OUT OF AFRICA
WHY PEOPLE MIGRATE

edited by **Giovanni Carbone**
introduction by **Paolo Magri**

ISPI

Out of Africa

Why People Migrate

Edited by Giovanni Carbone

ISPI

Contents

Introduction

Migration from Africa commonly evokes the picture of a continent fleeing from its evils towards the European Eldorado. Such alarmist representations of an African mass exodus, fuelled by the media and policy makers alike, are actually quite far from the real dynamics of African migration. In Europe, notably in the traditional destination countries, since the 1970s migration has turned into a politicised topic, increasingly leading to more restrictive migration policies, but it is only in the past few years that it has sparked off a crisis throughout the whole continent. The EU and its member states have failed to look below the surface of migration flows as they have repeatedly preferred to turn a blind eye to their root causes. Against this backdrop, this ISPI Report investigates why some Africans decide to leave their countries and how they do it, also with a view to challenging stereotyped perceptions. For this purpose, the experts brought together in this volume help reveal the hidden side of African migration, delving into its drivers, trends and effects. Contrary to popular perceptions, their findings suggest that, far from being exceptional, the size and destinations of African migration are impressively similar to global migratory patterns. In other words, African migrants too, when crossing an international border, are more likely to move to neighbouring countries within their African sub-region than elsewhere, because of the higher costs of moving over longer distances. Costs which may ultimately include the loss of their own lives. Actually, if something exceptional has to be found in African migration, it is the striking number of sub-Saharan countries each hosting over two million

displaced people last year: South Sudan, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, and Nigeria.

Migration is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon. Resorting to easy explanations may appear as a convenient short-cut but ultimately, twists the truth. This complexity is only very rarely reflected in the politicy choices adopted by receiving countries. By continuously placing the spotlight on border protection and on how European societies are affected by migration flows, they ultimately produce unintended effects. For instance, restrictive European migration policies have caused migrants to diversify their destination countries and to resort to riskier routes and irregular practices. These policies also have a negative impact on migrants' decision to return to their home countries: even if they want to, migrants are less likely to leave Europe if they know it will be difficult to eventually come back.

By the same token, the impact of Africa's recent economic and political transformations has had a complex and – to some extent – unexpected result in terms of African mobility. Contrary to popular belief, a higher level of development – rather than poverty – is a strong driver of African migration, especially over greater distances. Indeed, the spread of new technologies – especially mobile communication as a result of economic growth – as well as political stabilisation in some countries may have increased Africans' capabilities and aspirations to move. However, this is just another piece of a much bigger picture. Large swathes of the continent are still rife with conflict and repression, and Africa's growth has hardly been inclusive. And this still remains a crucial driver of migration.

In a nutshell, the rationale behind African migration is much more nuanced. It requires a careful, objective analysis highlighting the complexity of migration dynamics and merging short-term views with long-term prospects. This is ultimately the goal of this ISPI Report. In the first chapter, Giovanni Carbone presents a broad overview of the demographic, economic, political, and environmental developments of contemporary sub-Saharan Africa, and investigates the role these may play in migrants'

decisions to leave their country. Carbone warns against seeing migration only as a response to external conditions such as global inequalities: if that were enough, many *more* African migrants would be on the move over long distances. Instead, personal circumstances must also be taken into account, moving away from classic approaches (push-pull factors and historical-structural accounts), which downplay the role of personal decisions.

Empirical evidence helps give a clearer picture. This goal is at the core of Marie-Laurence Flahaux's chapter, in which she analyses macro and micro data on migration to debunk the myths surrounding African migration. Has the number of African migrants been on the rise? And do most of them live outside the continent? In seeking to answer these and other questions, her chapter illustrates the scale and destinations of African migration in recent decades. Her analysis reveals that migration from Africa, in proportion to the total African population, has actually slightly decreased since the 1990s and that, especially with regards to sub-Saharan migration, it has mostly been directed towards other African countries.

Environmental disruptions and climate change are often portrayed by the media as drivers of migration and conflict. Drawing evidence from the Sahel, the "ground zero" for climate change because of its high geographical exposure to tragic environmental events, Sara Vigil explores the multifaceted nexus between climate change and mobility through examples of periodic droughts and seasonal floods. Rather than as the root cause, climate change is presented as a threat multiplier and a supplementary stress factor compounding already difficult realities: weak governance, limited infrastructure and political instability are just some of the socio-political frameworks that influence the effects of climate change on people's propensity to migrate.

Flahaux's findings in chapter 2 are supported by Blessing Mberu and Estelle Sidze's analysis in chapter 4, in which the authors also attempt to explain why most sub-Saharan African migrants remain in Africa. They question the claim that African migrants move out of Africa to chase better socio-economic

opportunities. Quite the opposite: historical trends show that sub-Saharan Africans, especially those hailing from western and southern Africa, have long been involved in labour migration within their regions. So, far from being pushed by dire situations of environmental, demographic or underdevelopment pressures, many voluntarily decide to resettle in neighbouring countries. Besides this, the authors also investigate the relatively recent trend of sub-Saharan migration towards MENA countries as temporary or final destinations.

Shifting to country-specific analyses, the last two chapters of the Report are devoted to Eritrea and Nigeria, two countries that have made headlines in recent years as top countries of origin in sea arrivals to the EU. Last year Eritreans were the second largest nationality reaching European shores via the central Mediterranean route, yet those arriving in Italy are just a minority of those who flee the country, since most remain in neighbouring states. To devise better migration policies, it is indispensable to understand the motivations and the routes of Eritrean flight, and in chapter 5 Nicole Hirt seeks to explain how Eritrea, once a "beacon of hope", after much-awaited independence eventually became a harsh autocracy characterised by a command economy, a militarised society, and a mandatory open-ended national and military conscription – that turns out to be the major cause of Eritrean migration.

The second case study focuses on Nigeria, Africa's top sending country to Europe but also Africa's demographic and economic giant. Considering that its population is growing by 3% annually, the challenges its government will have to face in coming years are serious and should not be understated by international actors. Addressing the key drivers of Nigerian migration, Aderanti Adepoju investigates the migratory pressure posed by the disparity between labour force growth and job creation, which ended up creating "jobless growth". He identifies this as the major migration determinant, but still acknowledges that also conflicts, poverty, and human deprivation need to be factored in.

