, bodies are frequently lost and never recovered. Total numbers of dead and missing are often estimates based on the testimonies of survivors – if there are any – and the exact number of passengers involved is often unknown. Estimates of those lost at sea may vary considerably.

A large share of deaths recorded by IOM refer to migrants who are missing, mainly at sea. While it is generally presumed that those missing are dead, this is often impossible to verify, again complicating attempts to count deaths and to identify the dead.

Again tied to the clandestine nature of irregular migration, when migrants travel in groups, survivors who reach their destinations undetected may be afraid of reporting deaths of fellow travellers due to fear of apprehension by authorities. For similar reasons, families may not report missing relatives.

An additional complicating factor arises from the fact that irregular migration is frequently intertwined with the actions of smugglers, traffickers, other criminals and corrupt State officials. High levels of corruption mean that crimes, including death, often go unreported and unpunished. Murders that suggest State corruption and complicity are kept silent. Furthermore, in contexts in which migrants die due to the involvement of organized crime, survivors may refrain from reporting deaths and disappearances for fear of retribution against family members remaining in origin countries.

Finally, data quality is poor because reliable sources of information are lacking. A large share of information on deaths is drawn from the media, a method which presents a number of challenges. For one, media cannot cover all incidents involving migrant deaths, and even when an incident is covered, reporting may stop before a final count of dead and missing is known. Furthermore, details that would contribute

to a comprehensive record, such as profiles of the deceased, are rarely provided.

#### Q5: Is there any example of good data collection?

**A5:** An example of good data on border-related deaths is that produced by the Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner (PCOME) in Arizona. Since 2003, the PCOME has examined 95 per cent of all migrant remains discovered in Arizona, the state in which the highest number of deaths occurs. With data on deaths of undocumented border crossers from as far back as 1990, researchers are able to detect trends in routes used, nationalities of those dying, sex and age breakdowns, cause of death and more. While a considerable amount of information is still unknown, compared with the very patchy knowledge of the demographics of those dying in the Mediterranean – where data are largely taken from media – information is far more complete. For instance, between 1990 and 2013, sex could be determined in 97 per cent of cases examined. Other information, such as nationality and precise age, is contingent on successful identification of the deceased. Of cases examined between 1990 and 2013, 34 per cent could not be identified. In part, this level of detailed information on the deceased is possible because deaths occur on land. However, there remains considerable room for improvement in other sources of data, even those that concern deaths at sea.<sup>3</sup>

#### Q6: Why are deaths so much higher in some regions than others?

**A6:** Ideally, we would have complete data for every region of the world and would be able to freely compare numbers and rates across the globe. However, because of the inconsistency in data quality between regions – with some regions having much higher quality and complete data than others – comparing between regions must be done with considerable caution. Deaths of migrants have become headline news in Europe and Australia, and numerous groups

3 Information drawn from: Martínez, D.E., R. Reineke, R. Rubio-Goldsmith and Bruce A. Parks, (2014), Structural violence and migrant deaths in southern Arizona: Data from the Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner, 1990–2013. *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 2(4):257–286.

in the United States and Mexico are concerned about the high numbers dying on the southern border of the United States. This attention both responds to the high number of deaths and also stimulates documentation of deaths; thus, fewer deaths are likely to go unreported. In contrast, in some regions of the world, deadly incidents go entirely unrecorded. This may be because of a lack of public or State concern, or because of the location or manner in which death occurs, among other reasons. For instance, although interviews with migrants who have crossed overland through the Horn of Africa or through the Sahara Desert frequently contain mention of the death of fellow travellers, those who die are often left behind and no record of their deaths is made. Thus, deaths in these areas are underreported.

#### Q7: Who are the people dying? What can the data tell us?

**A7:** Associated with the challenges of data collection, outlined in A4, basic demographic information on the deceased is rarely known. In part, this is because many bodies are not recovered at sea, and because bodies are often in a very advanced state of decay when found. The reliance on media sources for information which often does not provide details on the deceased further contributes to this data challenge. At times, even the region of origin of migrants is not clear and only vague information is provided. Additionally, irregular migrants often do not carry accurate IDs, so even when bodies are found it may not be possible to identify them or determine basic demographic information. Even among deaths of undocumented border crossers examined by the PCOME – one of the most precise sources of information on border-related deaths – the identities of the deceased could not be determined in over one third of cases examined between 1990 and 2013.<sup>4</sup> In the data compiled by IOM, sex of the deceased is only known for about 5 per cent of cases. Region of origin has been determined for the majority of the deceased, but even this information was at times extrapolated based on available information – for instance, if all survivors of a shipwreck were of one origin, it was assumed those missing also came from the same region.

