«The Oranges in Europe taste better»
On the root causes of flight, the counter-measures – and their shortcomings

Edited by the Heinrich Böll Foundation

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The contributions of this web publication are taken from the German-language volume
«Die Orangen in Europa schmecken besser».

CONTENT

PREFACE AND INTRODUCTION

«Migration is our encounter with globalisation» (according to senior conservative German politician Wolfgang Schäuble). It cannot be stopped. There are many reasons for hitting the road, mainly terror, persecution and war, poverty and hunger, but also the desire to live a better life – one with greater employment opportunities, superior access to education and healthcare and prospects for the future. To put it concisely, migration means employing one's right to «pursue happiness», something that is enshrined in the US constitution as a fundamental human right on a par with such rights as the right to life and liberty.

Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: «Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.» Although this clause does not constitute mandatory international law, yet it is a recommendation, albeit one that a decreasing number of states is willing to take up – not least because there is increasing pressure from those countries whose citizens may enter and leave almost any country with little to no problem. For the time being, this global disparity will remain in place and the postulated right to leave one's country is not paralleled by a right to enter other countries.

It is important to realise that this global objective disparity is also experienced as such subjectively by the disadvantaged. Our perspectives on migration are moulded by fear (of being swamped by foreign cultures, of collapsing welfare systems, of terrorism) while the immigrants perceive it as a beacon of hope (for settling down, survival, employment and happiness). In order to reduce discord and promote civilised coexistence, one has to be able to see things from a number of different viewpoints, that is, one has to cultivate empathy. It is our objective to make such differing viewpoints better known in order to let people realise that migration is the norm and not an occurrence that has to be stemmed.

The Geneva Convention obliges states to receive refugees and to protect them. However, directing migration and designing an immigration policy is a political task – and thus something a government may do or neglect to do. Countries are bound by international law to receive refugees; yet whether they let in migrants is left to the discretion of national governments. According to the 1951 Refugee Convention, a refugee is a person who, out of well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his or her nationality. Also, those fleeing war or armed conflict have a right to protection. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in late 2016 there were 65.6 million refugees, of which 40.3 million were internally displaced. Most of the 22.5 million who had fled abroad were received by neighbouring countries. However, globally many more people are on the

move. As mentioned above, there are numerous reasons why people leave their home countries, for example, because their livelihood was destroyed; because rising youth unemployment means that there is no future; because they are being displaced by pollution or land grabbing; or because they want to study abroad, work or get married abroad. Migration means a mid or long-term shift of the geographical centre of one's life. Very often this happens in ways that are legal, yet there are also illegal migration patterns and they increasingly affect Europe.

European Migration Control

For some time, the influx of refugees and migrants into Europe has been met with efforts to seal off the continent. First, the Spanish built high walls complete with razor wire, sensors and night-vision cameras around their enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, and soon the number of people crossing the Strait of Gibraltar dropped considerably. When more and more migrants from sub-Saharan Africa began to arrive in small boats on the Canary Islands, the Spanish Guardia Civil sent boats to the coast of Senegal, while long-time Libyan dictator Gaddafi and Italian prime minister Berlusconi struck a deal to limit migration across the Mediterranean. Europe, it seemed, had succeeded in somewhat controlling migration.

Then, however, the Arab Spring happened, cancelling out Gaddafi as guardian of the coastal frontier, and shortly after the war in Syria made millions flee the country. In order to prevent refugees from entering their countries, Bulgaria and Hungary built new fences in locations where once fences, now demolished, had been erected in order to prevent people from leaving. In November 2015, at the Valletta Summit on Migration in Malta, hasty efforts were undertaken to force African governments to act. Right after that, a treaty between the EU and Turkey shut down most of the migration via the Aegean Sea. And only recently, a treaty with Libyan border guards reduced the numbers of those trying to cross the Mediterranean travelling on floating coffins or rubber dinghies along a route that frequently has proved to be lethal.

When, following the influx of people in 2015, European governments strengthened their border security and increasingly involved neighbouring countries in their border regime, «fighting the causes of flight» became an important political slogan. However, the nexus between migration control and development aid – what the EU often calls «support towards stabilisation» – is fraught with problems. As a matter of fact, thus far, the main focus has been on fighting human traffickers and strengthening border security, and not on measures which tackle the causes that make people leave their home countries in the first place.

When discussing efforts to «fight the causes of flight» even the terminology is flawed. Frequently the debate is nominally about flight, although, what is meant, is migration. The result is that we are claiming to fight something, which, as far as wars and conflicts are concerned, is beyond our means, while such a call to arms is unnecessary where migration is concerned. The attempt to «fight the causes of flight» lacks a multidimensional perspective regarding flight and migration. For example, no effort is made to seriously address Europe's responsibility stemming from its

asymmetric trade policies. In addition, there is little willingness to engage in a dialogue that goes beyond eurocentric points of view and self-referential political discourses. Our position is that such a dialogue is necessary in order to grasp the causes of migration. When faced with a crisis, doing things for the sake of doing them displays a lack of serious effort to deal with the global refugee question – and to comprehend the normality of global migration. Why is it that so many people embark on journeys that are desperately dangerous in order to reach their preferred target regions? To point out «war and poverty» as the main culprits is an overly glib way of identifying «problems» and «needs» that, for decades, have been the main rationale informing development co-operation. Even when rebranded as «measures to fight the causes of flight», the old methods will achieve little and additional development aid will just melt away as it did before.

Offshoring a «problem»

Since the Valletta Summit, a whole range of measures and mechanisms has been budgeted and set into motion, and while the time-honoured reflex of sealing the borders may result in fewer migrants coming in, the people will only divert to more hazardous and costly routes. Yet above all, Europe is trying to shift the «problem» to the transit countries, some of which are also host countries. In Turkey, there are 2.9 million refugees (mainly from Syria) and migrants. Probably hundreds of thousands of Africans are detained in camps in Libya, where they are being mistreated, tortured, raped, and often also enslaved. Many of them are about to leave for Europe. Because of this, an «emergency transfer mechanism» is to be put into action to push back refugees from Libya to Niger. This is supposed to be implemented by the UNHCR and financed by the EU. Thus, the countries in North Africa and Turkey are getting to play the role of police officer for Europe. However, the actual problem are the countries of origin, and pressure is being put on them to take back migrants that entered Europe illegally and who don‹t have a right to asylum or subsidiary protection. Many African governments, however, have little or no interest in taking back migrants – for obvious reasons. Many families depend on remittances sent by migrants, and the sum total of these remittances frequently exceeds that of development aid and foreign direct investment combined. Also, the governments in question have nothing to offer the deported migrants – no jobs, no outlook. Even if «fighting the causes of flight» succeeds in alleviating poverty in some countries, this would not necessarily result in less out-migration but rather stimulate it, as more people would have the means to bribe border guards, buy the bus tickets and pay the traffickers. As is well known, it is not the poorest of the poor who leave their countries.

Regarding migrants on the central Mediterranean route (from Libya to Italy), for the time period between January and the end of May 2017, the ranking of countries of origin was as follows: 1. Nigeria, 2. Bangladesh, 3. Guinea, 4. Ivory Coast, 5. Gambia, 6. Senegal, 7. Mali, 8. Morocco. With the exception of Bangladesh, these are African countries with democratically elected governments and (with the exception of Northern Nigeria) they are at peace. An important reason to leave – likely the most

important one, although not the only one – is unemployment. Over half a century of traditional development co-operation has funnelled hundreds of billions, if not of over a trillion of ollars, into sub-Saharan Africa, however, without making a dent in the levels of unemployment.

Crisis management through investment

For this reason and others, the EU now favours investment as a means of «crisis management». The new strategy has a name, «Compact for Africa», and it was adopted at the G20 Africa summit, held under the auspices of the German government in the summer of 2017. The compacts are meant to promote private investment of European companies and corporations in select African countries that meet certain standards for good governance. The main target is investment in infrastructure and agriculture. The countries selected – possible candidates are Ivory Coast, Senegal, Morocco, Rwanda and Tunisia – will have to pledge reforms that foster investment. The international institutions, such as the IMF, Worldbank and the African Development Bank, as well as the G20 partner countries will support such efforts financially and with technical expertise, and they will try to win private investors. Supposedly, these compacts are a «completely new form of economic co-operation» (Wolfgang Schäuble). However, no serious effort has been made to remove one of the most important obstacles, other than endemic corruption and bad governance, that impedes economic development in the sub-Saharan countries. While, over three years ago, the EU scrapped export subsidies for agricultural products, it still swamps African markets with its highly subsidised produce. African farmers are unable to compete, and this hampers the local creation of value. Whoever truly wants to combat the «causes of flight» will have to set out with their own responsibilities, and this means creating fair trade relations, promoting the local creation of value and banning foreign mega-trawlers from plundering the coast off Africa that are rich in fish.

Shaping migration

When it comes to wars and conflicts, political intervention can achieve only very limited results. Tackling the causes of flight and efforts to prevent conflicts could be a more efficient way of dealing with the structural causes of strife. Additional measures include providing humanitarian aid during refugee crises and supporting the return and re-integration of refugees. Over the coming years, the most crucial contribution will be to support the affected countries through resettlement programmes. Migration should not be stemmed but shaped. As long as many countries are unable to meet peoples› needs for services – such as healthcare, education, supply of staple foods, security, rule of law, etc. – global migration will be on the increase, not least because of the rising population numbers. It is also encouraged by migrant networks that offer potential migrants some support via social media, while also providing visions of a promised land, and there are dense networks of human traffickers, recruiting migrants in their home countries and making a big profit off of them while they are in

transit. In step with the increasing migration from developing to industrialised countries the migration between developing nations is also on the rise. Also, compared to permanent migration, there is an increase of temporary and circular migration.

In many European countries, over the last few years, the prevalent mood of crisis has thwarted previous efforts to reform migration policies and regulate migration in effective ways. Today, governments want to drive back illegal migration and promote the repatriation of migrants. However, migration policy that favours development has to facilitate legal migration and, in doing this, negotiate the interests of all three «parties» involved, that is, of countries of origin, destination countries and the migrants themselves. Whenever this happens, all three sides will profit, yet to achieve this is all but simple – and it requires the political will to go down that avenue and politicians that promote such an approach vis-à-vis their own people.

The German publication collects a number of interviews with intellectuals and activists who themselves have been migrants or refugees. The countries selected as well as the stories told are exemplary for flight and migration in the 21st century. There are contributions by academics from Pakistan, Somalia and El Salvador who tell us about their countries, as well as interviews with refugees from Syria, Burundi and Malawi and migrants from Niger and Senegal. The introductory text, which disambiguates some of the terminology used, was written by the author of the essay on Pakistan.

The following articles, a selection of the originally German publication, are meant to provide insights into the processes that drive people from their home countries, thus helping us to understand more about their manifold motivations. We hope that this will inspire debate and result in a humane and development-minded kind of migration that is sustainable and enjoys wide social acceptance – a kind of migration we urgently need.

Berlin, June 2018

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The terms migration, flight, asylum and some others

While this publication acknowledges the need to reflect on the inadequacies of existing policy arrangements, special emphasis is put on the need not to reinforce unsubstantiated, unscientific and arguably misleading claims and perceptions about the nature of the ‹problem› and/or potential strategies of addressing it. The following presents definitions of terms that occur throughout this publication.

For many scholars of migration, not even the term ‹migration› can be thought of as value-free. As many have noted, it is rarely used in reference to the ‹desirable› circulation of diplomats, entrepreneurs and highly skilled workers, and effectively connotes *problematic* mobility.[1] The term ‹migration› is rarely applied to the vast population movements that occurred before the modern period, or to the colonial era when so many Europeans populated entire swathes of the globe; only when viewed as problematic is human movement classified as ‹migration›, scrutinised and constituted as an object of investigation and as a policy issue. ‹Migration› already signals the need for control and in public discourse it is often raced and classed. For this reason, some scholars reject the term altogether, preferring the more neutral term ‹mobility›.[2]

For practical purposes, the term migration is frequently used in this report. However, wherever possible, mobility should be kept in mind as a more precise way of describing what is, after all, one of numerous types of movement that routinely occur between regions such as Pakistan and Europe (to take but one example, the author of this report travels between Pakistan and Europe several times a year without being referred to as a migrant).

Similarly, the current state of affairs within Europe is referred to in this report as a ‹situation› rather than a ‹crisis› – a term repeated ad nauseam in the media and policy circles with barely any attempt to clarify its terms of reference. Even where annual figures from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees are cited (‹worst refugee crisis since World War II etc.›), these numbers are rarely accompanied by any recognition of the fact that the bulk of forced migration is taking place outside

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1 Castles, S. (2003): «Towards a sociology of forced migration and social transformation» in Sociology 37 (1), pp. 13-34, p. 16.

2 Sirkeci. I./Cohen, J. (2013): «Not Migrants and Immigration, but Mobility and Movement» in Cities of Migration, July 31st : http://citiesofmigration.ca/ezine_stories/not-migrants-and-immigration-but-mobility-and-movement/ (all websites accessed October 15th 2017).

Western Europe, affecting countries such as Turkey, Pakistan, Iran, Lebanon, Uganda or Ethiopia.

This mirrors a broader tendency in representing international migration, which in fact constitutes a very limited proportion (3%) of the world's population. Viewed in relation to contextual factors such as increased trade, finance and capital flows, cross-border mobility appears less crisis-ridden than often presented.[3]

Some question whether migration in proportionate terms is now significantly higher than in previous eras; figures indicating volume alone, in any case, are ‹meaningless if we do not understand the broad patterns of and distinctions that shape migration, and have been used to… control migration›.[4] This is not to deny the unprecedented nature of the current situation as indicated by the numbers.

It is rather to point out that cross-border mobility must be placed in the context of overall changes such as rising population levels, altered dynamics of conflict, environmental change and various other aspects that come into consideration when the ‹migration crisis› is viewed through a wide-angle lens. Europe's own economic and demographic context, shaped as it is by an aging population unable to meet projected labour shortages across a range of sectors, is also not irrelevant here.

The term ‹forced migration› also requires some elaboration, above all in respect to legal and historical definitions of the term ‹refugee›. References to the mass flight (and protection) of persecuted groups in ancient texts, holy books and any number of founding national myths are as old as history itself.[5] However, a specific set of protections and rights accorded in the modern period have evolved in relation to the international system of nation states and continue to shape contemporary realities.[6]

‹Refugee› is a legally defined category in Article I of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and its 1967 protocol referring to anyone forced to cross an international border due to well-founded fears of being persecuted in their country of origin. This definition has remained broadly in place throughout the remainder of the twentieth century and up to the present, though massive, conflict-induced displacements during the 1960s and 1970s in Africa and Latin America led to regional elaborations of possible causality and circumstances that effectively complicated and expanded the Geneva Convention's original, somewhat narrow reference to persecution and alienage.[7]

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[3]   Arango, J. (2000): «Explaining migration: a critical view» in International Social Science Journal 52 (165) 2000, S. 283-296; Sutcliffe, B. (2004): ‚Crossing Borders in the New Imperialism›, Socialist Register 264; Betts, A. and Kainz, L. (2017): «The history of global migration governance», Refugee Studies Centre, Working Paper 122: https://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/news/new-rsc-working-paper-on-the-history-of-global-migration-governance.

[4]   McKeown, A. (2004): «Global Migration: 1846-1940», Journal of World History, 15(2), pp. 184-5.

[5]   Kleist, J.O. (2017): «The History of Refugee Protection: Conceptual and Methodological Challenges», Journal of Refugee Studies, Volume 30, Issue 2(1), pp. 161-169.

[6]   Zolberg, A.R. (1983): «The formation of new states as a refugee-generating process», in The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science Volume 467 (1), pp. 24-38; ders. (1989) «The Next Waves: Migration Theory for a Changing World», in International Migration Review 23(3), pp. 403-430.

[7]   Turton, D. (2003): «Conceptualizing forced migration», in Refugee Studies Centre, Working Paper 12: https://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/files/files-1/wp12-conceptualising-forced-migration-2003.pdf.

The term IDP (internally displaced person) was subsequently coined to refer to groups in refugee-like situations but who have not crossed international borders. IDPs – though classified as being ‹of concern› to the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) – are more often than not supported and managed by the IOM (International Organization for Migration), and policy pays far less attention to them than warranted by their numbers, which dwarf the world's refugee population.

Dramatic increases in the budgets, staff numbers, profile and remit of both the UNHCR and IOM have occurred since the end of the Cold War, reflecting the growing importance of forced migration.

However, despite its evolution from previously formed institutions tasked with formulating and implementing logistical policies to support displaced populations, the IOM was not formed until 1989,[8] which is indicative of the privileged legal and political importance of refugee rights and the relative neglect of internally displaced populations. Moreover, the relationship between the IOM and the UNHCR has historically remained ad hoc, ill-defined and contingent (Martin 2004). This institutional handicap has led to lack of clarity over the UN's and IOM's mandates in any given scenario of internal displacement, resulting in difficulties in supporting IDPs and bringing their plight to global attention. One of the most important recent changes resulting from the 2015 European refugee crisis occurred at the UN summit that took place 19 September 2016, at which the IOM was formally incorporated into the UN – a development considered long overdue.[9]

The term ‹asylum seekers›, which refers to those who have claimed asylum but have not yet had their claims adjudicated[10] has acquired growing importance, especially in Western Europe since the 1990s. As with stocks and flows of refugees and IDPs, asylums seekers have increased dramatically in number since the end of the Cold War. This is no doubt partly due to the character of the ‹new wars› (Mary Kaldor), in which 90% of those killed are civilians.[11] These conflicts, characterised by ethnic division and brutal struggles to control populations, comprise struggles of state formation, but often they also involve a range of diverse internal and external state and non-state actors: mercenaries, militants, diasporas, companies and foreign governments, each with their own responsibility for causing mass displacements.

However, despite the fact that many of those claiming asylum have a very good case for being accorded refugee status, claiming asylum is often also a strategy for circumventing controls on economic migration, which countries as diverse as Britain, France and Germany have instituted since the 1960s and 1970s. By the 1990s, growing numbers of asylums seekers in Europe resulted in controversy surrounding the question of what constitutes ‹genuine› or ‹bogus› asylum seekers.

The concept of asylum has origins dating back to the French Revolution. Since the 1980s, however, the asylum system has become plagued by the intractable difficulty of separating authentic refugee flows from economic migration. Attempts to achieve

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8   Betts, A./Kainz, L. (2017), p. 2

9   Ibid., p. 11.

10 Turton, D. (2003), p. 13f.

11 Kaldor, M. (2006): New Wars and old wars Polity Press, Cambridge MA.

this separation through policy have often reinforced the intermixture of channels and networks that mediate the migration process, with profound implications for certain groups and for the entire European migration system.

Other important points of intersection and overlap between political and economic migration occur partly because both ‹economic› and ‹political› migrants experience ‹illegality› and/or ‹irregularity› in migratory travel, transit, residency and work. The apparent vulnerability of refugees and asylum seekers to agents of forced labour migration (so called modern slavery), human smuggling and trafficking has been a major concern for policymakers since at least the late 1990s. The extent to which cross-border forced labour migration exists is a matter of some controversy, and this is also true regarding the degree of coercion and exploitation involved in illegal travel facilitated by agents of smuggling and/or trafficking. Scholars of human smuggling have observed that the trafficking framework has a tendency to portray voluntary migration as forced – a strategy for tackling unwanted immigration.

Given the difficulty of classifying migrants as economic or political, forced or free because of the malleability of their situations, scholars of migration tend to refer to statuses as a more accurate means of categorising changing situations and experiences of mobility at any given point in time. The term ‹irregularity›, in this report, refers to a status into and out of which individual migrants can move over time throughout the migration process: This, of course, may already occur in the sending context, if the endorsement or bureaucratic procedures stipulated as necessary by the country of origin for emigration are not respected.[12] The current migration debate, however, centres on migrants whose status is irregular from the standpoint of the destination countries due to the fact that they either enter illegally and/or do not comply with the legal conditions attached to their residency and/or employment. As Gosh underlines, the relations between these different sorts of irregularity is complex: they are not mutually exclusive, nor does the existence of one imply that any of the others will necessarily follow. Some of those who enter and/or reside and/or work without legal sanction are undocumented. However, many of the problems they experience arise specifically from the fact that their actions contravene national laws, and not as a consequence of being outside the ‹formal›, regulated sector. Hence the terms ‹irregular›, ‹unlawful› and ‹illegal› – used interchangeably here – are often more accurate than ‹clandestine›, ‹undocumented› and ‹undeclared›.