Finally, the editor sums up the volume's main findings and draws some policy recommendations for Europe. Throughout the Report, several authors showed how restrictive migration policies aimed at better patrolling the EU's external borders have not solved the issue of migration from Africa, instead generating unintended consequences. Likewise controversial are Western proposals suggesting that higher economic development in sending countries would reduce migration flows. In fact, some chapters have discussed how more economic resources available to would-be African migrants might actually make migration more affordable to a bigger portion of them, at least in the short-to-medium term. Finally, to contain climate-induced migration, instead of focusing only on the climate-change threat itself, it has been stressed that policies should also address the pre-existing political and economic vulnerabilities that amplify climate-related effects.

So, why do people migrate in and from Africa? As this volume shows, the reality is more nuanced than what common media reporting depicts. This Report joins new studies in demystifying such common assumptions on African migration. All the authors agree on the fact that African migration will not be disappearing any time soon. But far from being the hopeless continent, such a diverse region deserves more consideration now that, at a time of crisis, only a deeper understanding of the political and socio-economic conditions affecting sub-Saharan people in their home countries can inform better migration policies in Europe. That might require much effort and time but, as a Sudanese proverb goes, "patience is the key which solves all problems".

Paolo Magri
ISPI Executive Vice President and Director

1. Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Why Africans Migrate

Giovanni Carbone

Beyond the Mediterranean, south of the Sahara

A kind of short-sightedness seems to dominate European perceptions of international migration. National governments and publics peer over the horizon to monitor the infringement of the land and maritime frontiers of the European Union by migrants nearing the continent by boat, by walking on foot or by some other means. The migrants' often-dramatic journeys are observed with a primary focus on how and whether they will actually enter the EU, requiring some direct responses and interventions. This, in turn, is followed by concerns about how to manage asylum-seekers and economic immigrants who want to cross further national borders within the EU, how to deal with their presence in European host societies, and how to possibly favour their return home. In the process, our gaze only rarely goes much beyond the southern edges of the Mediterranean Sea[1].

Yet, since a substantial share of migrants to the EU hails from sub-Saharan Africa, the story of what lies behind contemporary migration is – to a large extent – to be found *in the region*. A more complete understanding of the root causes and immediate

---

[1] Migration scholarship itself is affected by a similar "receiving-country bias – the tendency of migration studies to focus on the consequences of immigration in wealthy, migrant receiving societies, and to ignore the causes and consequences of migration in origin countries" (S. Castles, H. De Haas, M.J. Miller, *The Age of Migration. International Population Movements in the Modern World*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2014, p. 26).

triggers of migration thus requires us to look further than we are used to, and to inquire into both the particular contexts and the shared processes that characterise the migrants' places of origin. What type of economic, political or social situations are these people trying to leave behind – maybe even flee – in their home countries, if any? In seeking to answer these questions, the volume illustrates and disentangles the impact of certain conditions that are specific to national or even sub-national realities (see, for example, Nicole Hirt's chapter on Eritrea and the role that an open-ended military and national service plays in encouraging clandestine emigration) from that of broader and common phenomena shaping reality across state borders (as, for example, with regard to climate change and migration in the Sahel sub-region, discussed in Sara Vigil's chapter).

Understanding migration

Migration is widely recognised as a complex phenomenon that cannot be easily reduced to any single factor, but rather results from multiple, overlapping and shifting motives. The common understanding that international migrants essentially respond to global inequalities and geographical differences in wealth, freedom and wellbeing is a helpful but limited starting point, as it cannot explain, for example, "why do so *few* people migrate"[2]– 244 million in 2015, or just about 3.3% of the world population – nor the reasons why this percentage stayed relatively unchanged for at least the past half-century (the figure was 2.4% in 1960 and 2.1% in 1980)[3]. Besides economic and political conditions in origin and destination countries, and existing national

---

[2] K. Koser, *International Migration. A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2016 (II edition), p. 35.

[3] The figure on the number of migrants for 2015 is from the Global Migration Data Analysis Centre, *Global Migration Trends 2015. Factsheet*, Berlin, International Organisation for Migration, Genève, 2016, p. 5. Percentages have been calculated based on the World Bank's *World Development Indicators* (accessed on 28 July 2017).

and international policies, any sound inquiry into this subject must account for the crucial role that a migrant's personal circumstances, and the family and social networks he or she relates to, play in a *decision* to move that cannot be reduced to a semi-automatic response to external conditions.

One classic if simplistic way of framing the various explanatory factors that are presumed to lead to migration is to distinguish between a macro, a meso and a micro level[4]. Macro-level causes are structural drivers that, in principle, indistinctly affect each and every potential migrant. A country's demographics, its geographic location and climatic events, economic wealth and performance, established political arrangements and security issues, and migration policies – both with regard to origin as well as to transit and destination countries – all fall into this category. On the opposite side, micro-level conditions include both the long list of an individual's personal features (age, gender, health, language, ethnicity, etc.) as well as the resources available to him or her (notably, finances and skills, including education). In between the two, a less obvious meso-level category accounts for those elements connecting the individual with the broader society, such as an extended family group, ethnic, religious or regional communities, and wider social networks, comprising those powered by internet and the new social media. It is well-documented, for example, that *migrant networks* connecting "migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through bonds of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin … decrease the economic, social and psychological costs of migration"[5], thus favouring the probability that a specific person will embark on the journey as well as affecting how the latter unfolds.