<sup>4</sup> D.E. Martínez, R. Reineke, R. Rubio-Goldsmith and B.A. Parks, (2014), Structural violence and migrant deaths in southern Arizona: Data from the Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner, 1990–2013, *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 2(4):257–286.

#### Q8: What role does smuggling play in migrant deaths?

**A8:** A large share of irregular migrants use the services of people smugglers at some point on the journey to their destination. In some areas, such as parts of Western and Central Africa, the smuggling industry is so strong it forms the backbone of local economies. While smugglers facilitate journeys for migrants willing to pay and may reduce many of the risks of irregular migration – such as that of getting lost along remote land passages – they also create a new set of risks and vulnerabilities for migrants. Countless deaths have occurred either through direct murder at the hands of smugglers or due to indirect consequences of poor care, abuse, torture, or abandonment, among others. Migrants are often misled and deceived, men may be beaten and women raped or forced into sexual servitude. Because smuggling networks can become so entrenched and rely on networks of corruption many smugglers are able to act with relative impunity, leaving migrants entirely vulnerable. Such dangers are particularly relevant in the Horn of Africa, for instance along routes heading north through Sudan to Libya or Egypt. Testimonies of deliberate drowning and murder are also common on crossings from the Horn of Africa to Yemen, and testimonies of trips across the Mediterranean increasingly describe such violence. While the number of deaths that occur at the hands of smugglers is unknown and determining such figures may never be possible we can say that the number is very high.

#### Q9: What's going on in the Mediterranean? Has the rate of death increased?

**A9:** Based on the data compiled by IOM, the large majority of deaths in 2014 have occurred in the Mediterranean, accounting for roughly two thirds (3,224) of all deaths so far this year, and making it the deadliest sea in the world for migrants. When looking at numbers compiled over a longer period of time, at least 22,400 people are estimated to have lost their lives trying to reach Europe since 2000 (IOM calculation based on The Migrants Files data). This means on average nearly 1,500 migrants died each year during this period. Based on available data, 2014 represents the deadliest year in this time period, with more than twice as many deaths occurring than

those that took place during the Arab Spring of 2011 when an estimated 1,500 lost their lives crossing the Mediterranean.<sup>5</sup>

It appears that the jump in fatalities in the Mediterranean this year reflects a dramatic increase in the numbers of migrants trying to reach Europe, rather than a greater rate of death. In 2014, the numbers of irregular maritime arrivals have spiked, with over 150,000 arrivals reported by the Italian authorities in the 10 months of the year, more than three times as many as in the entire year of 2013.

While it is difficult to gauge the rate of death given the varying quality of data on deaths over the years, by looking at estimates of deaths from IOM and UNHCR over the last four years we can see that the number of irregular maritime arrivals and the number of deaths at sea are highly positively correlated during this time period. Thus, it does not appear that it has become more risky to make this sea crossing. In fact the estimated rate of death in the first nine months of 2014, while slightly higher than last year, was actually lower than the estimated rates for 2012 and 2011. However, rates of death require additional research and various factors could influence calculations.

Even if rates are not necessarily higher, why are so many attempting the crossing? And shouldn't rates of death be much lower than previous years given the existence of Italy's rescue operation Mare Nostrum beginning in October 2013?

While several possibilities exist for why numbers crossing the Mediterranean have risen so dramatically this year, the most prominent reason is likely an intensification of push factors in origin countries, as an increasing number of people flee war, persecution and totalitarian regimes. In contrast to the past few years, the complex migratory flows this year to Italy are more prominently characterized by people fleeing conflict and crisis areas, with Syrians and Eritreans constituting the largest share of arrivals in Italy this year. The deteriorating security situation in Libya, where many migrants reside prior to their departure for Europe, has also increased migration pressures.

Although the number of people who have died in the Mediterranean is tragically high, it is important to note that numbers would be dramatically higher this year if not for Mare Nostrum, which has rescued an estimated 150,000 since October 2013. While some argue that rescue-focused approaches could act as a pull factor, it is critical that saving lives at sea remains a top priority. However, alternatives to irregular sea migration must be created, the most important one being to provide legal channels to Europe for migrants seeking international protection. Smuggling and high levels of corruption that help to perpetuate this crime must also be tackled, although without addressing the root causes and opening more legal channels to the European Union, it is unlikely such initiatives will have significant or lasting effects.