Incidentally, the terms ‹smuggling› and ‹trafficking› are not unproblematic. If there was much confusion over their meaning in the 1990s, there is a growing scholarly acceptance of the analytical and/or practical need to distinguish between ‹human smuggling› on the one hand, defined by the Vienna Protocols as the ‹procurement for profit for illegal entry of a person into and/or illegal residence in a State of which the person is not a national or permanent resident›, and ‹trafficking in persons› which, on the other, is specified as ‹the recruitment, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons,

either by the threat or use of abduction, force, fraud, deception or coercion...› [13] In April 2016, at a conference in Florence, Italy, several leading scholars of human smuggling noted the growing tendency of states to portray smuggling as trafficking, thereby misrepresenting volitional border crossings as forced, which is a cheap way of demonising and criminalising all facilitation of entry into Europe.[14] In conjunction with the growing militarisation and privatisation of border controls, detention and deportation, it seems that migration policy increasingly tends towards ‹prohibition without protection›. The bellicose language used against ‹traffickers› and ‹gangs› (often referred to as a ‹war›) ignores the complexities surrounding human smuggling, arguably the primary means through which refugees can access rights (the term ‹humanitarian smuggling›, encapsulated in the iconic figure of Oscar Schindler, was widely invoked at the conference in Florence).

Nonetheless, in this report the terms smuggling and trafficking are retained as useful heuristic devices, although it is unlikely that they will ever capture the full reality of any given situation on the ground. If anything, they are best seen as two ends of a ‹continuum›, in which there is ‹room for considerable variation between the extremes›;[15] as with ‹irregularity›, individual migrants can move from being smuggled to situations of trafficking and vice versa.

Other types of migration, which are not easily classifiable as either political or economic in any narrow sense, are also relevant. Particular significance is accorded to environmental migration, and that despite the fact that it is not a recognised legal category. Referred to in this report as eco-migration, this type of mobility encompasses populations affected by disaster, climate change and also development-induced forced displacement and resettlement (DFDR).[16] Since these populations are deemed to be under protection from their government (and therefore not in a refugee-like situation), they have often struggled to receive humanitarian aid and support of the sort accorded to refugees.

Experts are divided over whether climate change-related migration should be legally acknowledged, and there is little evidence that such a new legal category will be created in the near future.[17] However, the Nansen process on Climate Change and

13 Salt, J./Hogarth, J. (2000): Migrant trafficking and human smuggling in Europe: A Review of the Evidence, IOM, p. 153.

14 Workshop convened by Sanchez, G./Achille, L. (2016): Critical Approaches to Irregular Migration Facilitation: Dismantling the Human Smuggler Narrative, European University Institute: https://www.eui.eu/events/detail?eventid=119453.

15 Graycar, A. (1999): «Trafficking in human beings». Paper presented at the International Conference on Migration, Culture and Crime, Jerusalem: http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:AxUPma_uwzkJ:www.aic.gov.au/media_library/conferences/other/graycar_adam/1999-07-trafficking.pdf+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=pk&client=firefox-b.

16 Colson, E. (2003): «Forced migration and the anthropological response» in Journal of Refugee Studies 16 (1); Madlonado, J.K. (2012): ‹A New Path Forward: Researching and Reflecting on Forced Displacement and Resettlement: Report on the International Resettlement Conference: Economics, Social Justice, and Ethics in Development-Caused Involuntary Migration, Den Haag, in Journal of Refugee Studies, 25 (2), S. 193-220.

17 McAdam, J (2012): Climate change, forced migration, and international law, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Displacement, initiated in 2012 by the governments of Switzerland and Norway, indicates that there is a growing recognition of the impact global warming has on human mobility. As such, it figures analytically in this report, a contribution to the developing conversation about non-binding best practices – that is, practices that are of particular relevance to regions likely to be worst affected by the global ecological crisis. In sociological terms, eco-migration (both disaster-induced and DFDR) is forced, and thus shares many of the traits of the other legally recognised forms of involuntary displacement discussed in this report.

However, as we will see, the term ‹forced migration›, is itself a heuristic device that requires some discussion, and that despite its usefulness in bringing together all the above-listed types of displacement and involuntary mobility into a single theoretical, non-hierarchical frame. As policymakers have sought to apply ever narrower definitions of what constitutes a refugee and who is deserving of protection, progressive scholars, journalists and others engaged in advocacy and research sympathetic to migrants often feel a moral imperative to emphasise a lack of choice and agency in migratory decision-making. Forced migrants ‹make a special claim on our concern,› requiring us to consider ‹what is or should be our moral community, and ultimately what it means to be human›.[18] It is with this moral obligation in mind that *Al Jazeera*, for instance, made a conscious editorial decision to refer to the ‹crisis› of 2015 as a *refugee* (not migrant) crisis. However well-intended and politically sound such gestures may be, scholarship has established again and again that, ‹from a sociological point of view, we can rarely make very clear distinctions between voluntary and involuntary migration›.[19]

The following contributions draw upon two very elementary concepts from the field of migration studies. The first is *social networks*, a concept that has become so dominant in the field that Charles Tilly once wrote – ‹it's not individuals or even households but networks that migrate›.[20] Social networks are ‹sets of interpersonal relations that link migrants or return migrants with relatives, friends or countrymen at home. These mid-level units of analysis allow us to think of migration processes, causes and effects between the micro individual level and macro level at which states operate. They convey information, provide assistance, facilitate employment and accommodation, and give support in various forms. In doing so, they reduce the costs and uncertainty of migration and therefore facilitate it›.[21] As Portes points out, social networks are not in themselves ‹social capital› – the ‹ability to mobilise them (and other forms of capital) on demand›,[22] but the two are strongly linked to one another.

18 Turton, D. (2003).

19 Stepputat, F./Sorensen, N. (2014): «Sociology and forced migration», in the Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration, Oxford University Press, London, p. 86.

20 Tilly, C. (1990): «Transplanted networks», in Immigration Reconsidered, New York: ed. by V. Yans-MacLoughlin, Oxford University Press, p. 84.

21 Arango, J. (2004): «Theories of International Migration», in International migration in the new millennium, hrsg. von D.Joly Aldershot, Ashgate, p. 27; Massey, D./ Arango J./Hugo, G./ Kouaouci, A./Pellegrino, A./Taylor, J.E. (1998): Worlds in Motion, Oxford, Clarenden Press, p. 42.

22 Portes, A. (1995): «Economic Sociology and the sociology of immigration», in The economic sociology of immigration, hrsg. von A. Portes, New York: Russel Sage Foundation, p. 12.

Both are central to forging global pathways of migration centred and connected across the world. These configurations of mobility comprise the second concept drawn upon in this study: migration systems. The latter can be defined as geo-spatial formations of mobility formed over time, connecting movements of people to concomitant flows of goods, capital and information sustained and reinforced by social, political and institutional networks and relationships which make possible and encourage migration along certain paths and not others.[23]

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23   Kritz, M./Lim, L./Zlotnik H. (1992): International migration systems: a global approach, Oxford, Clarenden.

A topography of complexity – migration to, within and from Pakistan

Ever since the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan has consistently hosted one of the world's largest refugee populations. At the fall of the Taliban, in 2001, its population of Afghan refugees was over five million. Pakistan also has the sixth largest global diaspora – a population of around six million on all continents – a diaspora, which keeps the Pakistani economy afloat (overseas remittances have been Pakistan's principal source of foreign exchange since the 1980s). It ranks seventh in the world in terms of countries worst affected by climate change; an indication of what this will mean can be gained from the devastating impact of the 2010 floods, which uprooted an estimated 20 million people within Pakistan's own borders. Less well known are the staggering numbers displaced by military operations within Pakistan during the War on Terror: over five million between 2007-16, though remarkably many of these have returned by now. Around four million of Pakistan's Afghan population has also been repatriated in recent years. At the same time, Pakistan has been a major contributor to Europe's ‹refugee crisis›, with close to 100,000 Pakistanis claiming asylum in 2015-16. This was predictable: Since the 1990s, Pakistan was consistently among the top countries of origin of asylum applicants to the EU. Irregular migrants from Pakistan travel and transit through the exact same pathways used by Afghans; an unknown but for sure significant number of Afghans who apply for asylum in Europe are themselves former residents of Pakistan, underlining the how entwined the Pakistani migration system is with Afghan refugee flows. Around 20 percent of the refugees and asylum seekers whose presence in Europe was deemed to have triggered a ‹crisis› in 2015 and 2016 were from Afghanistan and Pakistan.[1]

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[1]   EASO (European Asylum Support Office): https://www.easo.europa.eu/news-events/press-release-pakistan-security-situation (all websites accessed 17 October 2017).

Market in Peschawar

1. Historical and contemporary contexts

(i) Partition and the colonial legacy

The partition of the Indian subcontinent, which gave birth to Pakistan, involved one of history's most tragic instances of forced migration. The drawing of new borders and the establishment of independent nation states – India and Pakistan – led to one of the most miserable forced migrations in human history. A million people were killed during the violence in 1947, many tens of thousands of women abducted and raped, and up to 20 million displaced under appalling circumstances.[2] These horrors were repeated within Pakistan just over a quarter of a century later, when a genocidal campaign of mass killing and rape was visited upon the population of East Pakistan by the military, leading to the creation of Bangladesh in 1971. This time, nearly ten million people were displaced and possibly three million killed. As with the partition of 1947, which was followed by decades of contentious population transfer and left tens of thousands in legal limbo, the aftermath of the 1971 crisis has resulted in the formation of entire communities without formal and/or substantive citizenship rights. Nearly 500,000 were stranded in various parts of subcontinent until a repatriation scheme was devised in 1973.[3]

In India's 70th anniversary year, the difficulties faced by tens of thousands of West Pakistani Hindus residing without Indian citizenship in Kashmir continue, yet within India's national mythology, which portrays the nation state as a timeless vessel, they remain largely invisible.[4] In Pakistan, by contrast, the legacy of forced migration has taken on cultural and political significance, with Urdu-speaking populations who migrated at the time of partition adopting the identity of *Mohajir* (migrants) within Pakistan as a mark of their sacrifice and Islamic piety (their own journey invoking that of the Prophet Mohammad's forced migration from Mecca to Medina). Bitter divisions between Urdu-speaking *Mohajir* and other groupings in Karachi over rights and resources, reinforced by the perceived abandonment of Bihari Urdu-speaking populations during the 1971 crisis, have contributed to severe inter-ethnic and political violence between supporters of the MQM (Mutthahida Qaumi Movement – United People's Movement), a political party that represents the cause of Urdu-speaking populations against entrenched interests – above all the Punjabi-dominated military establishment ethnic Baluch and Pukhtun populations as well as the Taliban in Karachi.

Forced migration from India during partition influenced subsequent pathways of voluntary international migration to the West. Interviews with long-settled Pakistanis

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2   Zamindar, V. (2013): «India–Pakistan Partition 1947 and forced migration» in The Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration, Blackwell, London. DOI: 10.1002/9781444351071.wbeghm285

3   Datta, A. (2013): «Pakistan–Bangladesh Partition 1971 and forced migration» The Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration, Blackwell, London. DOI: 10.1002/9781444351071.wbeghm586

4   Safi, M.: «In limbo for 70 years, stateless West Pakistani families bear scars of partition» in the Guardian 14th August 2017: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/14/west-pakistani-families-partition-anniversary-india-1947.

in Britain suggest a significant proportion of those who willingly took up the opportunity to migrate to the UK from Pakistan before the 1970s had already been displaced.[5] In other words, partition helped to create a dynamic of mobility in Punjab, where some 12 million were displaced by the violence of 1947. With much of their wealth, land and social capital lost in the primary move from Indian Punjab, secondary international migration to the West was arguably more likely for those who had less to lose by trying their luck in Britain. This pattern of internal primary experiences of forced migration (displacement) within a country or region making secondary, voluntary international migration more likely is familiar to scholars of migration, and will be seen again in the case of Pakistan's Afghan population.

Early on, forced migration from Pakistan to the West was also shaped by environmental factors. Through a joint international venture led by British and other Western enterprises, the world's largest hydro-electric earth dam was constructed at Mangla in Mirpur in 1960, displacing 100,000 people (18,000 families) in the process. Some were given vouchers facilitating their migration to the UK as compensation for losing their lands and employment; a sizeable number would have migrated to join relatives in the UK. By the late 1960s, passport offices opened in Rawalpindi and Mirpur itself. Consequently, for a significant proportion of Britain's Pakistani arrivals since the 1960s forced environmental migration underlay their decision-making.[6]

(ii) Migration to the UK

Britain emerged as a migratory destination for South Asians in the 19th and early 20th centuries, when Indian travellers to London and other English seaports laid the foundations of today's South Asian diaspora in Europe. By 1932, the Indian National Congress estimated that there were over 7,000 Indians in the UK, though this was most probably an underestimate.[7] When, in 1947, a distinct Pakistan-UK migration system was established, Britain initially opened its doors to the ‹New Commonwealth› (NC) through the *British Nationality Act of 1948*, which defined Commonwealth citizenship for Great Britain and the colonies. Only a relatively small proportion from South Asia took up the opportunity to migrate at this time. Until the early 1960s, the rate of labour migration from Pakistan and India into Britain was low compared to other countries and regions. Alarm at the presence of non-white populations led to the introduction of restrictive immigration policies, which paradoxically boosted rates of migration. The 1962 *Commonwealth Immigration Act* boosted NC-British migration, as thousands rushed to ‹beat the ban›, a number of whom may never have migrated without it. In 1960, migration from the subcontinent had been only 7,500. In 1961, 48,000 entered Britain as rumours of impending anti-immigration legislation circulated.[8] Thus, as a direct consequence of restrictive state policy, a much more sizeable community of

5 Ahmad, A.N. (2016): Masculinity, Sexuality and Illegal Migration London, Routledge, p. 48.

6 Khan, V.S. (1977): «The Pakistanis: Mirpuri villagers at home and in Bradford», in: Between two cultures: migrants and minorities in Britain, edited by J.Watson, Oxford Blackwell, p. 66

7 Visram, R. (1986): Ayahs, Lascars and Princes Pluto, London. p. 190.

8 Hiro, D. (1973): Black British, White British Penguin, London p. 103, 108.

permanent Pakistani residents sprang up. Its composition, in terms of sexual ratio, would become increasingly balanced, as marriage migration flows of women soon reached thousands and have remained at such levels ever since.

After Prime Minister Edward Heath came to power in 1971, the *Immigration Act of 1971* was passed which restricted the right of entry into Britain of individuals without parents or grandparents born in Britain, reinforcing the preference for the ‹Old› Commonwealth. Subsequently, Margaret Thatcher instituted various measures to curb transnational subcontinental marriages including the *British Nationality Act of 1981*, so that by 1982 policy had already altered the composition of stocks in terms of the ratio of workers to dependents, and men to women. Meanwhile, flows in general were substantially reduced, and even the number of dependents declined from 50,000 in 1972, to a mere 21,000 in 1983.[9]

(iii) A Global Diaspora

According to UN figures, the Pakistani diaspora, numbering some six million, is the sixth largest in the world – less only than that of India, China, Mexico, the Russian Federation and Bangladesh.[10] Pakistani migration to the UK remains significant, and looks to have developed in ways that were completely unforeseen by scholars and policymakers in the early 1990s. Already by 2004, however, the UK had been joined by several other important destinations as nodal points within a truly global diaspora, with overseas Pakistanis in the UK constituting just 20 percent of Pakistanis living and working abroad. Another 48 percent were based in the Middle East; 21 percent were in North America and around 7 percent in other EU countries.[11] The US and Canada were popular destinations for regular and irregular travellers, including some who claimed asylum. However, the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 transformed the US abruptly into a country less amenable to irregular migrants from Pakistan, thus boosting the popularity of other destinations, including Malaysia, Korea and continental Europe.

(iv) Migration to the Gulf

In stark contrast to today's attempts to mobilise outmigration as a form of generating foreign currency through remittances, in their early years, the newly formed states of India and Pakistan were not enthusiastic about emigration.[12] However, when the 1973 oil crisis transformed the Gulf into an immigrant-receiving region, Pakistan streamlined procedures to facilitate and regulate the acquisition of passports, travel and

9   Anwar, M. (1995): ‹New Commonwealth› Migration to the UK in The Cambridge Survey of World Migration, edited by R.Cohen, pp. 274-9.

10 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2016): International Migration Report 2015: Highlights (ST/ESA/SER.A/375).

11 Arif, G.M. (2009): Recruitment of Pakistani workers for overseas employment, Working Paper 64. International Labour Organization, Geneva, p. 7.

12 Hiro, op. cit. p. 107.

employment, creating the Bureau of Overseas Emigration and the Overseas Employment Corporation in the 1970s. In 1971, less than one thousand Pakistanis migrated to Saudi Arabia for work; by 1981 the figure had gone up to 85,000.[13] During the 1980s, overseas remittances from the Gulf became Pakistan's most important source of foreign exchange, keeping the economy afloat through various economic and political crises. Of the 8.7 million Pakistanis who went abroad for employment between 1971 and 2015, ninety-six percent headed to the Gulf. The main recipients are Saudi Arabia (which has absorbed 50 percent of all Pakistani labour migration) and the United Arab Emirates (33 percent).[14]

The Gulf migration system, based on restrictive visas that offer little chance of family reunification, naturalisation and/or lasting residential rights in the host society, is largely circular and regular. A small proportion of the vast flow involves dangerous illegal overland and sea travel to Dubai and Muscat, followed by undocumented work.[15] Irregular migrants have even less hope of settling in the Gulf. However, with the exception of a relatively small number of (much publicised) cases of young boys being sold as camel jockeys and women as sex workers, migration to the Gulf from Pakistan has been almost entirely *voluntary*. Due to the lack of protection for human and labour rights in the sending as well as the destination countries, the issue of forced labour has arisen, with some instances of coercion severe enough to merit the term, *trafficking*. An indication of migrant vulnerability can be gleaned from the findings of research into exploitation of workers conducted in recent years. These reveal that migrants are often charged exorbitant rates for visas and jobs, which are procured through private recruitment agencies and even social networks. Exploitative practices, such as contracts being altered upon arrival, giving workers less favourable terms, are not uncommon.[16]

The development of the *regional* Gulf migration system has had important consequences for global flows of forced migration, acting as a stepping stone for the relatively small numbers of ambitious *international* travellers who set their sights on the UK or the Schengen area. In the early 2000s, the UK in particular had already absorbed a new wave of Pukhtun emigrants from relatively small, semi-rural districts in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province (recently renamed Khyberpukhtun Khwa) such as Swat, Dir, Kohat and parts of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). These migrants belonged mostly to families that benefited from the vast, continuing migration to the Middle East that has sucked in and transformed the lives of millions across South Asia since the 1970s. Many grew up with fathers leading a transnational existence between home and the Gulf.

13   Tahir, P., Gazdar, H., Shahnaz, L. (2004): A New Perspective on Migration and Poverty issues in Pakistan, UK Department for International Development (DFID), p. 45

14   International Labour Organization (2016): The Cost of Migration, published by the ILO: http://www.ilo.org/islamabad/whatwedo/publications/WCMS_514127/lang--en/index.htm accessed 15 October 2017, p. 5.

15   Arif, op. cit., 2009, p. 30.

16   Arif, op. cit., 2009, p. xii.

«The Oranges in Europe taste better»

Although migration from Pakistan to the Gulf continues to increase, a growing preference in the Gulf states for better-trained workers from Bangladesh and India may have encouraged some migrants to consider alternative destinations. At the same time, developments relating to Afghanistan and the War on Terror resulted in new factors influencing westward travel. One thing is clear: Gulf migration has helped foster a new wave of mobile Pakistani Pukhtuns willing and able to reach European destinations. Some of these men have claimed asylum and are stakeholders in the European situation post-2015 (see part 3).