Yet how exactly one or more of the abovementioned factors actually lead to migration requires a specific *causal* story, that is,

---

[4] Cf. C. Cummings, J. Pacitto, D. Lauro, M. Foresti, *Why people move: understanding the drivers and trends of migration to Europe*, London, ODI, 2015, p. 25.
[5] S. Castles, H. De Haas, M.J. Miller (2014), p. 40.

a theoretical explanation. And there is no lack of such accounts[6]. In a rather deterministic way, "push-pull" or "gravity" approaches look at international migration as a response to the wide differences in the demographic structure and economic opportunities of individual countries, towards a functional equilibrium. Asymmetric relations between economically advanced and poor countries are also at the basis of a second set of explanations – at times referred to as historical-structural – but in this case the emphasis lies on the uneven and exploitative nature of (mostly labour) migration under global capitalism. Human migration, however, is hardly the kind of rational, passive and smooth response to external conditions that both push-pull and historical-structural accounts would posit. Ultimately, an individual *chooses* to migrate, and this may have to do more – or at least also – with his or her perceptions, aspirations and resources, with risk-sharing and diversification strategies within the family, or with the established mobility patterns of the cultural or regional community he or she belongs to. Recent versions of migration transition theories[7] try to incorporate the role of an individual's decisions within a macro-level approach. The central tenet is that migration is essentially "an *intrinsic* part of broader processes of social change, usually embodied in the concept of 'development'"[8], and unfolds in a non-linear way. As societies develop and transform, increased awareness, aspirations and assets make individuals more likely to decide to migrate. But the process also leads to a point where, once a country achieves a certain level of development, the balance between emigration and immigration shifts, with the former declining while the latter increases.

In their efforts to explain mobility, migration studies made several common or common-sense assumptions much more

---

[6] This section is mainly based on S. Castles, H. De Haas, M.J. Miller (2014), pp. 25-54.

[7] H. De Haas, *Migration transitions. A theoretical and empirical inquiry into the developmental drivers of international migration*, Working Papers Paper 24 - DEMIG project paper 1, International Migration Institute, Oxford, 2010; W. Zelinsky, "The hypothesis of the mobility transition", *Geographical Review*, vol. 61, no. 2, 1971, pp. 219-249.

[8] H. De Haas (2010), p. 3.

problematic than they at first appear. Far from being a modern phenomenon, migration is found across ages and societies (with a peak of intensity during the XIX century). As a matter of fact, asking why, today, so many people move may not even be the right question: in a global world that is otherwise characterised by freedom of movement – can we imagine a situation in which only 3% of supermarket products, television programmes, websites or books come from abroad? – the share of migrants over the world population actually looks abnormally low[9]. Also, there is now widespread consensus that the same individual may have different motivations for leaving his or her country, that these motives may change over time and often blur the distinction between economic migrants and refugees. Contrary to popular perceptions, it is not the poorest and the destitute that depart their home places to try and reach more advanced nations, since some basic financial resources and skills are necessary to afford long-distance mobility[10]. Most migrants typically remain within the world region they were born in[11]. For the same reason, climate and environmental changes per se are likely not enough to ignite very large extra-continental migration flows, as feared by some. Global inequalities may be less relevant than migration networks and a "culture of migration" in shaping patterns of international migration and making them self-perpetuating processes. The very notion that promoting aid, investment, trade and other forms of exchange between countries of destination and countries of origin can help contain people's movements may be misplaced, as closer links may turn out to actually foster the volume of migration. Finally, in spite of mounting anti-immigration fears across a number of Western countries, there is

---

[9] G. Sciortino, *Rebus immigrazione*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2017, p. 22.

[10] C. Dustmann and A. Okatenko, "Out-migration, wealth constraints, and the quality of local amenities", *Journal of Development Economics*, vol. 110, 2014, pp. 52-63.

[11] C. Wihtol de Wenden, "Current patterns of migration flows. The challenge of migration and asylum in Europe", in M. Ambrosini (ed.), *Europe: no migrant's land?*, Milano, Epoké-ISPI, 2016, p. 14.

increasing evidence of a positive economic impact of migration in receiving economies[12].

Does "Africa on the move" mean "Africans on the move"?

Ever since sub-Saharan countries gained independence back in the 1960s, the region has consistently remained the poorest in the world bar Southern Asia. With a US$3,922 per capita income at purchasing-power parity in 2016[13], the area has long been synonymous with development failure: a stagnating region with few signs of change and little prospects of advancement. The peak of disappointment was the "lost decade" of the 1980s and early 1990s, when "devastatingly bad economic performance" led to a visible decline in living standards[14]. By the end of the century, per capita income was at the same level it was in the early 1960s[15].

Since around the mid-1990s and then the early 2000s, however, sub-Saharan Africa began to witness quite substantial progress. More optimistic – and at times over-optimistic – assessments made their appearance and rapidly multiplied as if by contagion. By then, many observers deemed Africa "on the move", "fast-changing", "in transformation", or "rising". While the occasionally hyperbolic accounts risked hiding the extent to which many things remained just as they were – including the lifestyles, resources and vulnerabilities of many remote rural areas, as the current hunger crisis in East Africa reminds us all too clearly – sub-Saharan societies did see the emergence of new dynamics and important progress. Besides the latter, long-term ongoing processes also continued to unfold, implying additional, if more

---

[12] K. Koser (2016), p. 97.

[13] International Monetary Fund, *World Economic Outlook Database*, April 2017 (accessed on 24 July 2017).

[14] J. Darnton, "'Lost decade' drains Africa's vitality", *New York Times*, 19 June 1994.

[15] International Monetary Fund (2017), accessed on 24 July 2017.

gradual, changes. Some of the key transformations underway in recent years include massive demographic expansion, remarkable economic performances, technological innovations, social improvements, political renewals, and environmental change. What have been the main implications – if any – for African mobility?

With extraordinarily high population growth rates, the number of Africans south of the Sahara doubled from 493 million in 1990 to almost 1 billion in 2015, or a 96% increase (by way of comparison, Asians grew by "only" 37% over the same period). The region is expected to double yet again by 2050 (reaching 2.2 billion people) and then by 2100 (4 billion), driving the world's population dynamics and approaching the size of Asia[16]. The trend towards strong demographic expansion is the result of the "striking contrast" between rapid health improvements – leading to sharp declines in mortality rates, particularly for children – and a slow reduction in fertility rates[17]. With an astounding average of 7.6 children per woman – the world's highest fertility rate – the population of Niger will more than triple from today's 20 million to almost 70 million in 2050. A medium-sized country such as Uganda, which was inhabited by just 5 million people in 1950, will have 214 million at the end of this century. Since sub-Saharan Africa has historically displayed comparatively low levels of population density, however, it only overtook Europe in recent years and remains far behind Asia (i.e. 44 versus 142 inhabitants per square kilometre in 2015).