#### Q10: Why are governments not collecting and publishing data?

**A10:** In part, poor data exist because, as previously described, these deaths are inherently difficult to track. However, better monitoring and collection of data on migrant deaths is not merely a technical challenge. It is also a question of the political will of States, which so far has been lacking. Migrant deaths are often seen by civil society as a failure of border regimes, and governments are therefore reluctant to widely disseminate this information. Furthermore, migrant-receiving States have not been under pressure to produce better information because irregular migrants usually attract little public sympathy. Irregular migrants may be dehumanized, a process which Weber and Pickering argue: "produces exclusion, not only from a particular moral community, but also from all bonds of human empathy and protection."<sup>6</sup>

In some parts of the world, the complicity of government officials in people smuggling not only hinders efforts to counter smuggling and reduce deaths but also discourages open reporting of migrant fatalities. The deaths potentially caused, directly or indirectly, by certain government policies and actions of officials may raise questions regarding governments' adherence to human rights commitments, reducing motivation to publicize

5 UNHCR, "More than 1,500 drown or go missing trying to cross the Mediterranean in 2011," UNHCR News Stories, 31 January. Available from <http://www.unhcr.org/4f2803949.html>.

6 L. Weber and S. Pickering, chapter 1, *Globalization and Borders: Death at the Global Frontier* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011:59).



incidents of death. Furthermore, when deaths occur in weak, authoritarian or conflict-embroiled States, the capacity and will of the government to record deaths is often entirely absent.

#### Q11: Why should we count migrant deaths?

**A11:** If counts of migrant border-related deaths will always be estimates, why should we bother at all? Peter Andreas and Kelly Greenhill wrote in their book on the politics of numbers: “We live in a hyper-numeric world preoccupied with quantification. In practical political terms, if something is not measured it does not exist, if it is not counted it does not count.”<sup>7</sup>

By putting a number on deaths, even if it remains an estimate, we at least acknowledge the existence of these deaths – what before was vague and ill-defined is now a quantified tragedy that must be addressed. Although numbers may be contested, they at least provide a platform for debate. Politically, the availability of official data is important. The weak political commitment at national and international levels to record and account for migrant deaths reflects and contributes to a lack of concern more broadly for the safety and well-being of irregular migrants and asylum-seekers arriving by irregular means. Further, it may encourage public apathy, ignorance and the dehumanization of these groups.

Data are crucial to better understand the profiles of those who are most at risk and to tailor policies to better assist these migrants and prevent loss of life. Ultimately, improved data should contribute to efforts to better understand the causes, both direct and indirect, of these fatalities and their potential links to broader migration control policies and practices.

Not least, counting and identifying the dead is a moral imperative that not only respects and acknowledges those who have died but can also provide closure for families who may otherwise be left without ever knowing the fate of missing loved ones.

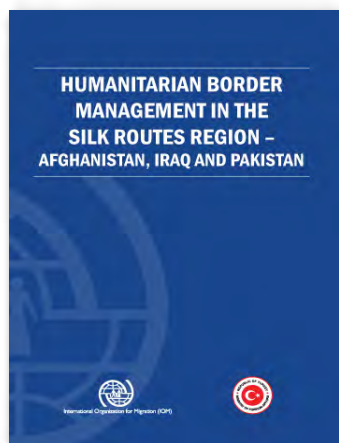
#### Q12: How can we stop deaths?

**A12:** Migrant deaths are intimately tied to processes of irregular migration. The need to evade border controls compels migrants to use unsafe methods of travel – whether a treacherous route or the contemptible practices of smugglers, kidnappers and other criminals. While efforts to reduce smuggling and the corruption that enables smuggling are important and can help to lessen the grave abuses suffered by irregular migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees, irregular migration remains a necessity for many and deaths will continue to occur. In fact, an approach that targets smugglers exclusively may have the unintended consequence of pushing these processes deeper underground, causing routes of travel and modes of operation to change, and making journeys more dangerous for those travelling. Ultimately, solutions must be balanced and involve the creation of regular means of migration for those seeking international protection and improved management of labour migration. ■

<sup>7</sup> P. Andreas and K. Greenhill, *Sex, Drugs, and Body Counts: The Politics of Numbers in Global Crime and Conflict* (Cornell University Press, 2010).