(v) Afghanistan and the Refugee Question

The mass exodus from Afghanistan following the Soviet invasion of 1979, a brutal civil war in the 1990s, and the 2001 NATO-led intervention have, at various points, made Pakistan home to the world's largest population of refugees. The initial influx between 1979 and 1980, that exceeded 1.5 million, saw entire households and communities connected by extended clan and kinship networks settle in Pakistan. Subsequently, an entire second and third generation of ‹Afghans› were in fact born and raised in Pakistan. Although they have experienced various kinds of discrimination stemming from their status as foreigners and marginalisation stemming from social and economic disadvantage, ethnic, social and tribal bonds binding ethnic Pukhtuns in particular have helped their integration within Pakistan's society and economy. Relatively well-off Afghans entered the urban commercial economy and transport sector, while the poorest have found jobs in the worst-paid sectors, such as construction, carpet weaving and brick making.[17]

The Afghan refugee population in Pakistan was considered something of a strategic asset by the Pakistani authorities and their US allies during the 1980s, and it has enjoyed UNHCR protection – and that despite the fact that Pakistan never signed the Geneva Convention. During the 1990s, the abrupt disappearance of American interest and the dwindling of international aid created an environment in which Islamabad's fateful support for the Taliban – part of its controversial ‹strategic depth› policy developed. At the same time, Pakistan's position towards existing refugee populations as well as new cohorts of ethnic Hazara fleeing persecution at the hands of the Taliban remained one of *relative* openness and acceptance of their presence.

By the time of the fall of the Taliban in 2001, over five million Afghans were in Pakistan.[18] Since then, attitudes towards Afghan refugees in Pakistan have increasingly hardened, and there has been an at times desperate drive to portray Afghanistan as a successful safe country. This resulted in massive AVR (Assisted Voluntary Repatriation) schemes run by the UNHCR, with some level of IOM involvement. Since 2003, following a series of tripartite agreements between the UNHCR and the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan, over 3.8 million Afghans were registered and repatriated

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17   Tahir et al 2004; see also Alimia, S. (2016): Vom Ende der Gedult: Afghanische Flüchtlinge in Pakistan, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/12934.pdf.

18   UNHCR (2005): Statistical Report on Census of Afghans in Pakistan http://www.unhcr.org/subsites/afghancrisis/431c7b1a2/census-afghans-pakistan-2005.html.

(until 2014).[19] As of July 2017, the remaining registered Afghan population in Pakistan is said to have dropped to 1.4 million, with an additional 600,000 to one million who are yet to be registered.[20] Advocacy from human rights organisations, scholars, activists, and civil society groups representing Afghan interests in Pakistan has resulted in a growing acceptance of the need to create visa regulations and new laws governing refugees, which would allow them to remain in Pakistan as legal residents. Many would prefer to stay in Pakistan, as this is where they have established livelihoods, social bonds – and the ongoing insecurity in Afghanistan doesn›t boost the wish to return either.[21]

Whatever the rights and wrongs of Pakistan's drive to remove its Afghan population, the well-known fluidity of the Pakistan-Afghan border – reflected in the permeability of the historically controversial Durand Line – makes many sceptical about the possibility of repatriating Pakistani Afghans. In the early 2000s, repatriation schemes that offered cash incentives for Afghans willing to return to Afghanistan reportedly failed, as migrants collected the cash, left – only to return to Pakistan.[22] Having intermarried with Pakistani citizens and/or established businesses in Pakistan, many Afghans in Pakistan have built up transnational lives, involving frequent cross-border movement; their belated recognition as refugees would be a mixed blessing, if it entails having to choose between countries. Also, refugee status may appear to be inconsistent with their coming and going to what is, after all, considered to be an unsafe country. As the title of one academic paper put the finger on the problem: ‹Afghan Refugees in Pakistan: Not All Refugees, Not Always in Pakistan, Not Necessarily Afghan?›.[23]

The significance of all this to forced migration, asylum flows, smuggling and trafficking into Europe is considerable. Firstly, for many Afghans Pakistan has been for decades a passage to the West; a closer look at the trajectories of many Afghan migrants to Europe reveals that these flows are in fact secondary processes that are driven by prior, primary migrations. There is every reason to believe that a substantial proportion of Afghans migrating to the West has either passed through Pakistan or came directly from there (see part 3).

If Pakistan acts as a springboard for westward movement among Afghans, there is also evidence that the reverse has been true: the westward mobility of Afghans in Pakistan acts as a stimulant for Pakistani migration to Europe, particularly within the Pukhtun ethnic communities in which Afghans are embedded. This might happen in one of several indirect ways. Having witnessed Afghans reach Europe and successfully claim asylum for decades, a small but not insignificant contingent of Pakistani

19 Khan, M. A. (2014): Pakistan's Refugee Policy, in: Forced Migration Review 46, p. 22, May 2014 http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/afghanistan/khan.pdf.

20 UNHCR (2017): UNHCR welcomes registration of a million undocumented Afghans in Pakistan, 21 July 2017: http://www.refworld.org/country,COI,UNHCR,,PAK,,5971c8904,0.html.

21 Interviews by author with UNHCR and IOM staff, Islamabad, 22 August 2017.

22 Tahir et al, op. cit. (2004) p. 67.

23 Kronenfeld, Daniel A. (2008): Afghan Refugees in Pakistan: Not All Refugees, Not Always in Pakistan, Not Necessarily Afghan?, Journal of Refugee Studies. 21: 1, pp. 43-63.

Pukhtuns may well have posed as Afghan refugees in the West, as a means of acquiring residency and work permits. In London, during the 2000s, individual Pakistani Pukhtuns adopting this strategy tended to enter the UK illegally after long overland and/or sea journeys, during which they had destroyed any documentation indicating their Pakistani citizenship. The steady introduction of biometric identification by Pakistan's NADRA (National Database Registration Authority) since the 2000s will have made this strategy less effective; almost all Pakistanis (96 percent) above the age of 18 are now registered with NADRA. Nonetheless, to claim Afghan heritage remains one possible way for illegal entrants to regularise their status, temporarily at least. Another strategy for Pukhtuns may be to take inspiration from the Afghan experience and argue their claim to asylum based on the ongoing violent conflicts, which also involve human rights abuses by the Pakistan army against civilians suspected of collaboration with Taliban (see part B). In other words, Afghan immigration to Pakistan is almost certainly a contributing factor to the high rates of outmigration from Khyber Pukhtunkhwa, which, despite being Pakistan's geographically smallest province, accounts for 28 percent of Pakistan's overall labour emigration between 1971 and 2015, exceeding by far its 12 percent share of the population.[24]

(vi) Other forced migrations

Invisible flows

One of the most notable aspects of Afghan migration is its high level of visibility. As Sanaa Alimia points out, the roots of this is the attention Afghans received during the Cold War for their value to the United States and its allies against the Soviet Union. Since 2001, this has again been the case, only now because of Pakistan's geopolitical and security concerns and the fight against Islamist militants. The resulting prominence of Afghans stands in contrast to the relative invisibility of other populations of forced migration into Pakistan, such as Bengali climate migrants displaced by floods and Burmese Rohingya fleeing persecution.[25] These were estimated to number 200,000 in 2004, and more recently the *New York Times* reported their number as half a million.[26]

The Pakistani government as well as international non-governmental organisations that manage forced displacement are silent on the plight of these groups, which leaves them in a difficult situation. They lead shadowy existences at the urban periphery where they dwell in the worst and most unsanitary conditions. Without access to humanitarian aid they experience high levels of marginalisation and vulnerability. To avoid persecution and access citizenship rights, a significant proportion deny their true identities altogether, identifying themselves as Bengalis settled in Pakistan

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24 ILO 2016, p.1.

25 Alimia, S. (2014): Who Counts as a Refugee, Himal South Asia 14 March: http://himalmag.com/counts-refugee/.

26 Zahra-Malik, M. (2017): Far from Myanmar, Rohingya in Pakistan are seething, New York Times, 12 September https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/12/world/asia/rohingya-pakistan-myanmar-violence.html.

before the 1971 war of independence. Since a 2014 clampdown on fake identity cards, others have had to manage as stateless persons without papers of any kind. Rohyniga fishermen who mistakenly cross into Indian waters often present the Indian Coast Guard with the unique problem of not knowing where to deport them to, once they have completed their sentences.[27] The lack of support for forced migrants towards rebuilding their lives in Pakistan would appear to create strong incentives to leave, but further research is required to make any kind of assessment on their trajectories within the Pakistani migration system. As things stand, these largely invisible populations of forced migration and their offspring live precarious lives in the informal sector, enduring frequent harassment and extortion at the hands of the police and bureaucrats charged with issuing them identity papers.

Exilic Outflows

The bulk of Pakistan's refugee and asylum outflows is made up of persecuted minorities such as the Ahmediyya, along with miscellaneous victims of state and societal oppression and sectarian persecution – Shia professionals, prominent ethno-nationalists, artists and journalists facing censorship or clerical rebuke, progressive political exiles, heterodox theologians and women fleeing oppressive circumstances. Despite the diverse array of individuals and communities who fall into these various groupings, it is useful to discuss them under the umbrella of a single category – *exiles*. While they are by no means socially homogenous within Pakistan, these otherwise disparate groups share important features: The grounds for their (well-founded) fears tend to be rooted in some form of majoritarian persecution; the mortal threats they face emanate from a murky, overlapping combination of state, society and/or non-state actors; they rarely emigrate *en masse* as part of an identifiable flow – rather, they constitute a constant trickle of individuals who tend to have the resources and networks that enable them to travel internationally. This is not to suggest the Ahmadiyya, for instance, have not migrated in significant numbers. Clearly, they have, and emigrants are generally supported by a highly organised diaspora stretching from the UK to North America and well beyond. Rather, it is to point out that this dispersal has taken place over long time periods, and that it takes forms that are quite distinct from the more spontaneous displacements that result from military conflict or disasters. Last year, the UNHCR received 58,460 applications for asylum from Pakistan – the fifth highest in the world. Close to a quarter were recognised as being entitled to protection. This is much lower than the overall 60 percent success rate of all asylums seekers, reflecting the fact that, although on the rise, the various forced migratory outflows identified above are still much lower than Pakistan's historic refugee stocks.[28]

27 Hasan, S. (2017): Rohingya in Karachi Struggle with Identity crisis, in: Dawn, 16 September: https://www.dawn.com/news/1357920.

28 UNHCR (2017): «Global Trends at a Glance» http://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2016/.

The Ahmadiyya – a religious minority officially designated non-Muslim in 1974 by the PPP government of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto (under pressure from the clergy) – have always faced some degree of persecution in Pakistan, with pogroms in the Punjab as early as 1953. However, since their religious practice was severely curtailed in 1984 under the military dictatorship of General Zia-ul-Haq, a period during which Pakistan underwent a profoundly conservative revolution that institutionalised a number of retrograde orthodoxies, violence against them has risen steadily. Pakistan is home to the largest number of Ahmediyya. This makes the frequency, with which individuals are target-killed with impunity (mostly in Punjab, where the population of several million – one or two percent of Pakistan's overall population – is concentrated), even more alarming. The rise in violence and bigotry against the Ahmediyya has been mirrored by similarly targeted attacks against Shia professionals – doctors, lawyers and other prominent figures – since the mid-1990s, when the phenomenon, which began in Punjab, migrated south to Sindh Province.

Since Pakistan's involvement in the War on Terror, targeted killings of individuals from these communities – as well as other minorities such as Christians – have increased and taken new forms. Amnesty International noted that, in Karachi alone, between 2000 and mid-2002, some 110 people were victims of sectarian killings. Of these, 69 belonged to the Shia minority. Shia professionals in Karachi reported a constant fear of assassination, with doctors frequently altering their daily routines, looking over their shoulders and receiving little to no protection from the police who, disconcertingly, advised them to arm themselves and keep personal bodyguards.[29]

Target killings have continued to become more frequent, and today they are paralleled by large-scale bomb attacks and commando-style massacres of Ahmediyya, Shia and Christians, who are killed indiscriminately at their places of worship, their congregations and even in public parks. This points to the growing role of the militant wings of two Islamist organisations: the notoriously bloodthirsty Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, a sectarian death squad which proudly claimed responsibility for a series of murderous blasts in Quetta targeting Hazara Shia in 2013; and the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP, the Pakistani outlet of the Taliban), who, together with their off-shoots, have also targeted all three named minorities as part of its broader campaign of mass murder in which government workers, police, shoppers in bazaars and even school children have been killed in scores. With some justification, the systematic killing of minorities in order to ‹purify society› has been called ‹slow-motion genocide› by some human rights advocates and commentators.[30]

29 Amnesty International (2002): «Targeted killings of Health Professionals in Pakistan» (ASA 33/031/2002), https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/116000/asa330312002en.pdf.

30 Husain, W. (2014): Early warning signs of Shia genocide in Pakistan, in: The Diplomat 22 May https://thediplomat.com/2014/05/early-warning-signs-of-shia-genocide-in-pakistan/.

Pakistan's notorious dirty war in Baluchistan in which thousands of students accused of ethno-nationalist sympathies have disappeared, their mutilated bodies bearing marks of torture when discovered, is perhaps the best known case of ongoing state repression leading to forced migration; many Baluch nationalist leaders now live in exile. Research into human rights abuses in Baluchistan makes clear, the state has made little secret of its own role, abducting individuals in broad daylight as a means of intimidating the wider population.[31] However, its collusion with militant sectarian organisations, which are given free rein to operate in Baluchistan (home of the Taliban's infamous ‹Quetta Shura›), something that came into the spotlight in 2013, following a series of explosions and other attacks targeting Hazara Shia, has had important implications for forced migration.

Despite the apparent basis of their vitriol in theology, militant Islamists often appear to target individuals and groups whose worldviews are at odds with their reactionary social values and wider political objectives: polio vaccinators, human rights advocates and socialist defenders of the poor. In this overlap lies perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the threat posed by militant Islamist non-state actors: their complex and largely unknowable relationship with the deep state, which has colluded with, nurtured, and/or supported virtually each of these groups at some point in order to achieve its own objectives. The basis of co-operation lies partly in ultra-right wing values shared by Islamist militants and the military establishment, not least elements within the intelligence agencies, but also in the stubborn belief of policymakers, which are faced with ethno-nationalist demands for regional devolution, that religious militants are a lesser evil than separatists.

Individual asylum cases from Pakistan can underline the complexity of political exile in situations where refugees in diaspora continue to actively engage in political activity that affects their countries of origin. MQM leader Altaf Hussain continues to run one of Pakistan's most important political parties from London, where he fled from Karachi in the early 1990s with at least 31 murder cases against him. British judges have found MQM to be a violent organisation that has killed over 200 police in Karachi. Amnesty International accused it of ‹torture, hostage taking, abductions and deliberate and arbitrary killings› of countless political opponents. In September 2010, a senior MQM member, Imran Farooq, was murdered in London. Hussain, whose fiery speeches from London regularly incite violence against opponents, is widely suspected of involvement. Having enjoyed a close working relationship with the British intelligence agencies throughout his years in London, he has not yet been

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[31] Human Rights Watch (2011): We can torture, kill or keep you for years, https://www.hrw.org/report/2011/07/28/we-can-torture-kill-or-keep-you-years/enforced-disappearances-pakistan-security.

convicted.[32] In other words, this particular political exile – who doubtlessly fled Pakistan for the UK with genuine fears for his life – continues to play an ambiguous role in Pakistani politics, and may well have been the reason why others fled Pakistan, fearing for their safety.

Journalism and Free Speech

Pakistan is considered one of the most dangerous places for journalists, who face multiple threats from state and non-state actors. There exists a long history of violent suppression of political dissent and free speech. However, between 2004 and 2008, the newly independent television media played a role in the fall of General Pervaiz Musharraf's dictatorship, and journalists felt briefly emboldened. The murder of Saleem Shazad, tortured to death in 2011 for reporting embarrassing details about the state's complex relationship with Al Qaeda, marked the beginning of a new phase of repression. Direct and indirect methods of censorship began to severely curtail the scope for critical discourse. Attacks on progressive journalists such Hamid Mir, in 2014, for speaking out on Baluchistan and liberal activist Sabeen Mahmud's assassination, in 2015, have been seen by many as another decisive shift in the state's approach to political dissent. This was prompted by a new phase in Pakistan's fight against the Taliban (operation Zarb-e-Azb, 2014), which was accompanied by a marked reduction in tolerance for criticism; secondly, by geopolitical realignments that have brought Pakistan closer to China following the assassination of Osama bin Laden by the United States in 2011. Since the CPEC (China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor) was announced, official Pakistan (the military establishment and its allies within the political elite and media) has been intent on ensuring that CPEC is rolled out without opposition.

After 2011, the strangulation of critical journalism increased the importance of social media as a platform for free expression. However, in 2017, dissenting bloggers also came under attack, when Waqas Goraya, an IT consultant and outspoken social media critic of the military and religious establishment, was abducted along with several other secular activists – a group that became known as the ‹missing bloggers›. Released three weeks after their kidnapping, the manner in which the bloggers were silenced is significant: fabricated allegations of blasphemy against them suddenly surfaced and proliferated on social media, evidence of a deadly new tactic in thought control employed by ultra-right wing elements of the state, which is now increasingly active in policing social media.[33]

At least 65 people including lawyers, judges and activists have been murdered by vigilantes over blasphemy allegations since 1990. This shows that, increasingly,

32 Amnesty International (1996), Human Rights Crisis in Karachi, February AI Index: ASA 33/01/96: https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/172000/asa330011996en.pdf; Bennet-Jones, O. (2013): Altaf Hussain, the notorious MQM leader who swapped Pakistan for London, in: The Guardian, 29 July: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/29/altaf-hussain-mqm-leader-pakistan-london.

33 Tauqeer, A. (2017): Pakistani Activist Waqas Gorya (interview), 6 Februrary, Deutsche Well, http://www.dw.com/en/pakistani-activist-waqas-goraya-progressive-voices-are-more-united-than-ever/a-37579033.

Pakistani society is playing an autonomous role in policing and punishing perceived deviations from Pakistan's official religious orthodoxy. The introduction of the blasphemy laws has shaped the mindset of mainstream society, and all too often instant death is deemed the appropriate sentence for individuals unfortunate enough to be accused of this ‹crime›. Minorities are the main victims, above all the Ahmadiyya, whose belief in the prophethood of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad has led to at least 50 public prosecutions for blasphemy in 2009 alone. This caused ‹thousands of Ahmadis [to flee] Pakistan to seek asylum in countries including Canada and the United States›.[34] An anti-Christian pogrom in Lahore's Joseph Colony in 2013 following a blasphemy allegation against an individual by a friend, a 2012 prosecution against 14-year-old girl Rimsha Masih accused of burning pages from the Koran, and the gruesome 2014 lynching of a Christian couple in Punjab, ruthlessly beaten and burned to death following blasphemy accusations; all of this highlights the particular vulnerability of poor Christians to such allegations, both as individuals and as communities. After several weeks in prison, Masih fled to Canada with her family. Mashal Khan, a young secularist and freethinking university student, was not so fortunate. He was shot and beaten to death last spring in Mardan within a short time after false allegations were circulated against him. Gruesome footage of Mashal's murder, captured on camera and circulated widely on social media, is powerful evidence of the particular threat posed by Pakistani's blasphemy law, which has normalised the killing of anyone accused of the crime, as well as of anyone who dares question the logic that fostered it in the first place.

2. Internal Displacement

(i) Conflict-Induced-Displacement (CID)

The North-West
Conflict between the Pakistani state and militant groups in Northwestern Pakistan began in South Waziristan in March 2004, when Pakistan pursued Al Qaeda fighters in the tribal areas as part of the so-called called War on Terror. There had been sporadic clashes with militants for several years against a backdrop of US drone strikes, which killed scores of alleged militants and an unknown number of civilians. Eventually this lead to the formation of the TTP, the military's principal adversary in a conflict that, as of 2016, had claimed 62,000 lives and an additional 67,000 casualties.[35]

The military's earliest incursions occurred in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas, in regions where few civilians live, and thus not many were displaced. This changed dramatically following the 2008-9 Taliban uprising and takeover in the

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34   Human Right Watch (2010): «Massacre of Minority Ahmadis» 1 June, https://www.hrw.org/news/2010/06/01/pakistan-massacre-minority-ahmadis.