The massive expansion of youth cohorts and the clash between their economic expectations and lack of employment opportunities in their home countries is one of the most-frequently cited motives behind migration flows towards Europe. In principle, however, the possibility exists of turning Africa's

---

[16] "Medium variant" projections, United Nations Population Division, *World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision*, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, New York, 2017.

[17] J. May, *The Demographic Dividend, Revisited*, Population Reference Bureau, Washington DC, March 2014.

expanding working-age population into an asset for economic and social development, as opposed to a Malthusian burden and a source of competition and challenging tensions for land, jobs, public services, etc. As shown by a number of successful Asian countries, a so-called demographic dividend "becomes possible when fertility declines sufficiently to increase the number of the working-age population relative to the rest of the population and to reduce the investments needed to care for children (an improvement in the dependency ratios)"[18]. The dividend period is estimated to last some five decades or more, until reduced fertility diminishes the rate of expansion of a labour force that has to care for an ever-growing elderly population[19]. Indulging in the hope of reaping the benefits of massive population growth, the former head of the African Union Commission, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, established a direct link with migration when, at the 2014 EU-AU summit, she observed that "Africa could be the only continent with a young labour force by 2050. If we concentrate on skilling-up our people, they will not have to come [into Europe] through Lampedusa or the desert … and [more will stay at home, where they] will drive development in Africa"[20].

Economic change south of the Sahara has already been kick-started. Many economies in the area achieved a string of impressive growth results over the first decade and a half of the XXI century. The region as a whole accelerated its pace from the meagre 2% yearly average GDP increases of the 1990s to a much more substantial 5.6% in 2000-2014[21]. In spite of the turmoil and disappointment that prevailed in markets such as Côte d'Ivoire or Zimbabwe for the better part of the period, several other countries experienced a period of unprecedented economic progress, including the likes of Nigeria, Angola, Ethiopia,

---

[18] Ibid.

[19] R. Lee and A. Mason, "What is the demographic dividend?", *Finance & Development*, IMF, vol. 43, no. 3, 2006.

[20] "Some partners are more equal than others", *Africa Confidential*, vol. 55, no. 7, 4 April 2014.

[21] International Monetary Fund (2017), accessed on 2 June 2017.

Rwanda, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Chad. In a number of cases, oil and mineral exports undeniably played a key role. But if these were the only explanation, neither Ethiopia, nor Rwanda nor Mozambique would ever be counted among the brightest performers in the region. The continent's economic recovery was sustained by additional factors (particularly, sounder macroeconomic management, reformed political arrangements, and rising levels of international aid) and cut across many sectors. After a long period of decline in the key agricultural sector, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, a revival began to take shape in the 1990s, leading to 4.6% average yearly growth rates for the sector in 2002-2010 and an even higher 5.2% in 2011-2015. This new scenario, observed across all major sub-regions, turned "the past 15 years ... [into] the longest period of sustained economic and agricultural growth since independence"[22].

Economic growth was accompanied by an impressive spread of new technologies, which was all the more revolutionary in Africa since it permitted addressing some infrastructural bottlenecks (of which there are still plenty on the continent). Thus, for example, Africans quickly embraced mobile phones to leapfrog the development of historically dysfunctional landline networks. This, in turn, fed into the pioneering use of mobile money, also a way around the lack of a specific kind of physical infrastructure, namely local bank branches. These new channels of information, communication and exchange have been highly consequential for would-be as much as for actual migrants. Some observers have pointed out that recent transformations help explain the growing numbers of emigrants from the region, as they "increased young Africans' capabilities and aspirations to migrate"[23].

---

[22] O. Badiane and J. Collins, "Agricultural Growth and Productivity in Africa: Recent Trends and Future Outlook", in J. Lynam et al. (eds.), *Agricultural Research in Africa: Investing in Future Harvests*, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Washington DC, 2016, pp. 3-30, cit. p. 5.
[23] M.-L. Flahaux and H. De Haas, "African migration: trends, patterns, drivers", *Comparative Migration Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2016, p. 23.

But to what extent did economic growth actually matter for potential migrants in the region? As the economic recovery stabilised a decade or so ago, concerns began to focus on the extent to which ordinary Africans were actually benefitting from their countries' remarkable performances. This was also a time when rising global inequalities were increasingly coming under the spotlight[24]. In Africa, the pace of economic growth was good, but was its distribution? While social indicators did show improvements virtually across the board, including a slow decline of poverty levels (see below), there appeared to be little progress by way of expanding employment opportunities. Africa's growth was largely "jobless" – as stressed, for example, by Aderanti Adepoju's chapter on Nigeria in this Report – hardly the kind of "inclusive growth" that the new development jargon increasingly demanded, that is, "growth that the poor and disadvantaged share in"[25]. Moreover, as this debate started to kick in, several key markets on the continent were hit by the economic downturn that began in late 2014, including 185-million-people and Africa's largest oil-producer Nigeria, but also South Africa and Angola, among others. As a result, the growth picture in the region has become significantly more nuanced and diversified than it used to be some five or ten years ago, with certain countries

---

[24] J. Stiglitz, *The Price of Inequality. How Today's Divided Society Endangers Our Future*, New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 2012; T. Piketty, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 2014.

[25] This early use of the concept of "inclusive growth" is from the Asian Development Bank, *Asian Development Outlook 2000. The social challenge in Asia*, 2000, p. 224. The World Bank subsequently defined it "growth that allows people to contribute to and benefit from economic growth… [implying] a longer term perspective as the focus is on productive employment rather than on direct income redistribution, as a means of increasing incomes for excluded groups" (World Bank, *What is inclusive growth?*, Washington DC, 10 February 2009, pp. 1-2). Inclusive growth was explicitly mentioned among the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nation, "Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all", *Transforming our world: the 2030 agenda for sustainable development*, New York, 2015). See also the African Development Bank, *Inclusive growth agenda*, Briefing Note 6, 10 April 2012.

still showing strong performances and prospects – including Ethiopia, Tanzania, Côte d'Ivoire or Kenya – and others slipping into an area of slower growth and even stagnation (Figure 1).