## Publications

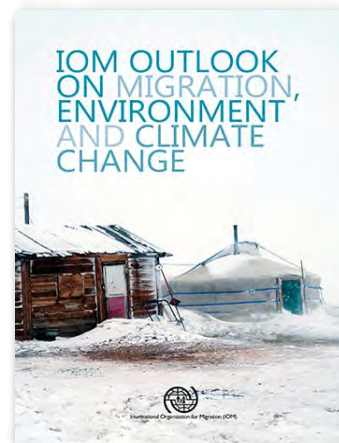


**Humanitarian border management in the Silk Routes region – Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan**  
2014/116 pages/English  
(Available for [PDF download](#))

This assessment report was produced in the context of the Silk Routes Partnership for Migration, an initiative of the Budapest Process. The aim of this report is to identify areas for future work in the field of humanitarian border management, a sector of assistance identified within the IOM Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF). Humanitarian border management covers border operations before, during and after humanitarian crises that trigger mass cross-border movements. It aims to ensure that border authorities respond to cross-border migration arising from both natural and man-made disasters in a way that protects crisis-affected migrants and guarantees their human rights while respecting national sovereignty and security.

The report recommends, among other things: the development of standard operating procedures for border authorities at times of humanitarian crises; the articulation of a policy relating to emergency mass movements creating exemptions for humanitarian relief workers and goods; multi-agency contingency planning; an upgrade of communications and registration equipment; and the provision of comprehensive training for border authorities on international protection standards, dealing with vulnerable migrants, organizing referrals and conducting risk assessments.

The report was funded with generous support from the Government of Turkey.



**IOM Outlook on Migration, Environment and Climate Change**  
2014/144 pages  
English  
(Available for [PDF download](#))

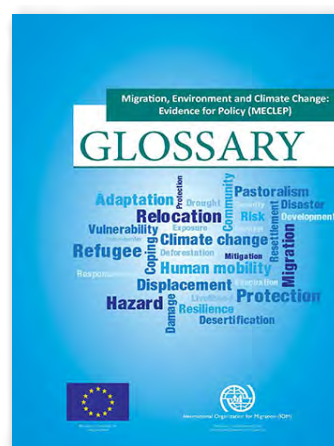
IOM Outlook on Migration, Environment and Climate Change aims to bring together in one easy-to-access reference document the knowledge accrued by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and to present IOM's role, understanding and approach to environmental migration.

This reference publication builds on IOM's expertise on the topic at the policy, research, international migration law, advocacy and operational levels.

IOM Outlook on Migration, Environment and Climate Change:

- Takes stock of IOM's action and institutional approach on the topic;
- Gives visibility to the work of the Organization on the topic and serves as a knowledge-sharing tool for this work; and
- Provides insights into the state of the knowledge, legal debates, and links between environmental migration and other policy areas such as adaptation, development, humanitarian response, human rights, disaster risk reduction and security.

The publication targets a broad external audience, including but not limited to policymakers, practitioners, researchers, international agencies, private sector, donors, students and think tanks.



2014/30 páginas/[Español](#)  
(Disponible en formato pdf solamente)

La contribución potencial de la migración a la adaptación al cambio ambiental y climático ha sido reconocida a nivel regional y mundial. Junto al reconocimiento institucional de la relevancia de las migraciones en términos de adaptación, existe una necesidad de contar con estudios empíricos dedicados a la migración y el cambio climático. El Proyecto “Migración, Medio Ambiente y Cambio Climático: Datos Empíricos para la Formulación de Políticas” (MECLEP por sus siglas en inglés) aborda esta necesidad para sondear cómo la migración puede contribuir a las estrategias de adaptación.

Este Glosario, elaborado como parte del Proyecto MECLEP, incluye términos de dos áreas distintas pero interdependientes como son la migración y el cambio ambiental. Conceptos como adaptación, resiliencia, y hacer frente deben ser utilizados con precaución en investigaciones y en el diseño de políticas en el marco de la movilidad humana y el cambio ambiental.

El Glosario comprende dos partes: la primera sección se centra en términos referentes a la movilidad, mientras que la segunda versa sobre la terminología de cambio climático referente al contexto de la movilidad.

Given the fluid nature of terminology and definitions, this Glossary should be viewed as a working document subject to review and updates. Nonetheless, we hope that stakeholders and researchers alike will see it as a useful resource for future studies and policymaking.



### Migration Initiatives 2015: Regional Strategies

2014/392 pages

English

(Available for [PDF download](#))

Migration Initiatives 2015 presents the Organization's nine regional strategies in a printed format. These strategies provide an overview of the regional context, capacity, partners, key trends and challenges. The publication comes with a CD which, in addition, contains a summary of IOM's current and intended responses and funding requirements for 2015 to address the wide range of evolving migration needs through programmes managed by IOM Country and Regional Offices, as well as by Headquarters.

## MPP Readers' Survey

*Migration Policy Practice* was launched three years ago and the editors would now like to invite readers to spare a couple of minutes to participate in a short readers' satisfaction survey.

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.