35   Crawford, N. (2016): Update on the human costs of war for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Watson Institute, Brown University, http://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/figures/2016/direct-war-death-toll-iraq-afghanistan-and-pakistan-2001-370000 accessed 15 October 2017.

Swat Valley, which triggered operation Rah-e-Nijat (path to salvation) that displaced over a million people. Operations in Khyber, Bajaur and Mohmand Agencies, Buner, Lower Dir, Shangla district and South Waziristan also took place during this middle phase of the conflict, which was followed by a period of widespread terrorism by militants and low intensity counterinsurgency. The Taliban and other armed groups continued to pose a deadly threat to Pakistani society, targeting civilians in indiscriminate massacres, as well as targeted acts of persecution against perceived ‹spies›. ‹Targeted killings› by US drones have also continued, turning the North West into a laboratory of dubious new techniques in warfare and surveillance. In 2014, the Pakistan Army began an operation in North Waziristan, Zarb-e-Azb (sharp strike) that displaced another million people, bringing the overall number for 2007-16 to a staggering estimated 5.3 million people. Many IDPs do not register, so the true figure may be higher.

Given the scale of these displacements, the immediate response of national and provincial authorities has been described as ‹laudable› by some organisations.[36] In 2016, the total number of those returned since 2008 was reported as 4.8 million.[37] The UNHCR, which, together with the UNDP, World Bank and foreign governments has supported the Pakistani government in its efforts to provide IDPs in the North-West with food, cash and transportation at a rate of between 400,000 and 160,000 rupees (4000 to 1600 USD) to return and rebuild their homes, described the latter's handing of IDPs as very good practice, as most refugees were quickly registered, their most pressing needs met and most of them rapidly returned to their homes.[38]

Other observers are less sanguine and point to human rights abuses by the military during its campaigns against the Taliban. Pakistan's constitution is not enforceable in the Tribal Areas, as these are still governed according to the draconian colonial-era Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR). In 2011, the armed forces were granted further sweeping powers of arrest and detention under the Actions (in Aid of Civil Power) Regulations (AACPR). As the state regained territory from the Taliban, the armed forces detained thousands on suspicion of colluding with the Taliban, and countless cases of abduction, torture, intimidation, mistreatment and summary execution were reported.[39] Since 2014, the Tribal Areas have became a no-go area for journalists, which has led to an information blackout, leaving the military completely unaccountable. In 2015, the introduction of military courts that routinely convict and execute alleged ‹terrorists› marked a new phase in the deterioration of justice. Anyone afraid of being accused of aiding and abetting the Taliban has powerful reasons to emigrate.

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36 IDMC (2015): Pakistan: solutions to displacement elusive for both new and protracted IDPs, 24 August, http://www.internal-displacement.org/south-and-south-east-asia/pakistan/2015/pakistan-solutions-to-displacement-elusive-for-both-new-and-protracted-idps.

37 Sayeed, S. & Shah, R. (2017): Displacement, Repatriation and Rehabilitation Stories of Dispossession from Pakistan's Frontier, Working Paper, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (German Institute for International and Security Affairs).

38 Interview with UNHCR, Islamabad, 22 August 2017.

39 Amnesty International (2012): Hands of Cruelty https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2012/12/report-exposes-hands-cruelty-pakistan-s-tribal-areas/.

As for those expelled from their homes, reports rarely reflect the optimistic picture given by officials. More than six months after a military operation that began in June 2014, some 193,708 registered families (1,162,248 individuals) were still internally displaced in or outside camps in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).[40] Many of them were from Waziristan, but the figure also included people displaced by operations in previous years. In May 2017, 47,259 families remained officially displaced, a reminder of their ongoing plight.[41] Critics point out that when the military first moved into the North Waziristan, Pakistan did not seek international assistance, allocating a mere five million USD to aid the IDPs. Some returnees were pressured and several journalists reported that, before returning home, residents were forced to sign agreements, taking collective responsibility for any militant presence in their areas, with collective punishments allowing for demolition of homes, blockades, and the expulsion of tribes.

Baluchistan

At the same time, military operations underway since 2005 against a separatist insurgency in Pakistan's southwestern province Baluchistan, which were accompanied by vicious sectarian attacks against Shia minorities, have resulted in the displacement of an estimated 275,000 people.[42] The nationalist uprising, led by groups such as the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) and Baloch Liberation Front (BLF), which began in 2006, has been ruthlessly put down by the military, with relatively little protest from the West, as Pakistan is an important US ally in the War on Terror (see Part A). Given the limited access that journalists have to the province and the strict censorship, the violence and the forced migration it causes have received little international attention. In 2010, a report on Dera Bugti district called the localadministration ‹dysfunctional›, education and healthcare ‹abysmal› and pointed to an absence of clean drinking water, a lack of roads and landmines. Approximately 14,000 to 18,000 people had fled from the area.[43]

Some claim the number of Baluch who have fled the province is much larger than reported, with most emigrating to Sindh and Punjab. However, up to 20,000 may have entered neighbouring Afghanistan (and could thus arguably be categorised under ‹refugee outflows› rather than IDPs). A decade after these displacements, the authorities and their pro-government tribal rivals reportedly still will not allow the displaced Bugti tribe to return home. Tens of thousands of the neighbouring Marri tribe have also been rendered homeless by sporadic fighting between separatists and

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40   UNHCR December 2015 Fact Sheet: www.unhcr.org/5000210e9.pdf accessed 17 October 2017.

41   UNHCR May 2017 Fact Sheet: unhcrpk.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Factsheet-May-2017.pdf.

42   EASO (2017): Pakistan security situation, COI Report: https://www.easo.europa.eu/news-events/easo-publishes-coi-security-report-pakistan. p. 45.

43   Constitution Petition 77 of 2010, www.supremecourt.gov.pk/web/user.../Const.Petition-No.77of2010_12.10.2012.pdf, pp.16-19.

government forces since 2010.[44] The vindictive refusal of the Pakistani authorities to acknowledge these displacements stems from a general intransigence in dealing with the province. It prevents those affected from seeking international assistance, underlining once more how geopolitical realities decide who gets classified as a refugee and/or IDP worthy of support. Meanwhile, Quetta's Hazara population, struck repeatedly by a devastating campaign of genocidal sectarian attacks, has also resorted to emigration (see part C). Like the Baluch, they too could be classified as part of Pakistan's exilic, forced migratory outflow, though of course they appear in European statistics as Afghans.

(ii) Disaster-induced Displacement (DID)

Disasters induced by natural hazards such as monsoon rains and earthquakes are a major source of forced migration in Pakistan – in fact, numerically they are the most important reason for flight, though there is virtually no research into this topic. South Asia will be hit harder by global warming than any other region in the world. The reasons for its vulnerability include a dangerous combination of acute geophysical/meteorological change and human factors such as poverty, institutional weakness and demographic pressure that threaten the livelihood and safety of vast populations. Within the sub-continent, Pakistan is particularly ill prepared to deal with large-scale displacement that could become the norm as climate change intensifies.[45] As South Asia's most rapidly urbanising country,[46] demographic pressure on Pakistan's already under-resourced towns and cities could cause further political instability – with regional and global implications.

In 2010, floods directly affected an estimated 20 million people in Pakistan, killing over 1,700. Research has shown that the impact of the disaster in terms of income has been significantly worse in rural areas, where recovery was much slower after the flood. Indeed, rural households accounted for almost 90% of all affected. In other words, the uneven impact of the floods underlined the defining socio-environmental inequality between town and country in Pakistan. It should come as no surprise that rural households have been more likely to move to entirely different areas and less likely to return to their original home after six months.[47]

Little detailed interest has been taken in patterns of disaster-induced displacement til date. Nonetheless, the floods have shown clearly that climate change will reinforce Asia's already barely sustainable rates of urbanisation, exerting huge pressure

44 Kakar, A. & Siddique, A. (2016): Pakistan's invisible Baluch displacement crisis, Gandhara, 24 February https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/pakistan-balochistan-displacement/27571358.html.

45 Colom, A.: Climate change in Pakistan, The Guardian 21 May 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2014/may/21/pakistan-climate-change-asia.

46 Kugelman, M. (2014): Pakistan's Runaway Urbanization, Woodrow Wilson Centre, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/ASIA_140502_Pakistan%27s%20Runaway%20Urbanization%20rpt_0530.pdf.

47 Kirsch T.D., Wadhwani C., Sauer L., Doocy S., Catlett C. (2012): Impact of the 2010 Pakistan Floods on Rural and Urban Populations at Six Months, in: PLOS Currents Disasters Edition 1. doi: 10.1371/4fdfb212d2432.

A man fleeing from the flood

on small to medium size towns, as the rural poor are pushed towards them by floods and droughts. In southern Punjab, migration triggered by the 2010 floods suggests that many of those who migrate to cities as a result of ecological pressures live in informal settlements and experience marginality at the interface of rural and urban worlds.[48]

Yet, there are circumstances under which climate migration leads to relatively favourable experiences for some forcibly relocated individuals and communities, or for some of those migrating as an adaptive strategy, freeing agricultural labourers from tyrannical landlords for instance. A key question for future research concerns how migratory outcomes vary in accordance with state rehabilitation packages, different adaptive strategies and other factors. How should approaches to economic development be calibrated in order to be able to cope with the massive displacements likely to occur because of climate change? Pakistan, with its colossal population of 207 million – the sixth largest in the world – ranks 7th among the countries most affected by climate change. As we will see below, there is little indication that this alarming prospect is at the forefront of policymaking.

(iii) Development-induced Forced-Displacement and Resettlement (DFDR)

A 2011 study estimated the number of persons displaced by development projects in India at 21 million.[49] Virtually no systematic research has been done on the extent of DFDR in Pakistan, though it could well account for displacements numbering in the hundreds of thousands, perhaps even millions. In Pakistan, as in many less developed countries that are playing catch-up, economic development and defence are prioritised over human development. Much of the damage during the 2010 floods occurred in areas near hydraulic engineering structures such as barrages, which suggests infrastructure was spared at the expense of densely populated villages.

Research on the 2010 floods has also revealed cases in which communities displaced by disaster have been resettled in their original homes with the help of humanitarian relief funds, only to be displaced once again when the government decided to build Chinese-funded power plants in the same location.[50] Such examples raise important questions about the contradictory workings of humanitarian aid in times of ‹crisis› and development in times of ‹normality›. Rehabilitation policies and international funds allocated to help and relocate internally displaced persons rarely work in harmony with patterns of foreign investment. The current Pakistani government and the military establishment want to use CPEC as a framework to pursue growth-led development through the building of large infrastructure that will displace rural communities. In urban areas, the development of housing in areas with informal settlements of the poor is yet another cause of displacement.

48   Ahmad, A.N. (2016): Disaster governance at the urban-rural interface: the 2010 floods in Pakistan's smaller cities, ZMO Working Paper 15.

49   Singh Negi, N.& Ganguly, S. (2011): «Development projects vs. internally displaced populations in India» COMCAD Working Papers, 103 http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-422011.

50   Ahmad, A.N. (2016): «The vagaries of a new coal regime» March 20th, The News on Sunday http://tns.thenews.com.pk/vagaries-new-coal-regime/.

The knock-on consequences of forced displacement for voluntary regional migration to the Gulf, and indeed international migration, is an important area for future migration research. Does forced climate migration increase the likelihood of voluntary labour migration? There may be circumstances under which DFDR leads to relatively favourable experiences for individuals and communities. Migratory outcomes vary in accordance with state rehabilitation packages and other contingencies. Bradford's Pakistani community, with its origins in Mirpur, is a case in point: Often described as having ‹won the lottery› when awarded the right to settle in Britain following the building of the Mangla Dam in 1967, Mirpuris are thought to have experienced displacement as upward mobility.

(iv) Internal Displacement: commonalities

Despite the many varied causes and contexts of internal displacement in Pakistan, key commonalities include relative invisibility at the international level, particularly where the state has a geopolitical interest in refusing to recognise the acuteness of given situations. For instance, thousands of families who fled to Afghanistan following military operations in Baluchistan and the Tribal Areas do not show up in statistics as IDPs or refugees. Many IDPs who remain in Pakistan's North-West live in rented accommodation, and are thus not registered as IDPs. More research is required to comprehend their mobility and its likely impact.

Many IDPs complain of insufficient access to humanitarian aid, which, like any resource, is mediated by local powerbrokers such as landlords. Furthermore, IDPs often lack healthcare and schools. Where local schools do not have the capacity to absorb IDP children, they can end up idle for months. Since aid is dependent on proof of identity – and that means documents – graft, profiteering and nepotism occur and favour those with political patronage and/or good connections. At the same time, many of the most needy – widows and the elderly, individuals without strong social networks – are particularly vulnerable and require special policy consideration.[51]

A 2016 survey revealed, however, that the top priorities among IDPs are not cash handouts or food aid, but securing a livelihood and employment, and this was followed by healthcare, financial support, housing and education.[52] Ironically, IDPs do not get support in finding work, and they are denied access to aid, if they move to find work in an urban centre. Forced displacement effectively drives peasants and rural dwellers into Pakistan's informal urban economy, thus reinforcing urbanisation – a process that has already put unsustainable pressure on cities and towns.

A key question for further research will be to determine the exact relationship between this development and emigration from Pakistan. Does it add to the contingent of regional and internationally mobile asylums seekers? There are some instances of

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51   Ahmad (2016) , op. cit.

52   Sayed and Shah (2017) op. cit. p. 7.

Pukhtuns displaced from Pakistan's tribal areas by military operations, which were subsequently migrating to Europe during the ‹crisis› of 2015.[53]

Since Pakistan has failed to effectively manage the relief and rehabilitation of affected populations, Islamic extremist organisations have started providing support to IDPs in the North-West. This is known to have occurred during the 2010 floods, and indeed the Kashmir earthquake of 2005.[54] If this trend continues, and as climate change intensifies, the consequences are potentially serious, given the degree of marginalisation experienced by IDPs, who tend to be young and with few employment opportunities.

3. Westward Mobility

(i) The Schengen Area

As Britain's borders became increasingly difficult to penetrate following laws such as the Nationality Act of 1981, networks of overland Pakistani travellers intending to reach the UK were effectively diverted to France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway. For much of the 1980s and 1990s, the volume of migratory traffic from Pakistan (and other parts of the New Commonwealth) to these countries was low and went largely unnoticed; migration to the United States, Canada and, to some extent, Australasia also remained relatively unchecked at the time. However, the 1989 reunification of Germany and subsequent establishment of the Schengen Area led to deeper integration within the EU and to greater connectivity with neighbouring countries that had formerly been part of the Soviet Block. By the 1990s, Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the Mediterranean became transit regions for migrants from Asia and Africa travelling to Europe. The Schengen Area's attraction as a region of countries within which migrants can move relatively freely in search of employment and residency permits was further increased, when, in the early 2000s, Australia and the United States made entry more difficult. At the same time, entering the EU without authorisation became increasingly dangerous as measures against illegal migration at airports and overland crossings were ramped up. Penetrating the borders of ‹Fortress Europe› led to growing numbers of deaths, detentions and deportations.

Smuggling pathways are responsive to changing border controls, a dynamism that means the trajectories of migrants from Pakistan have altered over time. For much of the 1990s and early 2000s, flying to Moscow and then travelling overland through Eastern Europe was popular, and the North African corridor and crossing the Mediterranean was also used as an alternative.[55]

53 Alimia, S. (forthcoming in 2018): Street Politics, Moral Lives and Transnationalism: Afghan Refugees and Pakistani Citizens in Karachi and Peshawar, University of Pennsylvania Press.

54 Siddiqi, A. (2014): Climatic Disasters and Radical Politics in Southern Pakistan, in Geopolitics (19) pp. 885-910.

55 Ahmad, A.N. (2015): Masculinity, Sexuality and Illegal Migration, Oxford University Press Karachi.

(ii) Pakistan, Afghanistan and the crisis of 2015

In 2015-16, Afghanistan and Pakistan combined contributed to around 20 percent of asylum applications in the EU.[56] Ever since Frontex began to collect monthly statistics in late 2007, the two countries had appeared in the list of the top ten nationalities of irregular migrants to Europe.[57] It was thus predictable that they would also play a role in the ‹crisis›. For many years, Pakistani asylum applications made up between 5 and 10 percent of the total. However, between December 2014 and June 2015 monthly applications by Pakistanis more than doubled from 1,915 to 3,989. The following month they reached 6,771, and in August they hit a peak of 9,443. In 2015, EU countries received some 48,000 asylum applications form Pakistanis. Hungary, the main receiving country, absorbed more than 30 percent of the EU total. In 2016, the figure increased further to 49,617 out of a slightly lower total of 1.24 million applications, most of which were lodged in Germany and Italy.[58] Reviewing these numbers, one has to keep in mind that applications from Afghans, which in 2015 and 2016 made up some 14 percent of the EU total, include an unknown number of people arriving from Pakistan.

Between 2004 and 2013, asylum seekers made up between 3 and 10 percent of immigrants to the UK, while the numbers had been ranging from 20 to 54 percent for the period between 1994 and 2003.[59] Curiously, however, Pakistan has remained among the top nationalities among those applying for asylum in the UK, irrespective of events in countries thought to be less safe. Indeed, it is telling that in 2016 the largest number of applications for asylum to the UK came from nationals of Iran (4,192), followed by Pakistan (2,857). Recognition rates for Pakistanis, however, are among the lowest, which means that asylum applications in the UK have continued to be made irrespective of success rates and changing political events.[60]

Frontex data indicate that, in 2015 and 2016, the Eastern Mediterranean route via Iran, Turkey, then Greece and Cyprus and onwards through the Balkans (Macedonia or Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Hungary) was the preferred route for Afghan and Pakistani migrants. Pathways converge in Iran, which they reached overland from either Pakistan or Afghanistan. Nodal hubs include Zahedan and the West Azerbaijani towns of Salmas and Urmia. The Turkish-Iranian border is crossed on foot, by car or van in groups of up to 100, which are escorted by smugglers. Migrants are then driven to the Turkish city of Tatyan near the border, from where they continue to Istanbul or Ankara. There they may remain for days, weeks, months or years depending on their

56 European Asylum Support Office: Asylum Trends, https://www.easo.europa.eu/information-analysis/analysis-and-statistics/latest-asylum-trends.

57 UNODC (2013): Recent trends of migrant smuggling into and out of Pakistan, https://www.unodc.org/documents/pakistan/2013.12.26_Research_Report_HTMS_COPAK_HTMSS_Designed_for_printing.pdf, p. 26.

58 EASO Asylum trends, op. cit.

59 Migration Observatory (2016): Migration to the UK: Asylum, 20 July, http://www.migrationob-servatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/migration-to-the-uk-asylum/.

60 Refugee Council: Quarterly Asylum Statistics (August 2017) https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0004/1243/Asylum_Statistics_Aug_2017.pdf.

options. Most travel on fishing, leisure and inflatable rubber boats (with or without facilitators) from Izmir or Ayvalik to eastern Greece.[61] If registered in Greece, they may receive 30-day transit papers before being sent back. To avoid this, some apply for asylum, buying time to organise further travel while their applications are being processed.[62] Since 2012, increasing numbers of Afghan and Pakistani migrants have also been arriving in Calabria and Apulia, indicating that the Central Mediterranean route (from North Africa to Italy) is still used by a minority of Pakistanis and Afghans, and it may gain in importance, as sea crossings from Turkey have become more difficult because of tighter controls.[63]

(iii) The Pakistani state

In recent years, the outsourcing of migration control to sending countries has sought to bring states like Pakistan into Europe's restrictive system. In 1996, the Federal Investigation Authority (FIA), set up in 1974 to control the smuggling of drugs and goods as well as people, became an organisation devoted exclusively to combating human smuggling, a measure of the issue's growing political importance by the end of the Cold War. In 2002, the Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking Ordinance was passed, making human smuggling an offence; two years later, state-of-the-art finger and face recognition was introduced as part of Pakistan's passport and identity programme. Also, joint naval patrols with a US-led naval fleet of Western ships were undertaken in the Arabian Sea to combat human smuggling and deter the movement of Islamic militants and arms, a development that underlined the growing convergence of anti-terrorist operations and the drive against illegal migration.[64]

None of this has stopped people smuggling and probably didn›t even reduced it. Pakistan's lack of success in this area has to do with the fact that the Frontier Corps has other priorities. The FIA itself has only two border checkpoints along 3,000 kilometres of land border with Afghanistan and Iran and no legal authority to arrest anyone before they have attempted to leave the country and no resources to pursue lawbreakers domestically. At the border with Iran at Taftan, where it has a sizable detention centre complete with a magistrate to prosecute cases on the spot, intercepted migrants have to pay a nominal fine. In 2015 the FIA claims to have arrested 1,310 human smugglers and intercepted 6,600 migrants. Far from acting as a deterrent, its own staff often concedes that its work is symbolic and ineffective.[65]

Pakistan's distinct lack of political will to halt smuggling – similar to that of other countries of origin – also reflects the importance of overseas remittances to the country's foreign exchange and GDP. Pakistan has little incentive to co-operate with

61 IOM (2017): Enabling a better understanding of migration flows from Afghanistan and Pakistan towards Europe, IOM Geneva (DIFID).