In the case of contemporary Africa, the broader issue of whether the net effect of development is to increase migration (particularly in the medium- and short-term) or to reduce it (mostly in the long-term) is thus further complicated by both the ups and downs of growth – with increasingly divergent trajectories potentially affecting intra-continental migration patterns – as well as by the latter's nature, namely whether "growth without jobs" matters at all, that is, whether or the extent to which growth of this nature can produce the kind of impact that "development" purportedly generates by expanding available resources.

Had the nature of Africa's growth been different, the extent and depth of poverty across the continent would have been affected in a much more substantial way. Africa was the only developing region to fail the target of halving extreme poverty set by the Millennium Development Goals. Contrary to the "lost decade", the past twenty years were not wasted. Poverty south of the Sahara did decline from a peak of 57% in 1999 to 41% in 2013, and possibly even more than that[26]. But, as mentioned, the fall was not as fast as it was hoped. Moreover, due to population increases, the actual number of poor went up by about 100 million: from 288 million in 1990 to 389 million in 2012, with rural and chronic poverty remaining particularly pervasive. The uphill struggle for socio-economic inclusion is also revealed by the proportion of Africans with access to electricity, a figure that almost doubled from 19.2% in 1991 to 37.4% in 2014[27], but remains well below the modest target of covering half of the continent's population.

---

[26] World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, Databank (accessed on 28 July 2017). See also World Bank, *Poverty in a rising Africa*, Washington DC, World Bank, 2016, p. 1.

[27] World Bank, *World Development Indicators*… cit., (accessed on 25 July 2017).

Fig. 1 - Growth in sub-Saharan African countries,
1995-2008 versus 2015-2017
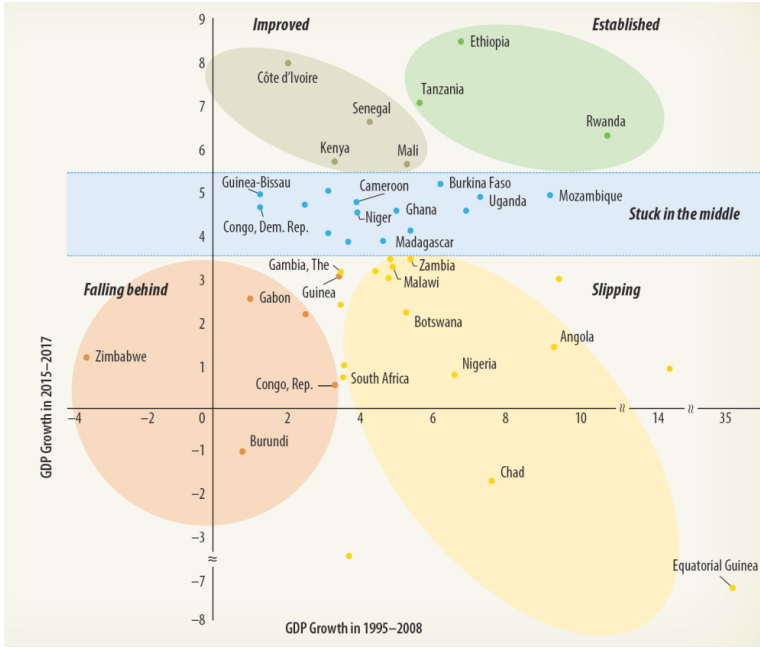
Source: World Bank, *Africa's pulse*, 2017, p. 21

Political violence, dictatorial rule and discrimination can also be important drivers of migration. The political landscape of 2017 sub-Saharan Africa is vastly different from pre-1990 politics. A number of states have gradually become more stable – both a condition for and a consequence of economic development – and governments were democratised to an unprecedented degree[28]. Up until the late 1980s, political normalcy consisted of repressive military rule or largely uncompetitive

---

[28] For an overview, see N. Cheeseman, *Democracy in Africa*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015.

one-party regimes. A tide of reforms was then rapidly ushered in across the region. In spite of the limits of the initial reforms, and of the many setbacks that followed, elections contested by multiple parties and candidates are now an accepted standard, and most countries allow a substantial degree of freedom for opposition politics and media outlets. Recent progress includes a historic election in Nigeria, in 2015, where the opposition was for the first time able to oust an incumbent President[29]. In 2016, the longstanding authoritarian ruler of the Gambia was surprisingly defeated at the polls, while the sitting Gabonese President only marginally avoided a similar fate. In early 2017, Somalia held a restricted election that nevertheless had significant potential for the process of rebuilding the state. Later in the year, Kenya had to abide by an unprecedented Supreme Court ruling that demanded a re-casting of the presidential vote, whose result had been contested by the opposition.

But contentious politics, conflict and repression still feature prominently in many corners of the continent. Instability in neighbouring countries made Uganda the fifth top refugee-receiving country in the world, with 940,800 refugees in 2016, followed by Ethiopia with 791,600 (UNHCR 2017). In South Sudan, the world's youngest state, a devastating civil war between the ethno-political factions of the President and of the former Vice-President contributed to the famine that was officially declared in early 2017. In Ethiopia, a state of emergency was declared for 10 months following violent unrest in Oromia and other regions, itself the result of a bogus election in which the ruling party and its allies won all parliamentary seats. Neighbouring Eritrea remains one of the most politically-closed and oppressive autocracies in the world. North-eastern Nigeria was profoundly destabilised by the Boko Haram insurgency, which caused some 30,000 deaths and displaced some 2 million people[30].

---

[29] G. Carbone and A. Cassani, "Nigeria and democratic progress by elections in Africa", *Africa Spectrum*, no. 3, 2016, pp. 33-59.

[30] Data from Council on Foreign Relations, *Nigeria Security Tracker* (accessed on 25 July 2017) and Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre - Norwegian Refugee

These and other political developments are mirrored by the ups and down of migration flows, with the likes of Eritrea, Somalia, Nigeria, South Sudan, Ethiopia or the Gambia listed among the top "sending countries". In 2016, for example, 12,000 Gambians – out of a total population of just about 2 million people – reached the shores of Italy. Yet, following the surprise electoral ousting of Yahya Jammeh, the dictator who had ruled the country for over two decades and viewed migrants as an unpatriotic and undeserving bunch, Gambians began to feel they had lost their legitimate claim to asylum in Europe, even though most had probably fled poverty rather than persecution[31].