62 Asif. H. & Hilton, J. (2016): The Perils of heading to Europe, in: Herald, 2 September, http://herald.dawn.com/news/1153467.

63 UNODC, op. cit. p. 86-88.

64 Ahmad (2015), op. cit.

65 Asif and Hilton, op. cit.

repatriation, and its geopolitical strength as an autonomous Western ally gives it more leeway than Afghanistan, which, under pressure, had to sign a readmission agreement. During the ‹crisis›, Pakistan suspended a 2010 readmission agreement with the EU, claiming EU member states were not adequately checking the nationality of deportees. Then, a week after reinstating the agreement, Islamabad refused to let 50 deportees from Greece, Austria and Bulgaria back into the country, citing discrepancies between documents and digital identity cards. Of the 50, 31 were not allowed to disembark, prompting the ambassadors of Greece, Austria and Bulgaria to rush to the airport to plea with the authorities – yet in vain.[66]

Pakistan's failure to halt smuggling is also reflective of the nature of governance in many post-colonial states, and the complicity of individual officials and politicians in is not unusual. Stricter demands for compliance from the West have raised the stakes – and the possibilities for individuals to make a profit. In 2014 Shahzad Gul, an FIA immigration official in Islamabad, was arrested along with a Pakistan International Airline (PIA) officer, Khurram Shahzad, for issuing boarding cards to three passengers later caught with fake documents at London's Heathrow Airport. In 2015, five officials of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) were arrested for issuing fake national identity cards to Afghan nationals. In May 2016, a foreign office director was arrested for suspected involvement in human smuggling.[67]

4. Making sense of Pakistani Migration to Europe

(i) Who migrates and why?

Objective factors

There is a strong tendency to view westward mobility from Asia and Africa as fitting neatly into preconceptions that distinguish between refugees and economic migrants. Data and migration statistics further divide mobility into categories such as marriage migration, asylum, refugees, students and tourists. It is generally assumed that Afghan migration is driven by political factors, while migration from Pakistan has economic factors. Policy-oriented surveys with migrants reinforce this general idea. The categories interviewers use are often based on bureaucratic norms, and the situations under which interviews are conducted rarely allow migrants to speak frankly about their motivations. Sociological analyses have shown that even when either political or economic reasons are the main driver of migration, the other factor tends to be lurking somewhere in the background.[68]

Numerous objective political factors could in some measure be regarded as causes of forced migration from Pakistan (see 1 and 2). The increase in westward mobility

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66 Boone, J. (2015): Pakistan sends deported migrants back to Greece, in: The Guardian, 3 December: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/03/pakistan-sends-deported-migrants-back-to-greece-eu.

67 Asif and Hilton: op. cit.

68 Suvin, D. (2005): Displaced Persons, New Left Review, 31 January.

of Pakistanis since 2011 may well reflect worsening conditions for minorities and dissidents. There is no data on the religious or ethnic profiles of those who apply for asylum in Europe, but recent reports based on 2016 data from the US Department of State Bureau of Population showed that 376 Pakistani refugees came to the US in 2016 (up from 205 in 2015), the highest number since 2011. Most of them were Ahmadiyya (247, up from 61 in 2015). At least 78 Christians (up from 76 in 2015) also sought refuge in the US, as well as 33 Shia (up from 15 in 2015). Data for the past five years shows that Ahmadis were the single largest group of Pakistanis seeking refuge in the US with 746, accounting for over half of all Pakistani asylum applicants; another 240 Christians and 66 Shias sought refuge.[69] There is evidence to suggest that Quetta's Hazara population and political activists whose life is in danger use routes to Indonesia and Australia via Sri Lanka or Bangkok. In addition, Baloch exiles have been spotted in Greece during the ‹crisis›.[70]

However, the difficulties in separating economic from political drivers of migration can often be acute. Afghans, Ahmediyya, Shia, Christians, political dissidents and others who flee persecution invariably set their sights upon specific destinations known for the quality of public housing, education, and health facilities; their aspirations clearly go beyond mere protection and include the dignity and material security that comes with welfare provision and access to public services. Conversely, some of those who say they migrate in search of employment and economic gain originate from areas in which educational facilities, infrastructure and the quality of life have been affected adversely by conflict and political violence: KP, FATA, Baluchistan and Karachi in particular have been severely affected by the War on Terror. This is leaving aside the crime rate and general insecurity that pervades even affluent provinces such as Punjab.

Rising flows of migrants from Pakistan to Europe may also reflect deteriorating conditions for Afghans in Pakistan, who are often being harassed by the police, something that tends to escalate during key moments in the so-called War on Terror, and it also has to do with the repatriation of millions who had made Pakistan their home. Those who have remained in Pakistan were affected by the cut in aid in October 2015, a consequence of the Syrian migrant crisis in Europe. Out of the $136.7 million budgeted for baby food, education and sanitation in 2015, the UNHCR in Pakistan received only $33.6 million. Also, cuts to services such as schools created a hostile atmosphere for Afghans in Pakistan.[71]

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69 Ashraf, G. (2016): Pakistanis increasingly seeking asylum abroad, in: Express Tribune, 3 September: https://tribune.com.pk/story/1175162/safer-climes-pakistanis-increasingly-seeking-asylum-abroad-national/.

70 Gannon, K. (2012): Under attack minority Hazaras risk death to flee, in: The San Diego Tribune, http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/sdut-under-attack-minority-hazaras-risk-death-to-flee-2012oct17-story.html; Asif and Hilton, op. cit.

71 Hashim, A. (2015): Refugees in Pakistan hit by aid cuts as Europe crisis drains funds, Reuters, 13 October, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-pakistan-refugees-europe/refugees-in-pakistan-hit-by-aid-cuts-as-europe-crisis-drains-funds-idUSKCN0S71T320151013; Alimia, S. (2018 forthcoming).

Subjective drivers: Gender and Masculinity

Descriptions of political and economic situations rarely account convincingly for irregular westward migration to specific destinations. This last mode of migration is a profoundly risky, expensive and complicated phenomenon that continues to confound many scholars and commentators. The question of who embarks on westward journeys and why requires closer attention to the specific trajectories and testimonies of migrants themselves.

During the period between 1971 and 2015, over half of all emigrants from Pakistan came from Punjab followed by Khyber Pukhtunkhwa (28 percent).[72] These ethnic and regional markers are even clearer in Western Europe and resemble those from the early twentieth century: Kashmir and Northern Punjab. What these regions share – including parts of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa since the Gulf migration got underway in the 1970s – are interrelated histories of movement among certain classes of men in specific districts. A powerful ideology of travel born of prior migrations› dramatic impact on specific locales is central to understanding the motivations in migrant-sending areas of Pakistan. The bulk of those who attempt to reach ‹Fortress Europe› from Pakistan are lower middle class men with intermediate educational backgrounds, and they come from semi-rural districts in Northern Punjab and KP. They are not the most educated or urbane, as those tend to favour the United States. Nor, however, are they the most unskilled, a group that, if they are able to travel, heads to the Persian Gulf.[73] The fact that they are able to pay the several thousands of dollars it costs to migrate underlines that they are not poor. However, the chances to increase their upward mobility within Pakistan remain restricted for these men. Pakistan's emigrant population remains largely male. This is by no means unique to Pakistan. In 2014, three out of four primary applicants for asylum in the UK were men from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East and, because of the conflict in Kosovo, Eastern Europe.[74] However, migrants from Pakistan are overwhelmingly male, and between 2008-2013 just 8,000 (0.1 percent) of all emigrant workers were women.[75] Over time, this model of the male as breadwinner has been reinforced by restrictions in the West that have made residency and family reunification more difficult. Recent waves of westward mobility are underpinned by circular migration to the Gulf, which, according to some studies, has in fact reinforced the seclusion of women in the home, as male returnees from the socially conservative Gulf countries use part of their new wealth to ‹liberate their women from the need to work›.[76]

Bearing this in mind, a number of scholars have questioned whether the causes and consequences of migration should continue to be read in purely rational, economistic and gender-neutral terms. The subjective aspects of travel and work are increasingly viewed as mediated by gender and sexuality. Understanding migration thus entails making sense of the imbalance between the sexes that structures the

72 ILO (2016), op. cit. p. 1-5.

73 Arif (2009), op. cit.; ILO 2016 op. cit.

74 Migration Observatory, op. cit.

75 ILO (2016), op. cit.

76 Ahmad (2015), op. cit.

«The Oranges in Europe taste better»

Pakistani migration system. The notion of masculinity and the fact that men's decision to migrate are not purely utilitarian have fostered ideologies that associate westward travel with upward mobility, leisure and pleasure. The decision to migrate is often contentious within households, and the lack of any singular political or economic rationale in migrant testimonies suggests that one has to consider what migrants imagine is entailed in overseas travel.

Extrapolating from Pakistan to make sense of Afghan migration is no doubt problematic. Afghanistan is, after all, thought of as a place from which any rational person would try to escape on account of the severe political instability, conflict and violence that have afflicted it for decades. Here too, however, research suggests that not all young men emigrate for purely political or economic reasons. In a regional study about Hazara male migrants who move between the mountains of Central Afghanistan and Iranian cities, Monsutti argues that emigration is a means of widening one's social networks – a rite of passage to manhood. Perilous journeys and difficult stays abroad enable spatial and social separation from the families, and upon their return to the village they are viewed as adult marriageable men.[77]

Pakistan and Afghanistan are very different starting points. For Afghans it is more than twice as likely that they have to sell land in order to be able to cover the costs of migration (IOM 2017). However, the fact that both sets of travellers can afford to pay for the services of smugglers underlines the fact that those who head for Europe are not acting to secure the survival of poor households. Indeed, a large proportion (87 percent according to a very recent report) make the decision to migrate without recourse to other members of the household. This underlines that young men's individual agency and identity often outweighs economic or family pressures.

Recent IOM data suggests that a quarter of Afghans and only 12 percent of Pakistanis were well-informed about the legal possibilities and realities of claiming asylum. This is no greater than the proportion who received information from social media, television or the internet. As irregular migrants, almost all used the services of smugglers for at least part of the journey, and just 5 percent had, at least at some point, some kind of visa.[78] Migration and smuggling networks, in other words, are socially embedded and are a more important source of information for both Afghans and Pakistanis than public or private institutions. Migrant networks play an important role in driving migration. This underlines that economistic interpretations, which portray the migrants as rational actors bent on maximising social welfare for their households, are simplistic.

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77 Monsutti, A. (2007): Migration as a Rite of Passage: Young Afghans building masculinity and adulthood in Iran. in: Iranian Studies 40 (2): 167-85.

78 IOM (2017), op. cit. p. 34,47.

(ii) Channels of Migration: Smuggling, Irregularity and Brokerage

The facilitation of migration has always been subject to varying degrees of profiteering at both ends of the migratory process. Clearly, the volume of irregular human mobility into Europe today distinguishes it quantitatively from previous eras. Also, the spatial distribution is different, reflecting how much the geography of the European migration system has changed since the 1970s. Today, smuggling networks are held together by Pakistanis who settled abroad a long time ago, and who are embedded in a series of nodal transit points stretching from Central Asia to Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and the Mediterranean. Agents live in many of these regions, speak the local language and have built relationships with individuals able to facilitate the smuggling process – fixers, drivers, providers of accommodation and employment – some of which may be Pakistani, but including other migrants as well as natives with a stake in this profitable global enterprise consisting of countless informal transactions at many sites and in many currencies. Within the Afro-Eurasian smuggling system, individual border guards, immigration officials and even military personnel will provide information and logistical support.[79]

Recent estimates are that 90 percent of the migrants who arrive in Europe have used a smuggler at some point in their journey. Surveys of Afghans and Pakistanis, who use almost identical routes, support this claim. Both sets of migrants generally set out with a target destination. The UK's importance within the Pakistani migration system remains, but particularly among Afghans, its historic centrality may have faded with the post-2015 perception that Germany is wide open to refugees. Between 61 and 79 percent of Afghans interviewed at various points along their way to Europe expressed a preference for Germany, viewing it as the country most likely to allow them to regularise their status and stay permanently. Around a quarter of Pakistanis name the UK as their destination of choice.[80]

However, networks are sensitive to change, a fact reflected in migrant trajectories; destinations can alter en route, and indeed within months or years, depending on changing circumstances.

The fee structure is complex, with a number of variables at play. Some pay between 10 and 15,000 USD for comprehensive, all-inclusive ‹packages› that cover several border-crossings for the entire journey from Pakistan to a specific country in the Schengen area. Others pay 3,000 or 4,000 for part of the journey. These latter people may be in transit for weeks or months, working intermittently and completing their journey in stages. Some people will choose cheaper, often riskier alternatives such as travelling by boat without a smuggler. Almost half of all Afghans received some kind of support from the UN along the route, while 80 percent of Pakistanis rely entirely on facilitators. This goes some way toward explaining why on average, Pakistanis pay higher sums for their journeys (around 16,000 USD) than Afghans (10,000 USD), and

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79 Ahmad (2015): op. cit.

80 Europol (2016), Migrant smuggling in the EU, https://www.europol.europa.eu/publications-documents/migrant-smuggling-in-eu. UNODC op.cit; IOM (2017) op. cit.

why, perhaps, they report fewer problems en route: 73 percent of Pakistanis and 52 percent of Afghans said their journey was relatively free of trouble.[81]

Most problems en route involve not agents but police and border guards, with coercion, beatings and forced fingerprinting suggesting that the Afghan ‹advantage› of being supported by institutions is a mixed blessing. Press reports from 2016 suggest that Pakistanis experienced much frustration inside detention facilities such as Moria on the Greek Island of Lesbos. Migrants in transit in Bulgaria speak of ‹hellish› difficulties; 65 percent claim they would advise relatives in Pakistan not to embark upon journeys to Western Europe.[82]

In short, there is a very wide range of experiences in travel and transit – from problem-free arrival, to near-lethal border crossings, detention, etc. In either case, the term ‹people smuggler›, as invoked by the media and politicians – and almost always referring to organised crime – is misleading. Smuggling networks are far less organised and centrally co-ordinated than frequent references to ‹gangs› suggests. Many border crossings involve one-time transactions between migrants and smugglers, in which the risks are well-known to the migrants; on the other hand, individual migrants do experience mistreatment at the hands of smugglers, with numerous instances of kidnapping and abduction in Turkey in particular. Earlier this year, harrowing footage appeared of Pakistani migrants who were brutally beaten after being abducted and held for ransom in Istanbul. «We'd rather die than be sent back to Turkey», one group of migrants in Greece told a reporter, adding: «It is not a safe country».[83] All of which suggests that smuggling is best viewed as one end of a continuum that can blur into trafficking.

Furthermore, if one tries to distinguish too neatly between migrants and smugglers, this misses the fact that many ‹smugglers› are in fact migrants who facilitate illegal travel, entry and/or regularisation of family members, friends, acquaintances and paying strangers. The term ‹smuggling› – which refers to the practice – is more useful than the noun, ‹smuggler› or ‹agent›, since facilitation is not some vocation practiced by career criminals. Historically, the two have always been mutually permeable and organically linked categories; today they are more blurred than ever through the practices of profiteering from facilitation, in which more and more migrants are involved thanks to the expansion of the migration business into areas such as the regularisation in inhospitable host countries. In particular, regularisation programmes in the Mediterranean during the 2000s created a vast market for brokerage as irregular migrants from across the Schengen area (and, in some cases, the UK) scrambled to countries such as Italy to legalise their residential status. Lawyers, employers, native fixers and previously settled migrants can make a profit from facilitation, for example by helping newcomers navigate red tape, fill out forms and/or by providing them

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81   Ahmad (2015); IOM (2017), pp. 25-6.

82   IOM (2017) op. cit. p.29, 33; 42-4; 67-9; Asif and Hilton, op. cit.

83   Hilton, J. (2016): I'd rather die than be sent back to Turkey, in: Dawn 15 April, https://www.dawn.com/news/1251418; Dean, S. (2017): Pakistani migrant begs for his life…, in: Daily Mail 7 January, http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4097172/Pakistani-migrant-begs-life-horrific-torture-video-filmed-Turkish-gang-sent-family-ransom-held-captive-way-Europe.html.

with fake documents. This commodification of migration has become integrated into the very social fabric of the migration and settlement process, turning regularisation into a business conducted by migrants long after agents and facilitators have left the scene.[84]

(iii) Consequences

Although there are many reasons why people leave their countries, Pakistani migrants, who have gone through global smuggling networks that span several continents, use the same paths as many other refugees and asylum seekers and face the same risks in travel and transit. The initial motivation becomes largely irrelevant in shaping the migration experience during border crossings and in transit. Bodily harm and/or death by drowning or suffocation are common occurrences during illegal border crossings. Furthermore, life as an irregular migrant in transit is shaped by struggles to subsist and find shelter; this, in turn, creates vulnerability to exploitation and coercion within the labour process – that is, trafficking. Detention and deportation, arguably the ultimate form of state-sanctioned forced migration, are also integral aspects of the Afro-Eurasian system of mobility. Here, the Pakistani experience has little that is specific about it.

However, between 2012 and 2015, FIA records showed a marked rise in deportations from Greece (14,145) and the United Kingdom (9,778), suggesting that today some European countries deport a lot more people to Pakistan than previously.[85] This is perhaps not surprising, as over 90 percent of Pakistani asylum claims have been rejected in the EU during the crisis.[86] Some European countries succeed better than others, and overall the EU has found it difficult to deport people to Pakistan.[87] The contrast with Afghans, who are flown back by the hundreds since the EU pressured Kabul into an agreement last year, is striking. Of the close to 10,000 Afghans returned by the EU in 2016, Germany alone sent back 3,440.[88]

What happens to Afghans who, after having lived their entire lives in Pakistan, are not granted asylum in Europe and get deported to an arguably more dangerous country? Studies of deportees suggest that they have trouble reintegrating (or indeed integrating in a country where they have never lived). They lack social capital, and many, it is thought, will migrate again.[89] Of those who do not, experts of Afghan migration

84 Ahmad (2015), op. cit.

85 Express Tribune (2016): Nearly 250,000 Pakistani migrants deported in 3 years, 20 November, https://tribune.com.pk/story/1237016/irregular-migrations-nearly-250000-pakistani-migrants-deported-3-years/.

86 Saleem, A. (2016): Deported Pakistanis will have to face the law, Deutsche Welle, 5 April, http://www.dw.com/en/deported-pakistanis-will-have-to-face-the-law/a-19164560.

87 Express Tribune (2016): EU warns Pakistan over migrant co-operation, 26 January, https://tribune.com.pk/story/1034661/eu-warns-pakistan-over-migrant-cooperation/.

88 Amnesty International (2017): Afghanistan: forced back to danger, ASA 11/6866/2017 https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa11/6866/2017/en/.

89 Schuster, L. and Majidi, N. (2015): Deportation, stigma and re-migration, in: Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 41 (4) 635-52.

fear some could be targets for recruitment by the Taliban and other militant groups, increasing instability in the region.[90]

The plight of young returnees highlights the importance of understanding the role played by the factor ‹masculinity› throughout the migration process.