The 2017 food crisis – and particularly the famine in South Sudan – put the spotlight on the intertwine of political and environmental factors in driving human mobility. The very origin and pace of human migration out of Africa, with the waves of dispersal of *homo sapiens* between around 120,000 and 15,000 years ago, has long been linked to climatic events and environmental change, since the latter deeply affects the availability of resources and thus the "carrying capacity" of a given region (i.e. the human population it can support), shaping human dispersal[32]. Today, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) defines "environmental migrants" as those "persons or groups of persons who, for reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their country or abroad"[33]. It is the combination of the existing demographic, socio-political and economic

---

Council, *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2017*, Genève, 2017.

[31] L. Hunt, "Meet the Gambian migrants under pressure to leave Europe", *IRIN*, 20 July 2017.

[32] P.B. deMenocal and C. Stringer, "Climate and the peopling of the world", *Nature*, vol. 538, no. 7623, October 2016, pp. 49-50.

[33] International Organisation for Migration (IOM), *World Migration Report 2008: Managing Labour Mobility in the Evolving Global Economy*, 2008, p. 493; Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (2016), p. 5.

vulnerabilities, alongside region-specific geographical features, that makes the sub-Saharan area disproportionately exposed to climate-change events – both sudden-onset events, such as droughts or floods, and slow-onset ones such as desertification or sea-level rise – as Sara Vigil explains clearly in her chapter. For this very reason, whether initiatives such as the Great Green Wall of the Sahara and the Sahel will help contain migration flows or actually make it easier for Africans to afford to move remains an open question[34].

Conclusion

International migration is an increasingly complex reality. The task of the analyses contained in this Report and similar works is to contribute to a better-informed understanding of the phenomenon and possibly to a related improvement of public action. The trouble is that much of the public systematically prefers quick and clear-cut representations of the world, rather than more nuanced investigations.

The prevailing narrative on African migration, with its rhetoric and images, is most often stereotyped. As Marie-Laurence Flahaux points out in her chapter, migration is typically reported through alarmist discourses about an African "exodus" or an "invasion" of Europe driven by poverty and wars. In fact, much of this reporting is based on assumptions that new studies are increasingly questioning, and, overall, African migration appears to be less exceptional than it is often thought. From a Western and European perspective, emphasis is often placed on the growing number of Africans – in absolute terms – on the move. But, as Flahaux argues, the number of African emigrants as a share of (a fast-expanding) population is essentially stable. Moreover, most of them "simply" move somewhere else on the continent (see Blessing Mberu and Estelle Sidze's chapter).

---

[34] J. Filipovic, "Will Africa's Great Green Wall discourage migration to Europe?", *The Guardian*, 19 July 2017.

The stereotyped migration narrative builds on a broader, well-established Afro-pessimism as a simplistic view that portrays African development as an overall and intractable failure. This perspective, dominant ever since at least the 1970s (but one may trace its roots much further back[35]), was only challenged during the past ten to fifteen years – roughly, from the beginning of the new millennium – when an opposite narrative quickly and surprisingly began to gain ground. The "Africa rising" story looked at the continent as the fastest-changing developing area, with unprecedented and sustained economic growth in countries across the region. This was also partly a somewhat stereotyped narrative, and the economic downturn that began in late 2014, with the fall of oil and other commodity prices, led to a scenario in which, as mentioned, national growth prospects are more diversified than they were in previous years.

The barriers between the abovementioned perspectives – the over-pessimistic (as for migration) and the over-optimistic (as for early XXI economic performances) – should be lowered. As much as we should avoid a uniform reading of the different realities across Europe, a grown-up view of contemporary sub-Saharan Africa, a region almost seventy times the size of Germany, is needed. One that looks at it as a land where poverty and conflict are at times on the rise (as with the increasing instability in parts of the Congo-Kinshasa or with the violence of the Fulani militias in the Nigerian middle belt), and may feed into migration flows, but also as a land of growth and dynamism, transformations and opportunities that have recently attracted not just foreign companies and investments, but also immigrants from other countries of the global South (notably from China) and even of the global North (as in the case of Portuguese migrants to Angola or Mozambique in the years following the financial crisis[36]).

---

[35] Joseph Conrad's *Heart of darkness* novel was published in 1899. See C. Achebe, "An image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*", *Massachusetts Review*, vol. 18, 1977.

[36] See A. Akwagyiram, "Portugal's unemployed heading to Mozambique 'paradise'", *BBC News*, 6 April 2013; E. Nieves, "Portuguese migrants struggle to find

The demystification of outsiders' perspectives on Africa is key to lessening the fear that grips part of the public in EU countries, and to expanding the room for manoeuvre for policy-makers in addressing issues such as migration. Because Africa is a diverse and fast-evolving region, and migration – including African migration – is a fact of life that is here to stay.

relief in Angola", *New York Times*, 17 December 2015.

2. Demystifying African Migration: Trends, Destinations and Returns

Marie-Laurence Flahaux

In public opinion and political discourses, African migration is most of the time described as high and increasing, mainly directed toward the North, and generally explained by poverty and wars. African migrants are often perceived as poor individuals fleeing the difficult context of their place of origin and migrating massively to rich countries. In addition, it is sometimes believed that smuggling, carried out by profit-seeking criminals, is the cause of migration from the African continent to Europe. Also, it is often expected that most migrants intend to settle permanently in those countries of destination and never return to their origin countries.

These ideas or "myths" are influenced by media images of "boat migration" in the Mediterranean. Images of boats full of migrants have contributed to drawing public and policy attention to African migration to Europe. The Mediterranean crisis, with the drowning of African (and non-African) migrants who attempt to reach Italy, has reinforced the alarmist discourses of various stakeholders, including those of politicians, and have spread in the public opinion through the media at national and international levels. The phenomenon of African migrants travelling by sea despite the risks is not new but fuels the idea of an "exodus" from Africa and an "African invasion" in Europe[1].