What becomes of those who neither returned ‹home›, nor settled in Europe? Out of 13,000 people Germany turned away at its land borders in the first half of 2016 because of invalid documents, 529 were Pakistanis.[91] Many of these men, rejected by their intended target countries in North-West Europe, will be thrown into a cycle of peripatetic wandering within the Schengen area. As with previous waves in the 2000s, a significant number appear to have headed towards the Mediterranean. A *BBC* report from Italy speaks of about 5,000 migrants whose applications for asylum were rejected by other countries and who arrived in Udine in north Italy during the first six months of 2016. The local mayor claimed 90 percent were young men from Pakistan or Afghanistan. Udine, home to 100,000 people, initially struggled to cope with the new arrivals, many of whom slept rough. The reporter met at least one 25-year-old Afghan man who had lived in Britain in 2009 before being deported back to Afghanistan. In Italy, temporary arrangements for asylum seekers allow these men to regularise their status without having to fear deportation. Afterwards they will regroup and consider options for further travel.[92]

5. Conclusions

After absorbing refugee populations without much complaint for decades, since 2002, Pakistan's ugly repatriation of millions of Afghans living peacefully in Pakistan is a controversial attempt to remove a population that had effectively integrated within Pakistani society. It might well have contributed to the flows of Afghans arriving in Europe during the ‹crisis›, and may well have further unpredictable consequences in the future. The EU, bent on deporting its own Afghan population, has done little to discourage this policy. For the Afghans still living in Pakistan, regularisation and rights of residency require a legal framework. A circular migration system for Afghan diaspora communities, which allows them to move between countries, may well be preferable to ‹protection› or ‹integration›. This raises the question of how helpful it is to think of them as a ‹refugee› population in blanket terms, especially as such a classification is in stark contrast to Pakistan's invisible forced migrants who desperately need support, not least the Rohingya. All of these populations, including Afghans, suffer

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90 Rasmussen, S.E. (2016): EU signs deal to deport unlimited numbers of Afghan asylum seekers. in: The Guardian, 3 October, https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/oct/03/eu-european-union-signs-deal-deport-unlimited-numbers-afghan-asylum-seekers-afghanistan.

91 Ashraf, G. (2016): Pakistanis increasingly seeking asylum abroad, in: Express Tribune, 3 September, https://tribune.com.pk/story/1175162/safer-climes-pakistanis-increasingly-seeking-asylum-abroad-national/.

92 Bell, B. (2016): Migrants grim odyessy ends in Italian city of Udine, BBC, 27 September, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-37475086.

discrimination and marginalisation in Pakistan; throwing light on forced migration in Pakistan is an important first step towards addressing this.

The Pakistani state is directly responsible for forced migration within its borders and for persecuting and driving individuals and groups into exile. The international community is notably silent when it comes to the human rights violations committed during and after the large-scale military operations in Baluchistan and in the North-West; this silence is a reflection of Pakistan's geopolitical privileges. Staggering numbers of people have been violently driven from their homes, while Pakistan's allies in the ‹War on Terror› kept quiet. The complete information blackout is disturbing in the context of what is known about the state's approach to those it disagrees with in Baluchistan. The blasphemy laws and Pakistan's treatment of minorities are matters requiring urgent discussion and policy reform; anyone in any doubt about this should take a look at the lynching of Mashal Khan in 2017. It may take years to address bigotry and chauvinism within society, however, the deliberate concoction of online blasphemy allegations against critics is indefensible.

Recent IDP crises in Pakistan suggest that the country is ill-prepared to deal with large-scale population displacement, something that could become the norm as climate change intensifies. Individuals without strong social networks are particularly vulnerable and require special policy consideration. Islamic extremist organisations have started providing aid to IDPs, a disturbing development that has been observed since the 2005 Kashmir earthquake. However, rather than just giving them aid, the focus needs to be on how displaced persons can earn livelihoods. Here, a holistic approach would need to address the question of Pakistan's economic development, which currently puts growth and infrastructure over people in manners that are destructive. A key question for future research is how development may be harmonised with state rehabilitation programmes and adaptive strategies following disasters. During my research, I came across absurd cases of communities that were displaced and then resettled after the 2010 floods – only to be expelled once again to make way for the construction of power plants.

When it comes to climate change, Pakistan, like many Asian countries, is burying its head in the sand. One of the most important consequences of internal displacement is the acceleration of urbanisation, a fact which links forced migration to urban governance: how will Pakistan's smaller cities cope with the arrival of marginalised, formerly rural populations? Also, there are many questions to do with the links between different migrations – forced and voluntary. Mobility is often layered in complex ways, meaning individuals who were once forcibly displaced will be more likely to migrate again, either within the region or internationally. Historically, this has certainly been the case within Pakistan since partition, as well as regarding migration of Afghans, or the Pakistanis who went from Mirpur to the UK.

The westward mobility of Pakistanis has resulted in a truly global diaspora that contributes to the prosperity of the sending as well as the receiving societies. Systems of mobility derived from the colonial era have been gradually supplemented by new pathways of migration directed to Northwestern Europe. The role of irregular migration, smuggling and brokerage has been central to the development of this system,

which the Pakistani state (like others in the global South) does relatively little to control. Decades of restrictions in the West have not stopped illegal migration but commodified it. Before panicking about the admittedly impressive numbers of Pakistanis who claimed asylum in 2015-16, Europe would do well to consider that restrictionist policies such as Britain's Commonwealth Immigration Act have had unintended consequences. Clearly, *some* of those who claim asylum have not been forced to migrate. But then, why do they risk their lives to scale the walls of a fortress in which little other than unemployment awaits them? Understanding the dynamics of voluntarism and agency in irregular migration must begin with contextual analysis: When and why does migration to the Gulf remain circular; when does it act as a springboard for westward mobility? International mobility, after all, is often layered. It will also require to listen attentively to the accounts of the migrants themselves. These stories tend to reveal deep, often gender-based aspirations for inclusion – as free and autonomous human beings – in societies that rarely view them as such, and which view them ambiguously even when exploiting their labour. Categories such as ‹refugee›, IDP and migrant serve important purposes when it comes to advocacy. When it comes to addressing the realties of Europe's contemporary ‹crisis›, however, policymaking would benefit from a more complex account of the factors that drive human mobility.

NIMO-ILHAN AHMAD ALI

«The oranges in Europe taste better» – Young Somalis and the perilous journey to Europe

1. Introduction

Sitting on a veranda outside her parents› home in Hargeisa, the capital of Somaliland, Amina,[1] a twenty-one year old woman describes a constant battle she faces in her mind – to succumb to the lure of a journey to Europe, a journey that many of her friends and peers have already embarked on, or to stay put in Somaliland and continue her university education.[2]

The mental battle Amina faces is a familiar one and is experienced by many young Somalis regularly. For those living in Somaliland and Puntland where crucial barriers to international migration have largely been removed – thanks to the flourishing local smuggling industry, which is connected to networks along the lengthy route – a decision to stay can be a remarkably difficult one to make. Going to Europe, on the other hand, has become significantly simpler – a young Somali does not have to worry about securing the substantial funds normally required upfront before making the journey nor undertake the gruelling and stringent process of attempting to obtain a visa.[3]

They also do not have to worry about how to navigate and negotiate their way throughout the treacherous journey from Somalia to Europe. In some cases, they do not even have to contend with the decision whether to leave or stay in the first place; smugglers actively recruit them by convincing them that going to Europe will provide them with «a better life, employment and a nationality […]»[4]

The aspiration to leave the country is widespread among the young. A study undertaken by the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) in 2012 found that over 60 percent of young people in Somalia intended to leave the country to pursue better

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1   Not her real name
2   She was, at the time of this interview in August 2017, about to commence her second year of university.
3   N-i Ali: «Going on Tahriib: The Causes and Consequences of Somali Youth Migration to Europe,» Rift Valley Institute Research Paper 5 (London. UK.: Rift Valley Institute, 2016).
4   Interview in Hargeisa, August 2017
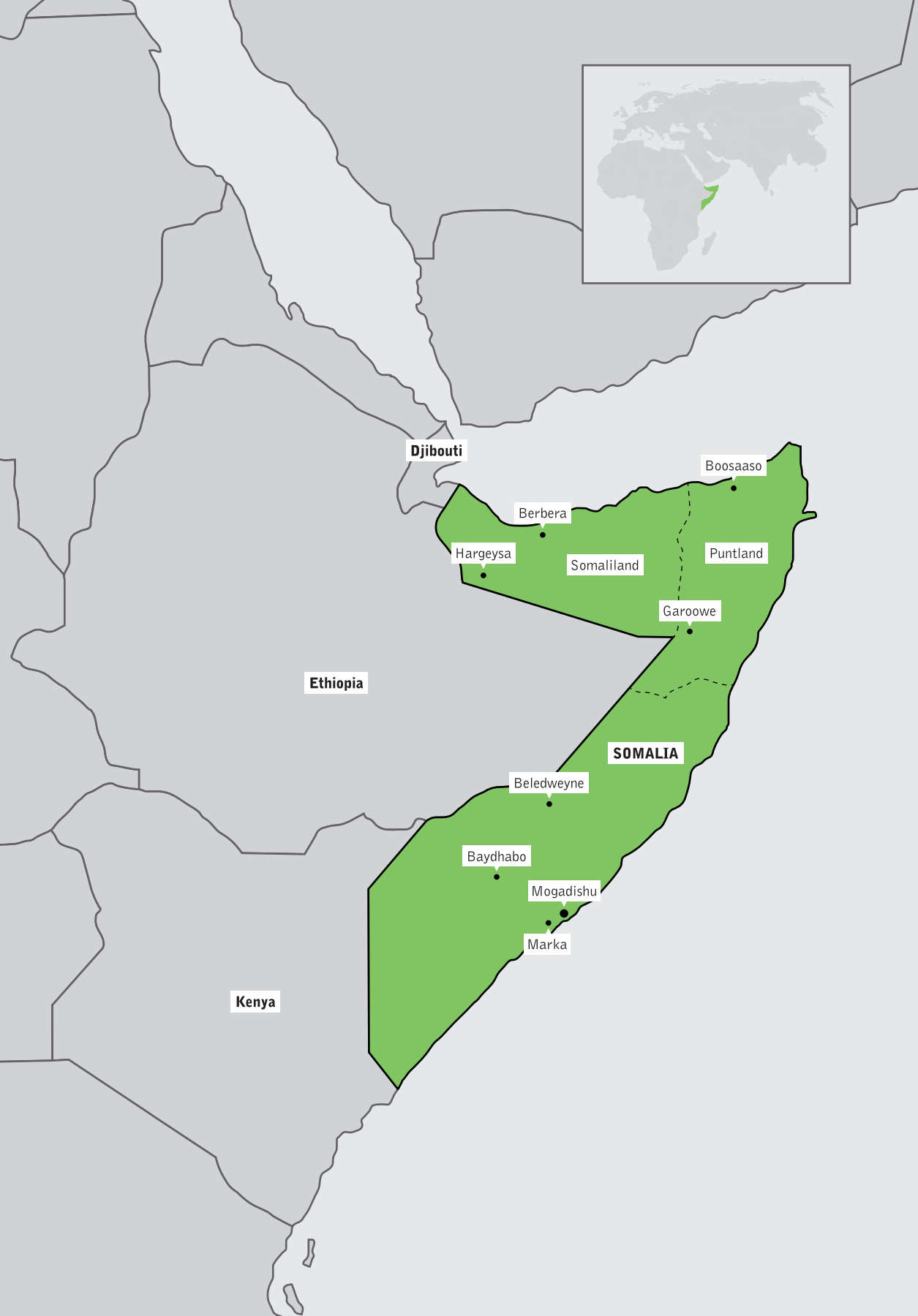
Djibouti

Boosaaso

Berbera

Hargeysa

Somaliland

Puntland

Garoowe

Ethiopia

SOMALIA

Beledweyne

Baydhabo

Mogadishu

Marka

Kenya

livelihood opportunities.[5] This trend is astounding since Somalia has an extremely young population. Seventy percent of Somalia's 12.3 million people are less than 30 years old, and those under the age of 15 represent 45 percent of the population.[6]

The wish to leave the country continues to be prevalent – and this at a time when large parts of the country have seen significant social, political and economic improvements notwithstanding the continued presence of the Al-Shabaab terror group in parts of the southern and central regions. In many ways, Amina's generation has fared better compared to people their age in the period before the war or in the immediate post-war period of the early 1990s. Key social services such as education and healthcare have since improved significantly.

For instance, today the number of educational establishments across all levels is much higher than before the war. More young Somalis now have access to university education because before the war there was only one university, the Somalia National University in Mogadishu. The number of students at universities across the country is now on a par or higher than in many of the neighbouring countries.[7] Though modest, this growth is phenomenal considering that the education sector as a whole was completely destroyed during the war and reconstruction of both physical and human infrastructure had to start from scratch.

Provision of healthcare has also improved and, though resources are limited, large hospitals now operate across the country. Medical clinics, pharmacies as well as dental services are now available in most major towns. In Somalia, in 2001, life expectancy at birth was a mere 47 years.[8] By 2014 this had increased to 55.4 years.[9] Infant and maternal mortality rates, though still very high, have declined and are now similar to or below those of other fragile countries in Africa.[10]

There is, however, a caveat. Private entities, instead of the government, are the main providers of education and healthcare. Due to the protracted period of conflict and uncertainty, these providers have filled a crucial gap left by the absence of a central state. Somalia had been without a credible government for over two decades, and the first non-transitional government only came to power in 2012. In Somaliland, although government institutions were established in 1991, the lack of adequate revenue means that the government there has very little fiscal capacity to provide and maintain social services.

What this means is that although schools and medical facilities are largely available, people have to pay and, as a consequence, these services are inaccessible to the

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5   UNDP: «Somalia Human Development Report 2012: Empowering Youth for Peace and Development», Human Development Reports (United Nations Development Programme for Somalia, 2012).

6   UNFPA: «Population Estimation Survey 2014 – Somalia», 2014.

7   N-i Ali: «The Growth of Higher Education in Somaliland: Implications to the Higher Education–Development Nexus» (SOAS University of London, 2016).

8   UNDP: «Somalia Human Development Report 2012: Empowering Youth for Peace and Development.»

9   UNDP: «Human Development Report 2015: Work for Human Development,» Human Development Reports, New York: United Nations Development Programme, 2015.

10   UNDP, ibid.

indigent or to those living in rural areas where these services are generally absent. It is very likely that the 43 percent of Somalia's 12.3 million people who live on less than 1 USD a day have no access to such services.[11]

However, it is also true that thanks to remittances from relatives abroad a significant number of households in urban areas are able to send their children to school and can afford to pay for their day-to-day medical care. It is reported that over 40 percent of the population receive remittances, and in 2014 they were estimated at around 1.3 billion USD – a figure almost twice the size of the development aid and five times more than the humanitarian aid the country received.[12] Research carried out in the region revealed that most households spend remittances on their children's education and on healthcare.[13] Many of these households also share what they receive with relatives who do not receive remittances, thus further expanding the reach of this income.

The Somali economy, though small, has also been growing rapidly. According to the World Bank, Somalia's GDP was projected to grow to 6.2 billion USD in 2016, up from 5.6 billion USD in 2014.[14] Although Somalia's per capita income of around 435 USD is one of the lowest in Africa, the enduring tradition of resource sharing between relatives has a positive impact on income distribution and lessens income inequality.

The election of the first non-transitional president in 2012 as well as the peaceful transfer of power that took place in early 2017 has been hailed as a new beginning. When the new president, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed «Farmajo», was sworn in in February 2017, Somalis celebrated on the streets of Mogadishu. Although Al-Shabaab's deadly attacks are still felt especially in Mogadishu, the majority of people across the country have not experienced persistent violent conflicts for a long time.

This is particularly the case for Somaliland where Amina resides, a region that has not experienced any large-scale violent conflict since the mid-1990s. Apart from localised skirmishes over land or other resources that are quickly resolved by local elders, most people in this region feel relatively safe and conflict-related insecurities are not the main concerns locally. The region has also held a number of local and presidential elections that, according to external observers, were free and fair. Another presidential election is scheduled to take place in November 2017.

Although state institutions are still weak across all Somali regions, and governments are crippled by the lack of resources, governance in general has seen a modicum of improvement, and even more so in Somaliland with two decades of uninterrupted state building. Here, ministries have been formed, national priorities articulated through national visions and national development plans, and a number of legal measures aimed at improving governance have been implemented. One of them was to reduce the minimum age required to run for public office from 35 to 25 years in order to include young people in the political process.

11   WB: «Somalia Economic Update», The World Bank Group, 2015.

12   WB, ibid.

13   Laura Hammond: «Family Ties: Remittances and Livelihoods Support in Puntland and Somaliland» (Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit – Somalia, June 2013).

14   https://data.worldbank.org/country/somalia (all websites accessed 3 August 2017).

A fresh water basin as the only water source after 11 rainless months

Of course, Somalia as a whole still faces monumental political and developmental challenges – from the threat of the terror group Al-Shabaab, a group that still holds sway over large parts of the southern and central regions and has eluded the African Union Mission (AMISOM) and Somalia forces, to the severe drought that is currently savaging livelihoods in the north of the country. However, it is also true that life for many Somalis has drastically improved compared to the early post-war period of the 1990s. For young people in Somaliland like Amina, born and raised during this period, their day-to-day lives are not very different from that of their counterparts in many other parts of the continent.

Still, many are aspiring to leave. In our conversation, Amina highlights just how much she wants to go to Europe. Holding her smartphone firmly in her hand, she explains animatedly, «When I go on Facebook and see pictures of my friends in Europe, I die inside. I want to be there. That's all I think about.»

But why do you want to go to Europe Amina? She shakes her head and shrugs, «I just think about it. I think about it everyday. Even when I go to the market to buy oranges, I look at the oranges and can›t help but say to myself, surely the oranges in Europe taste better than these.»

From the mid-2000s, going to Europe, or going on «tahriib» as the locals call this journey, has become hugely popular with young people. Most of those that leave are around twenty years old, although there is a significant minority that does so before the age of 18. Those that leave are students at secondary schools or universities and they go together with some of their classmates and friends. They employ the services of human smugglers, the facilitators, who are happy to take them without demanding any money upfront. The journey, however, is not for free. At some point en route the young people are being held hostage until their families back home pay the required amount. To embark on this journey, young people do not need a passport, identification card or any other form of travel document. They do not even have to tell their families. Leaving the country is that easy.

The question is, if leaving is so easy and the desire to leave so high, why are some young people like Amina still ambivalent? Amina explains, «I do want to go but I›m scared of the dangers. I›m scared because I›m a woman. Only my fears are keeping me here in Somaliland.»

Amina's fears are well-founded. The journey from Somalia to Europe is fraught with dangers, and there are many examples of fatalities and horrific abuse. Many know stories of Somalis perishing in the Sahara or on the Mediterranean, and such accounts are often used for awareness campaigns by the government, local and international non-governmental organisations, as well as religious institutions in the country. Reports of Somalis wasting away in formal and informal detention centres across Libya are also widespread.[15]

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[15] For more information on detention in Libya, see UNHCR, «UNHCR Steps up Efforts towards Alternatives to Detention in Libya and Solutions for Vulnerable Refugees» (UNHCR – The UN Refugee Agency, 12 September 2017), http://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2017/9/59b7b0c24/unhcr-steps-efforts-towards-alternatives-detention-libya-solutions-vulnerable.html.

Nevertheless, many young people discount these dangers and decide to leave. They argue that whatever happens during the journey is in the hands of *Allah*. It is already predestined, and death will happen even if they stay in Somalia.[16] However, every time one of them succeeds to get to Europe, «he or she inspires one thousand to follow their footsteps,» says a 24-year-old man who has resisted many pleas from friends to accompany them on tahriib.

The following is an analysis of the journey to Europe and an examination of the factors compelling young Somalis to embark on it regardless of the widely known dangers. It is worth noting that although going to Europe is popular, Europe is not the only destination for Somalis. The next section briefly discusses the complex migration history in the region and situates the journey to Europe within wider contemporary migration trends.

2. The long history of migration

It is often noted that migration has been a quintessential feature of Somali society and that Somalis embody what academics call ‹a culture of migration›. The image of a Somali nomad wandering with his camels, on the lookout for green pastures and without a care for borders, is commonly invoked to explain the supposedly high propensity of Somalis to migrate.

Whether or not such a way of life predisposes Somalis to international migration is debatable, however, it is a fact that the country has experienced numerous waves of migration, with the result that a large part of its population is living outside the country, mostly in the neighbouring countries of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti but also further afield. These waves of migration have also created one of the largest populations of internally displaced people in the world.

The turbulent history of the country is largely responsible for this. Since its formation in July 1960 – when British Somaliland (regions to the north-west) and the Italian administered United Nations Trust Territory of Somalia (regions to the south and central as well as the north-east) merged – Somalia has faced a series of upheavals that have contributed to a large movement of people both within and outside its borders.

In the mid-1970s a devastating drought left a large population of nomads destitute and forced many to relocate to other parts of the country. Later that decade, the disastrous war with Ethiopia forced close to a million Somalis living in the Somali region of Ethiopia to seek refuge in Somalia. Some of these refugees would later become refugees once again, this time fleeing to Kenya when the Somali state collapsed in 1991.[17]

In earnest, however, the first large-scale out-migration in the pre-war era occurred throughout the 1970s and continued into the 1980s. Disappointed by the lack of employment opportunities at home, a large number of Somali men left the country to seek work in the oil-rich Gulf countries. Most of these men left their families behind

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16 Ali: «Going on Tahriib: The Causes and Consequences of Somali Youth Migration to Europe.»

17 Horst, C.: Transnational Nomads: How Somalis Cope with Refugee Life in the Dadaab Camps of Kenya, vol. 19, Studies in Forced Migration: Berghahn Books, 2006.

and sent remittances back home through Somali traders, thus setting the scene for what is now a thriving money transfer system, *hawala*, a lifeline for Somali households depending on remittances to pay for basic food and non-food items.

The outbreak of war in the late 1980s triggered perhaps one of the biggest outflows of people the country had ever experienced. Brutal attacks by Siad Barre's military regime on the main towns in the northwest of the country, the former British territory and present day Somaliland, not only led to the death of over 50,000 people but also forced over half a million to flee to neighbouring countries, mainly Ethiopia and Djibouti.[18]

The eventual collapse of the military regime in 1991 and the ensuing fighting produced another wave of refugees. Then, in 1992, many more fled to escape a conflict-induced famine that claimed the lives of over 300,000 people. Over the following years, many more left Somalia, driven out by famine, the eruption of new or intensified violence, or both.

Although the majority of those who fled turned to neighbouring countries, many others were able to utilise their social and economic resources to go to Europe, North America and Australia. A relatively small number were resettled by the UNHCR whilst others benefited from family re-unification mechanisms (which, however, became more and more restrictive) to join their families in Europe, North America and Australia. This created a large diaspora – «Somalia's missing million» – both in the neighbouring countries as well as further afield.[19] However, as the table below shows, the majority of those that fled is still living as refugees in neighbouring countries.

Somali refugees in neighbouring countries

Country	Number of Somali refugees	Data date
Kenya	313,255	01-Apr-17
Yemen	256,169	31-Jul-17
Ethiopia	249,903	31-May-17
Uganda	34,963	01-Sep-17
Djibouti	13,077	31-Dec-16
Total	869,613	

Source: UNHCR Data Centre https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/horn

18 Africa Watch: Somalia. A Government at War With Its Own People: Testimonies About the Killing and the Conflict in the North (New York, NY.: The Africa Watch Committee, 1990).

19 Sally Healy and Hassan Sheikh: «Somalia's Missing Million: The Somali Diaspora and Its Role in Development», UNDP Somalia, 2009.

Over time, as the situation in different parts of the country improved, many people returned home. When Somaliland was created in 1991 by seceding from the union it had entered into with Somalia in 1960, a large number of those that had fled returned. Many more returned in the early 2000s following the peace conference that ended the violence that had prevailed in Somaliland since the mid-1990s. Similarly, some people returned after Puntland was established as an autonomous region in 1998 and was able to maintain semblance of peace.

It is true, not everyone impacted by war was able or wanted to leave the country. Instead, many moved to other, less violent parts of the country. This was particularly the case after Somaliland and Puntland achieved peace while many regions in the south and centre of Somalia remained in turmoil. These movements have created one of the largest populations of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the world. According to UNHCR, in 2016 there were 1.5 million displaced people in Somalia. This figure is bound to rise if those displaced by the drought at the time of writing (August 2017) are added.

Contemporary refugee movements

Over the years, some Somalis living in refugee camps in neighbouring countries have returned home. The eruption of conflict in Yemen has contributed to a reverse flow of Somali refugees and, as of March 2017, about 33,460 Somalis had returned from Yemen. In addition, warnings by the Kenyan government that it would close Dadaab, the camp with the largest number of Somali refugees, has perhaps motivated the UNHCR and other agencies to accelerate voluntary repatriation programmes. In the first six months of 2017, close to 29,000 Somali refugees were voluntary repatriated from Kenya.[20] Since voluntary repatriation from Kenya began in 2014, a total of 72,557 refugees have returned from Kenya to Somalia.[21]

Refugee returns

Returning from	Number of returnees	Date/coverage
Yemen	33,460	March 2015 to March 2017.[137]
Kenya	29,000	January to June 2017.[138]

20   UNHCR: «Voluntary Repatriation: Rebuilding Lives of Somali Refugees Returning from Kenya» (UNHCR. Somalia Newsletter, June 2017), https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/59013.

21   RMMS: «RMMS Mixed Migration Monthly Summary: East Africa and Yemen» (Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS) & Danish Refugee Council (DRC), September 2017).

22   http://data.unhcr.org/yemen/regional.php

23   RMMS: «RMMS Mixed Migration Monthly Summary: East Africa and Yemen» (Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS) & Danish Refugee Council (DRC), September 2017).

As refugees return they encounter those that are moving within the country. Contemporary internal movements are complex. The devastating drought in the north and the food insecurities it causes account for some of this movement. Affected communities are moving to towns and cities to get support either from their kin or from local and international aid agencies, while people from some parts of the south and centre are on the move in order to escape the onslaught of Al-Shabaab. These more recently internally displaced people intermix with those that have been displaced a long time ago, some as early as the late 1980s.

Many others are moving from rural to urban areas. As most of post-war development in social services has occurred in urban areas, it is not uncommon that families move from countryside to town in order to access these services. Furthermore, migration to urban areas has also been accelerated by the gradual deterioration of rural livelihoods, partly due to recurring drought but also due to the change in the structure of livestock trade, which is the bedrock of the rural economy.[24]

Contemporary external movements

Although accurate statistics are scarce, anecdotal evidence suggests that a large number of people is migrating outside of Somalia's borders. A mixed group of people driven by heterogeneous factors participate in these outflows and there are many destinations to the ‹East›, ‹South and ‹West›.

Going East – to Yemen and further onto Saudi Arabia – continues to be an important route for Somalis, and that despite the on-going conflict and humanitarian crisis in Yemen. According to the UNHCR, in the two-year period between March 2015 and March 2017, over 31,000 Somalis entered Yemen,[25] and the eruption of conflict in 2015 has not significantly reduced the number of Somalis entering the country. However, an opposite flow of Somalis is apparent.

Instead, the power vacuum in Yemen has boosted human smuggling in the country, with possible connections to departure points in Puntland and Djibouti.[26] The sea crossing from both Puntland and Djibouti to Yemen is dangerous and fatalities are common. In August 2017 about 70 people were presumed dead after smugglers forced

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24 Monopolisation of the sector has significantly reduced the number of players but also profits to the actual producers (nomads)

25 UNHCR: «Yemen Situation: Population Movement between Yemen and the Horn of Africa» (UNHCR – The UN Refugee Agency, 31 March 2017), https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/56247.

26 C. Sturridge, O. Bakewell, and L. Hammond: «Migration Between the Horn of Africa and Yemen: A Study of Puntland, Djibouti and Yemen» (Research and Evidence Facility. EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, 25 July 2017), https://www.soas.ac.uk/ref-hornresearch/research-papers/file122639.pdf

them off the boats and into the sea. [27] In addition, there are many reports of human trafficking and of women and girls who have disappeared on this route.[28]

Going South – to countries in the southern part of Africa such as Zambia but mostly South Africa – is also an important route for Somalis. Somalis have been using this route for a number of years now, and there are established Somali communities in Zambia and South Africa. Some of these communities, especially the one in Zambia, are biased towards specific clan groups and thus attract individuals in Somalia who belong to those clans. The Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS) estimated that about 14,750 to 16,850 individuals from the Horn of Africa travel this route each year.[29] Somalis account for approximately 20 percent of this number.

Although the journey south is undertaken on land, it is hazardous nonetheless. Human smugglers operating along this route are increasingly violent and there are reports about kidnapping, extortion and labour and sexual exploitation.[30] Further-more, many Somalis are being detained for «illegal entry» in transit countries (such as Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia) for long periods of time.[31] Also, to reach South Africa does not necessarily mean that the worst is over. A combination of xenopho-bic attacks targeted at Somali business owners and increasingly restrictive refugee policies makes South Africa a difficult host country. This might be the reason why many Somalis look to leave South Africa towards South America, the USA, Europe or Australia.[32]

Since the mid 2000s, going West – to Europe via Sudan, Libya and then across the Mediterranean – has become a popular for Somalis. However, this route, referred to as the Central Mediterranean Route, is quite dangerous for people travelling from the Horn of Africa, and in particular for Somalis and Eritreans. Although fewer in numbers than Eritreans, Somalis have consistently been amongst the top nationalities entering Europe from Libya. Accurate statistics on how many Somalis are going West are dif-ficult to find but some estimate that between 500 and 3,000 people cross the border from Somaliland into Ethiopia, which is the first transit country on the long route to Libya.[33] The next section describes this journey in detail.

Apart from going East, South and West using irregular routes of migration that depend heavily on human smuggling and do not require travel documentations, some

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27 http://www.unhcr.org/uk/news/press/2017/8/598dd22b4/unhcr-saddened-reported-drown-ings-yemeni-coast.html

28 Migrants on the move: «Human Smuggling – No Victimless Crime: Voices from Those on the Move,» RMMS Briefing Paper 4 (Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS) & Danish Refu-gee Council (DRC), June 2017).

29 B. Frouws and C. Horwood: «Smuggled South,» RMMS Briefing Paper 3 (Regional Mixed Migra-tion Secretariat (RMMS) & Danish Refugee Council (DRC), March 2017).

30 Migrants on the move: «Human Smuggling – No Victimless Crime: Voices from Those on the Move.»

31 Migrants on the move, op. cit.

32 Frouws and Horwood, «Smuggled South.»

33 Altai Consulting: «Mixed Migration: Libya at the Crossroads. Mapping of Migration Routes from Africa to Europe and Drivers of Migration in Post-Revolution Libya» (UNHCR, November 2013), http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/52b43f594.pdf

utilise more regulated forms of emigration. This is particularly the case for Somalis studying in neighbouring countries as well as further afield. There is a substantial number of Somali students at universities in Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan. Some families even send their children as far as Malaysia, Pakistan and India to pursue a higher education.

Although the initial journeys of such students are regular, it is not uncommon that they will join Somalis travelling irregularly at some point during or after they complete their studies. It has been reported that a substantial number of Somalis in Sudan have quit their studies and joined their countrymen and women on their journey to Libya and in the hope of reaching Europe. In addition, some Somali students in Sudan have joined the lucrative human smuggling business and are reported to earn as much as 4,000 USD a week.

External movements: routes and destinations

Route/destination	Estimated number of people	Date/coverage
Going East / Yemen and Saudi Arabia	31,000	March 2015 to March 2017.[149]
Going South/Zambia and South Africa	2,950 to 3,370	Per year/estimated in 2015/16.[150]
Going West / Europe	500-3,000	Per month/estimated in 2013.[151]

To say the country is currently a melting pot of people with very different migration profiles is to some extent an understatement. As some are returning home after years spent as refugees in countries in the region, others are crossing the borders heading in different directions. Many others are simply moving from rural to urban areas in the hope of improving their lives and that of their children. A sizeable number is also displaced within the country – some newly displaced and forced to leave their homes because of natural disasters or the threat of Al-Shabaab, while others have been in displaced since the late 1980s.

34 http://data.unhcr.org/yemen/regional.php

35 B. Frouws and C. Horwood: «Smuggled South,» RMMS Briefing Paper 3 (Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS) & Danish Refugee Council (DRC), March 2017).

36 Altai Consulting: «Mixed Migration: Libya at the Crossroads. Mapping of Migration Routes from Africa to Europe and Drivers of Migration in Post-Revolution Libya», UNHCR, November 2013, http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/52b43f594.pdf.

3. Going to Europe

Although there are many destinations for Somalis that leave the country, Europe has become a firm favourite since the mid-2000s. This journey, however, is subject to intense debate across the country, and awareness campaigns designed to discourage people from attempting it can be found in schools, university campuses and even mosques.

In Somaliland, government officials refer to the journey to Europe as a «national disaster».[37] There are a number of reasons for this. First, the journey is largely undertaken by people aged twenty and younger; although the majority of them are men, women are increasingly participating. Second, the route to Europe is highly dangerous and involves crossing the Sahara and the Mediterranean, often in ways not adequate to the challenge; consequently many people die. Third, there are many accounts of horrific abuse, kidnapping and extortion en route.

The dangers of the journey have lead many religious leaders to equate it to suicide and thus declare it *haram* – that is, prohibited for any Muslim. However, such declarations seem to have little impact on young people who, in turn, also justify their decision to leave with religious grounds, claiming that Islam encourages travel and that *Allah* has already predestined what will befall travellers.

Families are also actively trying to dissuade their young from leaving. Some promise to send them abroad to study, while others invest in businesses to keep their children busy and ward off the temptation to leave. In Somaliland, parents buy their sons small vehicles that they can use as taxis in order to earn an income. These taxis are commonly referred to as «*hooyo ha tahriibin*», which roughly translates as a mother's appeal to her child, «please do not go on *tahriib*.»[38]

Governments in the region have also been trying to curb the exodus of the young. In 2013, the president of Somaliland, Ahmed Mohamed Mohamoud «Silaanyo», created a ministerial committee on *tahriib* – the Committee on Illegal Migration and Unemployment – with the purpose to stop emigration by creating jobs. It is not clear whether the committee has made any progress since.

Despite government and community efforts, young people continue to leave. Statistics in Europe suggest that Somalis are among the top nationalities entering Europe. A significant minority of Somalis entering Italy are under the age of eighteen. According to the UNHCR, a quarter of the 7,281 Somalis that entered Italy in 2016 were children – a large proportion of them unaccompanied.[39]

While the number of asylum applications Somalis have filed in Europe is a good indication, such numbers do not account for the number of Somalis still en route, and in particular those stuck in Libya,. In 2016, Somalis were among the top ten

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37 Frouws and Horwood, «Smuggled South.»

38 http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2016/06/08/parents-in-somaliland-are-going-to-great-lengths-to-stop-their-children-from-migrating-to-europe/

39 UNHCR: «Desperate Journeys: Refugees and Migrants Entering and Crossing Europe via the Mediterranean and Western Balkans Routes» (UNHCR. The UN Refugee Agency, February 2017).

nationalities applying for asylum in the EU, accounting for almost 2% of the over 1.2 million applications.[40] As the graph below shows, this trend has been fairly consistent.

The number of first-time Somali asylum applicants in the European Union

Source: Data collected from Eurostat. A first-time applicant for international protection is a person who filed an application for asylum for the first time in a given EU member state; it therefore excludes repeat applicants (in that member state) and thus is a more accurate reflection of the number of newly arrived applicants. The data includes four non-EU countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

So far, the number of Somalis entering Italy has declined this year – only about 2,366 Somalis are reported to have entered Italy between January and August 2017.[41] However, this decline is seen across all arrivals by sea from Libya, not just Somalis. Perhaps this decline was caused by deals Italy has struck with different entities in Libya in order to stem the influx of people from there.[42] It is highly likely that this is only a temporary decline and that, provided they are not locked up in the many detention centres across the country, Somalis and other migrants in Libya are only biding their time until opportunities to enter Europe re-emerge.

Somalis use a number of routes to get to Europe. Although travelling through Ethiopia-Sudan-Libya has been a predominant route, in 2016, political tension in Ethiopia and the ensuing declaration of the state of emergency, restricted the movement of people and caused a change of route. Many now opt to cross the Red Sea to Yemen before re-crossing it to Sudan and making their way further north into Libya or Egypt. The multiple sea crossings (to and from Yemen and the eventual Mediterranean

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40   Eurostat

41   http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5205

42   D. Howden: «The Central Mediterranean: European Priorities, Libyan Realities», Refugee Deeply, October 2017.

crossing) as well as the Sahara, make this route particularly hazardous.[43] It is highly likely that this change of route is just temporary.

Those with economic and social resources can bypass such dangerous routes. They can obtain Turkish visas, for example, and fly directly to Turkey. Once in Turkey they can use the Eastern Mediterranean Route to Greece.[44] However, since the EU-Turkey Statements of March 2016, it is questionable how viable of an option this route is at the moment. Prior to this deal, in 2015, Somalis along with Afghans and Syrians were among the top nationalities using the Eastern Mediterranean Route.[45]

However, all those with insufficient social or economic resources have to rely, from the very start, on the services provided by smugglers. Smugglers operating locally and connected with others along the route are the key facilitators of this journey, and, at least at the beginning of the journey, they will decide what route to take. Information about how to get into touch with smugglers is widely available and often shared between friends and peers.

Although young people often approach ‹good› smugglers when they decide to leave, smugglers also actively recruit youngsters. Smugglers operating locally are mainly from the area and are thus well informed about social norms. There are also Somali smugglers in transit countries such as Ethiopia and Sudan, and in Sudan Somali students not only participate in the journey but some have become smugglers and tend to work only with Somali clients. It is a very lucrative business and an individual can make up to 4,000 USD a week.

Local smugglers are operating an ingenious ‹leave now – pay later› business model that provides them with a never-ending flow of clients. Early on they recognised that to attract a large number of young people, they have to remove a key barrier – money. Since young people are often in school and unemployed, it is impossible for them to make a substantial down payment. However, as smugglers tend to be locals who understand prevailing social intricacies, they realised that it was possible to exploit an age-old Somali cultural norm – reciprocity and mutual obligation to support one another in time of need – to their benefit. There are significant social sanctions against those who do not provide support to their kin when called upon.

Although young people leave without having to pay anything, the journey is far from free. At some point, the young people will be held hostage until their families back home send the money. Families achieve this in a number of ways. Although they reach out to relatives, they will not always get the full amount and thus will have to sell key assets.

The possibility to leave without having to pay upfront has significantly changed the previously very selective nature of international migration. While once only those with substantial social and economic resources were able to leave, such barriers no

43 Sturridge, Bakewell, and Hammond: «Migration Between the Horn of Africa and Yemen: A Study of Puntland, Djibouti and Yemen.»

44 Ali: «Going on Tahriib: The Causes and Consequences of Somali Youth Migration to Europe.»

45 Frontex: «Eastern Mediterranean Route,» FRONTEX, accessed 27 July 2016, http://frontex. europa.eu/trends-and-routes/eastern-mediterranean-route/.

longer exist. Today, the journey to Europe therefore attracts young people from a wide array of socio-economic backgrounds.

Previously, the decision to migrate, and particularly in the case of international migration, had always been made by a household as a whole. Discussions about which member of the family should go where and why normally included a wide range of immediate and extended family members, often located in different countries.

Today, many young people leaving for Europe do not tell their families. Given the dangerous nature of the journey, many families would stop their children from leaving, if only they knew beforehand. Furthermore, since the cost has to be paid by the family, many would refuse to take up a financial burden they cannot afford. Although the age-old system of reciprocity allows families to reach out to their kin for support, many fail to collect the full amount and will have to sell key assets.[46] Since their children are often held for ransom along the route and will not be released until the family pays up, the urgency will result in the sale of key possessions at prices well below market value.

However, the costs are not the only burden. The emotional stress experienced by families waiting to hear from their children can be excruciating. This is exacerbated by the fact that the journey is long, unpredictable and leads through very insecure places. There are many reports of parents losing their minds and of daily life coming to a standstill as families are anxiously waiting for news.

Given the dangerous nature of this journey, as well as the significant costs to families, it is difficult to comprehend why young people would undertake such a journey. The next section discusses the complex factors driving young Somalis to leave their homes in hope of reaching Europe.