---

[1] D. Lessault and C. Beauchemin. "Ni invasion, ni exode. Regards statistiques sur les migrations d'Afrique subsaharienne", *Revue européenne des migrations internationales, Nouvelles migrations chinoises en Afrique et en Amérique latine*, vol. 25, no. 1, 2009, pp. 163-194.

However, these ideas are based on observations selected by journalists. These ideas, widespread in public opinion, mainly reflect impressions rather than the realities of African migration[2].

Firstly, this chapter intends to summarise empirical evidence revealed by research conducted on African migration. Analyses of "macro" data (from estimations of the volume of African migrants or "stocks") and "micro" data (from surveys carried out among African migrants) demystify the common representations of African migration. We will particularly focus on the following questions:

- Is there an increase of African migration?
- Do most African migrants live outside Africa?
- Is poverty the main driver of African migration?
- Is smuggling the cause of migration from Africa to Europe?
- Do African migrants return to their origin country?

Recent research allows us to answer these questions in the next section.

Secondly, based on the empirical evidence explained in the next section, this chapter will discuss the effect of measures implemented by European countries in order to stop or – at least – reduce African migration. On the one hand, European countries indeed want to restrict the flows of African migration, but, on the other hand, they seem unable to do it, as illustrated by the tragic events at the southern border of Europe, despite the budgets allocated to reinforce European borders. Thus, in the second section of this chapter, the effectiveness of policies aiming at managing African migration will be discussed.

The findings revealed by recent studies and summarised below are based on two types of data.

On the one hand, estimations of stocks of international migrants are now available. The Global Bilateral Migration Database, released by the World Bank, contains bilateral

---

[2] M.-L. Flahaux and H. De Haas, "Migration from, to and within Africa: the role of development and state", *Comparative Migration Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2016.

migration population or stocks data for 226 countries, major territories and dependencies for 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000[3]. Migration stocks for 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010 and 2015 that have been estimated by the United Nations Population Division (Department of Economic and Social Affairs) are also available. These volumes of migrants are estimated from census data and population register records. Despite the possibilities of analyses offered by these databases, it is important to bear in mind that they are not perfect and that they contain limitations. Unauthorised migration is not included, for example, when the data comes from population registers (and to a certain extent when it comes from population censuses). And when data is based on migration defined from the "country of citizenship" criterion rather than from the "country of birth" criterion, the stocks are likely to be underestimated.

On the other hand, survey data carried out in 2008-2009 on migration between Africa and Europe also provide more specific empirical evidence on Congolese, Senegalese and Ghanaian migration. Household surveys were carried out in the region of the capital cities of the countries of origin, and biographical (individual) surveys took place both in origin and in destination countries in Europe. These surveys provide detailed information on many aspects of migration (and non-migration)[4]. The findings from this data source developed in this chapter focus on the case of migration from Senegal and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo). These case studies are interesting to compare as these countries' political and economic climates have evolved very differently since their independence. While Senegal has been politically stable since independence, DR Congo has

---

[3] C. Özden, C.R. Parsons, M. Schiff, T.L. Walmsley, "Where on Earth is Everybody? The Evolution of Global Bilateral Migration 1960-2000", *The World Bank Economic Review*, vol. 25, no. 1, 2011, pp. 12-56.

[4] For information on the Migration between Africa and Europe (MAFE) project and data (household and individual/biographical surveys) that investigated Congolese, Ghanaian and Senegalese migration, see the MAFE, http://mafeproject.site.ined.fr/en/

experienced manifold troubles over decades. Living conditions have become more difficult for the population of both countries over time, but the economic crisis has been far deeper in DR Congo. While these two cases studies are not representative of the whole of Africa, the comparison highlights that the context in the countries of origin and destination plays an important role for many aspects related to migration, and that migration is not homogenous across the African continent.

Empirical evidence from research on African migration

Is there an increase of African migration?

Contradicting common ideas, empirical analyses using data on migration stocks reveal that there has not been an increase in African migration in recent decades. Figure 1 shows that the total number of African migrants was stable between 1990 and 2000, but rose afterward from 21.6 million in 2000 (16.3 million from sub-Saharan Africa) to 32.6 million in 2015 (23.9 million from south of the Sahara). However, it is important to take into account the fact that the African population has also increased over time. Consequently, to measure the extent of emigration, it is more appropriate to consider Figure 2, showing the trends of African migrants as a percentage of the population of Africa. It indicates that emigration from the African continent has not increased, but instead slightly decreased between 1990 and 2015, albeit the downward trend was marginally reversed after 2005 (after 2010 for sub-Saharan Africa). Less than 3% of the African population live in a country other than its country of origin. This is even less than the average worldwide, as about 3.3% of the world population is a migrant[5].

[5] M. Czaika and H. De Haas, "The Globalization of Migration: Has the World Become More Migratory?", *International Migration Review*, no. 48, 2014, pp. 283-323.

Fig. 1 - Total numbers of African international migrants (1990-2015)
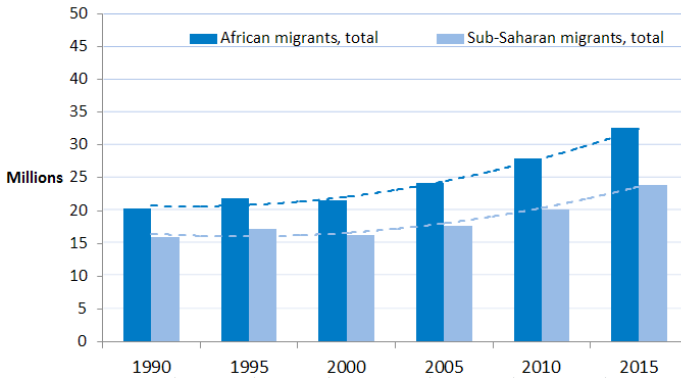
Source: UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (author's calculations)