4. Why are they going to Europe?

Much of the discussion about what drives migration is often couched in highly simplistic terms: People leave their homes because of economic hardship or violent conflict – and consequently, those leaving are either perceived as economic migrants or as refugees in need of protection. The Somali case, however, highlights the inadequacy of these conventional bipolar explanations.

When we asked Amina why she wanted to go to Europe, she neither mentioned economic hardship, nor concern about her safety and security. She also did not seem to be afraid of the future in Somaliland. In fact, she was simply motivated by her wish to go to Europe. As is the case with many young people around the world, Amina just wanted to experience life elsewhere. The images posted on *Facebook* by her friends in Europe allowed her to visualise life there. Surely, in Europe even the oranges must taste better than the ones at home. Just like Amina, many young people in Somalia want to leave. An investigation into the underlying reasons for such aspirations will provide important insights into why they are choosing such precarious means to achieve this.

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46   Ali: «Going on Tahriib: The Causes and Consequences of Somali Youth Migration to Europe.»

Social media

Throughout our discussion, Amina held firmly on to her smartphone and constantly checked for updates posted by friends on *Facebook* and *Twitter*. She said that, these days, the internet has become much faster. The country is now connected to a high-speed terrestrial fibre optic cable linking it to Djibouti and Ethiopia. Good quality Internet is widely available and many young people utilise their smartphones to access the internet. For those without smartphones, internet cafés are abundant in urban areas. Apart from the wide availability of the internet, Somalia also has advanced telecommunication services. The cost of making international calls is significantly lower than in other parts of Africa, and it is cheaper to call Europe from Somalia, than Somalia from Europe.

The improvement in communication technology means that Somalis are always connected to family and friends living abroad. They are also have access to a large number of Somali news websites providing information about Somalis across the world. Information flows between young people inside and outside the country is particularly swift. The widespread use of social media apps (*Whatsapp*, *Viber*, *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Instagram* and *Snapchat*) keeps young Somalis closely linked to others outside the country.

Social media will also facilitate the journey to Europe. Those that have left will keep their friends at home informed about their journey whenever they are able to. They will also send updates about routes, as well as information about smugglers to friends planning to follow. Such communication continues once they reach Europe, and constant status updates including images will highlight the ‹good life› they are leading there.

Images are incredibly powerful and have an almost immediate impact on how viewers feel about themselves and their lives at home. Images that Amina's friends constantly share on social media have provided her with a complete narrative of life in Europe. The fact that her friends had to undergo significant hardships to get to Europe is momentarily lost – such experiences are not captured on photos. With this narrative, her aspiration to join them is formed.

Social media can also exert significant pressure on young people still at home to join their peers abroad. Seeing images of friends that have ‹made it›, and which are now posing for pictures by beautiful landmarks, can motivate those at home to also ‹change› their lives. This draw can be especially powerful, if friends living in Europe are sending money to support their families back home, while those left behind are unemployed.

Those in Europe will sometimes encourage friends to join them, asking, «why are you still in the dustland?»[47] Then, those who have stayed behind will have to justify their inaction. For Amina, the fear of the journey allows her to deflect this pressure as well as contain her aspiration to leave. However, how long will she be able to sustain this, given the amount of time she thinks about going to Europe and the ease of

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47   Ali, ibid.

leaving. It is highly possible that a small nudge may suffice, temporarily at least, to let her forget her fears and leave. Once on the way, very few are able to or want to return.

Diaspora

The Somali diaspora epitomizes a popular mantra in the development arena, namely that diasporas are ‹agents of development› for their homelands. Though highly differentiated, the Somali diaspora in general has been indispensable during the post-war development of the country. It is difficult to find a social, political or economic area that has not been affected by the diaspora – be it transnationally or in the shape of returnees.

The involvement of the diaspora in the Somali economy has been significant. The substantial remittances they send home, estimated in 2014 at around 1.3 billion USD, dwarfs both the humanitarian and the development aid the country receives.[48] These remittances support around 40% of Somali households, allowing them to buy food and basic non-food items. Often households that receive remittances will share some of this income with relatives that are less lucky. These secondary flows further expand the impact of the diaspora.

The Somali diaspora is also behind much of the investment coming into the country. Somalia's reputation as the world's ‹oldest failed state› has not helped attract foreign investors. Consequently, the Somali diaspora is the main source of foreign direct investment and key for the growth of the private sector. It has invested in construction and housing, communication and information technology, as well as in import and export.

The Somali diaspora has also been intimately involved in the country's politics, and often members of the diaspora will fill key positions in government. The current president of Somalia, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed «Farmajo», is a dual citizen of the United States and Somalia, and the president of Somaliland, Ahmed Mohamed Mohamoud «Silaanyo», comes from the UK diaspora. Many ministers and directorate generals are also from the diaspora, and of the 275 Somalia MPs, elected in January 2017, 105 belonged to the diaspora and held foreign passports, among them 29 British and 22 US citizens.

However, not all members of the diaspora are businessmen and women or politicians. Many have returned home merely to seek employment in the lucrative development sector. Equipped with high levels of education and often a good command of English, they have a better chance of getting such jobs than locals. They also have foreign passports, and this allows them to travel internationally without having to worry about visas, a factor which is vital, since the majority of aid and development agencies working on Somalia are actually based outside the country.

Members of the diaspora have also established many primary and secondary schools, as well as universities; others work as teachers and administrators in such institutions. The high number of medical and dental clinics is also partly due to investment from the diaspora.

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48 WB, «Somalia Economic Update.»

Apart from remittances and their economic and political involvement, many members of the diaspora return home for short visits during the summer. These visits are important, as they not only boost local businesses, particularly in the hospitality sector, but also provide an important window through which locals can learn about the diaspora and get a glimpse of life abroad. Those visiting the country in the summer will come to enjoy themselves and thus tend to be extravagant in their spending. Such spending sprees will then give locals – and in particular impressionable young people – the impression that life in Europe affords such luxuries.

While the Somali diaspora has been vital for the social, economic and political development of the country, their activities at home have also fostered aspirations to leave the country among the young. This manifests itself in a number of ways.

First, when talking to young people one gets the impression that members of the diaspora enjoy a high social status when they return home. For young local people such status is very difficult achieve. Also, because of their command of the English language, many are thought of as highly educated, as good leaders and are consequently given important public offices. Such assumptions, however, do not always match reality. Some members of the diaspora may be very educated, while others are not.

Because of the high social status accorded to members of the diaspora, young local men often complain that it has become incredibly difficult for them to compete – especially on the marriage market. The idea that men from the diaspora are educated and wealthy and that they can take their new wives abroad has inevitably given them an edge over local men. In addition, the large amounts members of the diaspora spend on weddings has inflated the cost of getting married very considerably. «Before it was possible to spend only few hundred dollars for everything. Now you can›t even talk about proposing without having thousands! It's the diaspora that has made it like this. All families now want their girls to marry diaspora men,» says a 23-year-old man in Hargeisa.

Second, apart from their success in marriage, young people also think that members of the diaspora «have it easy» on the labour market.[49] Often they have foreign degrees that are highly valued locally. Their English language skills and the fact that they are supposedly attuned to the best of both world (local and Western ways of doing things) makes them particularly attractive to employers in the development and humanitarian sectors. Locals, on the other hand, are at a considerable disadvantage. Although today many of them also have degrees, lack of government oversight has lead to a slump in the quality of education local universities provide.[50] Many are merely «teaching shops,» and graduates often lack basic English skills. English, however, is an important working language and a prerequisite for many jobs in Somalia. As noted earlier, families with the necessary means are increasingly sending their

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49   N-i Ali: «The Quest to Become a ‹Qurbajoog,›» Horn of Africa Bulletin 27, no. 5, 2015.

50   Ali: «The Growth of Higher Education in Somaliland: Implications to the Higher Education–Development Nexus.»

children abroad for higher education. Upon their return, if they do return, these graduates have a slightly better chance of securing a good job than their locally educated peers.

Third, young people also admire how easily members of the diaspora may enter and leave the country. They hold foreign passports that allow them such flexibility. Many young people do not have passports, and even if they do secure one, their ability to leave the country legally is severely restricted. Young Somali men in particular face much scrutiny even when travelling within the East Africa and Horn of Africa regions. The ability of Al-Shabaab to carry out terror attacks in Kenya and Uganda has, to a large extent, made all young Somali men suspects.

The ability to travel with a Somali passport is constrained even more when one wishes to travel further afield. Somalis are now on the list of people banned from entering the US, and securing visas to enter other countries in the West is incredibly difficult. For those in Somaliland the situation is even worse. Since Somaliland is not recognised as an independent country, Somaliland passports cannot be used to travel outside Somaliland (except to Ethiopia).

While locals face such serious constraints, members of the diaspora may come and go as they wish. Many of them return for short periods to ‹give it a try› and leave when things don›t go their way.[51] They have a way out, yet locals lack such an exit strategy. They are unable to travel to other countries in search of work and thus forced to stay put regardless of the circumstances.

The perception that returning members of the diaspora succeed easily and their ability to leave whenever they wish, has created an important narrative that is prevalent among young people, namely, that in order to be successful one has to leave the country and return equipped with all the human and financial resources.[52] This narrative has stimulated young people's aspiration to leave the country.

Social pressure

Abdi is a 25-year-old man living in Hargeisa, Somaliland. He graduated from university three years ago with a degree in business administration. After graduation, Abdi spent two years looking for work but could not find anything. In Somaliland alone, over two thousand new graduates enter the labour market every year, and each of them is trying to get one of the few jobs available in the formal sector. Given the high number of graduates, it is not uncommon for employers to receive hundreds of applications when they post a single job, making it very difficult to assess all applications. Many employers have resorted to raising the required qualifications for entry-level positions in the hope of reducing the number of applications.[53]

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51 Peter Hansen: «Revolving Returnees in Somaliland,» in Living Across Worlds: Diaspora, Development and Transnational Engagement, ed. Ninna N. Sørensen, International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2007, pp. 131-48.

52 Ali: «The Quest to Become a ‹Qurbajoog.›»

53 Ali: «The Growth of Higher Education in Somaliland: Implications to the Higher Education–Development Nexus.»

After two years Abdi gave up of finding a job in the formal sector. Now he had two choices. He could either join the large number of university graduates who have been waiting for jobs in the formal sector for years, a very long queue, or he could join those working in the informal sector. For Abdi and many young people in his position, this decision is not easy.

Socially Abdi was expected to join the queue and wait for a suitable job in the formal sector – after all, he had a university degree. Society expects that graduates work in the formal sector, wear a suit and tie and have an office with desk and computer. In fact, social expectations are for university graduates to continue looking for work, no matter how long, rather than find a job in the informal sector.

Abdi, however, felt that he could wait no longer. He was the firstborn son and his family was surviving on handouts from kin. Therefore he decided to ask relatives for a small loan and established a market stall selling shoes. Today, Abdi is able to support himself, his parents and siblings.

Although Abdi's life has significantly improved since the time he was looking for work, his social status has plummeted. Deka, a 22-year old woman in Hargeisa, could not hide her disappointment when she told me about Abdi: «I can›t believe he's selling shoes in the market! He has a university degree.» Deka is not alone. Many in society cannot understand why Abdi would «waste» his education. Surely it is better to wait for a job one is qualified for. However, in talking with Deka, she also said that what Abdi did was commendable, as he was now able to take care of his family. However, she pointed out that it would be difficult for him to find a wife – unless he settles for a woman without university degree.

Abdi's story points to one of the most peculiar contradictions in the country's university system. Universities fail to ground students in the realities of life and instead instil unrealistic expectation. This problem is however not unique to Somalia or Somaliland and can also be observed in other parts of Africa. It is a legacy of the early years after independence, when a university education available only to the privileged few – who where then guaranteed to get senior positions in government or in government-owned industries.

The mismatch between what graduates (as well as society at large) expects and what is actually available in the local labour market is particularly great in Somalia. Although the Somali economy has been growing, most jobs are in the informal sector. In contrast to the period before the war, the state is also no longer the biggest employer. In fact, governments in the region are extremely small. In 2015, with a budget of slightly less than 150 million USD, the government of Somaliland employed only 15,384 civil servants.[54]

University graduates are caught in this disparity between reality and expectations. On the one hand, social norms demand they do to not «waste» their education by taking just any job to make a living. On the other, joining the queue for formal sector

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54 SLMoP: «Somaliland in Figures 2015», Hargeisa, Somaliland.: Somaliland Ministry of National Planning and Development, 2016.

jobs, though it safeguards their social standings, does little to help them in practical terms such as being able to secure the resources necessary for getting married.

This disparity heightens the drive to leave the country and acts as a powerful motivation for university graduates to go to Europe. It has a similar effect on those in secondary school, as well as those still at university, and many young people decide that there is no point in going to or finishing university, if this only delays the inevitable.

Smuggling networks makes it all possible

Having the aspiration to leave is however very different from actually being able to leave. In Amina's case her fear of the risks involved makes her stay, even though going to Europe is all she is thinking about. However, not everyone is as realistic or as conservative. Many evoke religion and embrace the risks. If the risks are viewed as destiny, this enables them to shift the burden of responsibility to *Allah*. Whatever happens is predestined and would have happened, no matter whether they stayed or left.

Others merely see the risks as worth taking, since the pay-off in the long run is appealing. If they reach Europe and apply for and are granted asylum, they will be able to go back home within a few years as members of the diaspora, as *qurbajoog*. This is not far-fetched. As the table below shows, the acceptance rate for Somali asylum seekers is fairly high, with about two-thirds of applicants granted asylum.

Acceptance rate of Somali asylum application in the European Union

Year	Total first time applications submitted	First time applications processed	First instance positive decisions	First instance rejections	Proportion of positive decisions
2008	18,505	13,615	9,700	3,915	71%
2009	19,415	21,445	14,340	7,105	67%
2010	14,465	19,195	13,075	6,120	68%
2011	13,265	13,135	8,995	4,140	68%
2012	15,725	15,100	9,595	5,505	64%
2013	17,700	13,850	8,955	4,900	65%
2014	16,345	10,975	7,410	3,565	68%
2015	21,310	9,960	6,215	3,745	62%
2016	20,675	18,835	12,180	6,655	65%

Source: Figures from Eurostat. First instance decisions on applications by citizenship, age and sex Annual aggregated data (rounded) [migr_asydcfsta]. The data includes four non-EU countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

However, translating one's aspiration into the actual act of leaving requires the capability to do so. Not only Somalis want to go to Europe, the desire is also prevalent in many other communities – from the Soninke in Mali,[55] to Cape Verdean off the West African coast,[56] to the Tanzanians in East Africa.[57] The difference is that young Somalis are at present able to act out their aspirations.

To a large extent it is the flourishing smuggling industry that is responsible for allowing young Somalis to leave in a fairly easy way. Although smugglers do not demand money upfront, they know that the prevailing social tradition of reciprocity and strong obligations to support kin in time of need, ensures they do eventually get paid. Although this system does not always work, most of the time it does.

There are many efforts across the country to curb the journey to Europe, yet these efforts are largely directed towards young people. Awareness campaigns, public lectures, sermons in mosques, speeches from senior politicians and community leaders are purely designed to discourage young people from leaving. On the other hand, however, very little is done to capture and prosecute those involved in the smuggling business. This is puzzling since the people in question are widely known and easy to find.

In part this can be explained by the fact that smugglers are viewed very differently in Somalia. While in Europe the prevailing perception is one of criminals and human traffickers, in Somalia smugglers are mostly seen as facilitators, as individuals providing an important service to young people. They tell young people about ‹bad› smugglers and other questionable people to avoid on their long journey. Furthermore, smugglers or *mukhallas* have always been important facilitators of migration in the country.

It is also important to note that although Somalia is a signatory of the European Union – Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative (Khartoum Process) and took part in the Valletta Summit, it is unlikely that Somalia's involvement and any subsequent bilateral or multilateral agreements will have any impact on Somaliland. Although Somaliland is not internationally recognised, it functions as an independent country, and any international agreements Somalia signs do not have any bearing on Somaliland. Given Somaliland's proximity to Ethiopia, cities such as Hargeisa are hotbeds of human smuggling and are often the first stop for Somalis going to Europe.

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55 Gunvor Jonsson: «The Mirage of Migration: Migration Aspirations and Immobility in a Malian Soninke Village», Institute of Anthropology University of Copenhagen, 2007.

56 Jørgen Carling: «Aspiration and Ability in International Migration: Cape Verdean Experiences of Mobility and Immobility», Department of Sociology and Human Geography, University of Oslo, 2001, https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/32655/dt2001.05.carling.pdf?sequence=1.

57 Noel B. Salazar: «Tanzanian Migration Imaginaries,» in In R. Cohen and G. Jónsson (Eds.) Migration and Culture, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, M., 2011, https://lirias.kuleuven.be/bitstream/123456789/314490/2/NBS-MAC.pdf

5. Conclusions and policy recommendation

Although Somalia is often seen as a synonym for insecurity and poverty, these factors, although important, are not sufficient to explain why so many young Somalis embark on the dangerous journeys to Europe. A closer look at the reasons underlying these aspirations reveals that they are intricately connected to the developmental progress the country has made in key areas. Advances in information and communication technology have significantly improved connectivity between people in and outside the country. It has allowed people to exchange information and to share their migration projects. Videos and pictures shared between friends in different countries have allowed young people in Somalia to imagine life outside the country. It has allowed them to dream, it has raised their aspirations.

In addition, improved safety and security in many parts of the country has allowed the diaspora, «the agents of development», to return and participate in the development of the country. The Somali diaspora continues to be crucial for the social, political and economic progress of the country. Its substantial involvement in all areas of life and the flexibility with which its members are able to enter and exit the country has created a narrative of social mobility – a narrative in which, to be successful, one has to leave the country and later return from abroad. For young people the returning members of the diaspora are the proof that emigration works.

The improvement in social services, in particular education across all levels, is another factor to consider when analysing the widespread aspiration to leave the country. As more and more young Somalis acquire university degrees, they aspire to get formal sector jobs. However, even though the Somali economy has been consistently growing, the jobs created are largely in the informal sector. Since university graduates (and the society at large) expect to be employed in the formal sector where jobs are scarce, many choose to stay unemployed rather than pursue opportunities in the informal sector. In reality however being unemployed for long periods of time is tough and many eventually decide to leave the country instead.

The thriving human smuggling industry has given many young Somalis the ability to act on their dreams. Smugglers operate freely and young people can easily find them. Smugglers also actively recruit for potential clients. Improvements in information and communication technology have also helped smugglers maintain their connections with colleagues along the long route.

Although migration has been an enduring feature of Somali society, young people are strongly discouraged from going to Europe. Governments, parents and community leaders alike are trying to convince young people to not leave. They are, however, fighting a losing battle. Not only are the aspirations to leave very pronounced among the young, they also have the capability to do so.

All of the above results in the following policy recommendations:

■ *Recognise that the aspirations of young people are a powerful force.* Although issues of conflict and poverty are important, to truly understand why young people are leaving Somalia and embarking on a dangerous journey to Europe, it is crucial to analyse their aspirations and to understand how they are connected to wider issues of development in the country.

■ *Understanding Somali migration trends as a whole.* A focus on the journey to Europe alone restricts a fuller understanding of the complex migration trends currently taking place within as well as across the country's borders. An analysis of how these differing migration trends feed into each other will provide a much richer understanding of the journey to Europe.

■ *Awareness campaigns do not work.* Awareness campaigns designed to scare away young people from leaving simply do not work. Young people are fully aware of the dangers associated with the journey, and most know horrendous stories about friends and peers that have perished on the way.

■ *The contradiction between university education and formal sector employment.* Although, given the recent history of the country, the growth of universities is a welcome development, universities could benefit from supervision and support – and support on course development will be particularly important. Finding ways of grounding universities in local realities will go a long way towards correcting the mismatch between what graduates expect and what the labour market has to offer.

■ *Foster regional integration.* Relaxing restrictions on Somalis› ability to freely and legally travel and seek employment in the Horn of Africa and East African region could relieve migration pressures and redirect movements away from the prevailing dangerous routes.

«The Oranges in Europe taste better»

«The Oranges in Europe taste better»
On the root causes of flight, the countermeasures
– and their shortcomings