Fig. 2 - African migrants as a percentage of the population in Africa (1990-2015)
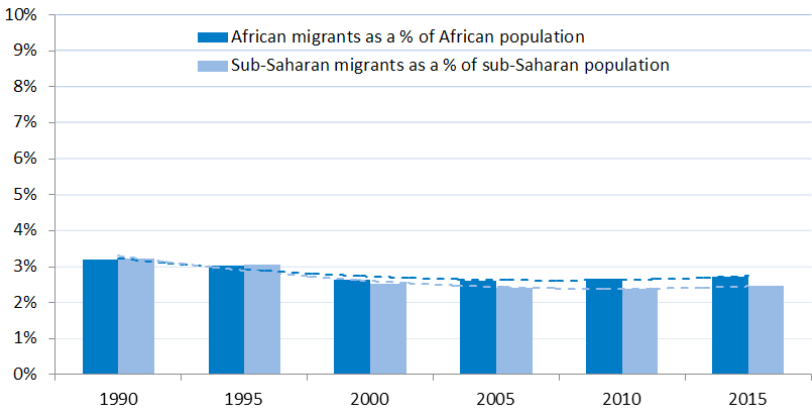
Source: UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UN Population Division (author's calculations)

In-depth analyses of the evolution of African migration between 1960 and 2000 reveal that most African migrants migrate within Africa[6]. They indicate that emigration from the poorest countries is mainly a short-distance migration, predominantly directed towards neighbouring countries. On the one hand, Figure 3 (a) indicates that there was an increase of emigration out of the African continent from Maghreb countries between 1960 and 1980. This increase to non-African destinations does not appear from the other regions of Africa. On the other hand, Figure 3 (b) shows a decrease in intra-continental migration from East Africa and to a much lesser extent from Southern, Central and North Africa. This declining evolution of migration within Africa may be related to processes of post-colonial state formation and their imposition of barriers against free circulation after independence, or to the intensification of nationalism that led to the implementation of restrictions to movements. Therefore, it has become more difficult for African people to migrate within the continent and it may have resulted in less emigration. The evolution of intra-continental migration for West African countries was more stable between 1960 and 2000. It may be related to the fact that strong migration patterns were already established under the French colonisation (as in the case of migration between Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast), that migrants continue to have social networks across borders, and to the absence of visa requirements between ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) countries that makes migration of their citizens easier[7].

Do most African migrants live outside Africa?

Contradicting some perceptions and although the proportion of Africans living in the North (North America and Europe mainly) has increased, Figure 4 confirms that most African migrants are still located in African countries, with the exception

---

[6] M.-L. Flahaux and H. De Haas (2016).

[7] Ibid.

Fig. 3 - Evolution of emigration intensity by African region (per 1000; weighted by population size)

(a) Extra-continental intensity (b) Intra-continental intensity
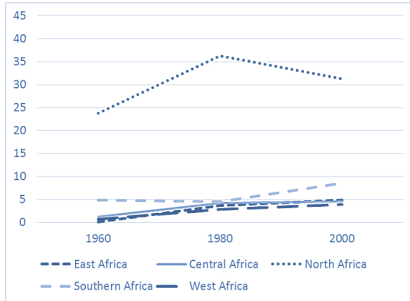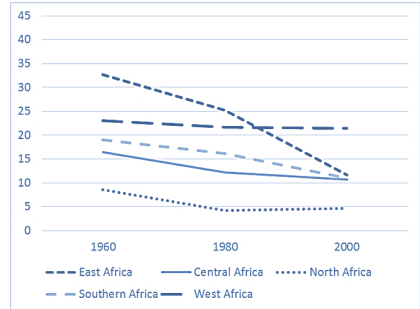
Source: Global Bilateral Migration Database
(in M.-L. Flahaux and H. De Haas, 2016)

of migrants from Maghreb countries. The main destinations of North African migrants are Europe and Asia (Gulf countries), followed by Africa. For the other regions (West, East, Southern and Central Africa), Europe is, after the African continent, the second continent of destination. However, America and Oceania also appear to be continents of destination for migrants from Southern Africa. But it can still be acknowledged that the majority of African migrants do not live outside Africa.

Figure 5 represents the destinations of African migrants in the world in 2000. Some coastal countries on the African continent appear to have high numbers of African migrants, in particular Ivory Coast, Nigeria, South Africa, Mozambique, Kenya, Ethiopia and Libya. Outside the African continent, African migrants are also present in Europe, with which most African countries had colonial links, but also in North America, in Saudi Arabia and in Australia.

Fig. 4 - Destinations of African migrants in 2000,
by region of origin and continent of destination
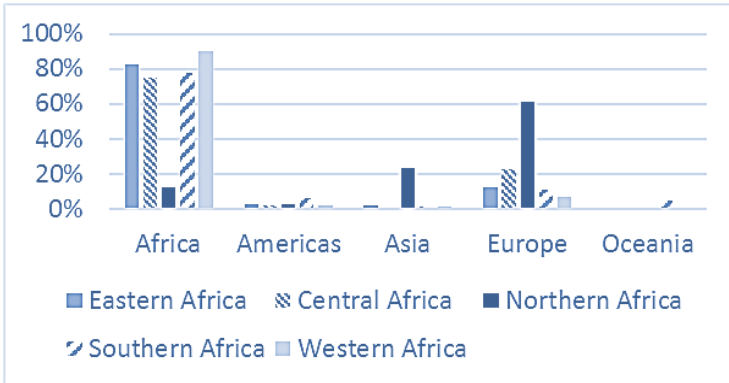
Source: Global Bilateral Migration Database (author's calculations)

Is poverty the main driver of African migration?

While it is often believed that poverty, demographic pressure, conflicts and environmental degradation are the main drivers of African migration and that "development" of the countries would stop emigration, empirical evidence suggests the opposite.

At a macro level, as previous analyses have demonstrated earlier, most African migrants do not move from the poorest countries to the wealthiest countries. Emigration is generally lower from sub-Saharan Africa, which is a poorer region, and higher when a certain level of "development" has been reached, which is the case with North African countries. Migration from poorer countries or regions is primarily directed towards other African countries, while more "developed" regions like North Africa have a higher level of extra-continental migration. This result suggests that populations of the least developed countries are less able to move, and tend to migrate over shorter distances

Fig. 5 - Destinations of African migrants in 2000

Legend:
- (150000,275000]
- (75000,150000]
- (25000,750000]
- (10000,250000]
- (5000,100000]
- [0,50000]
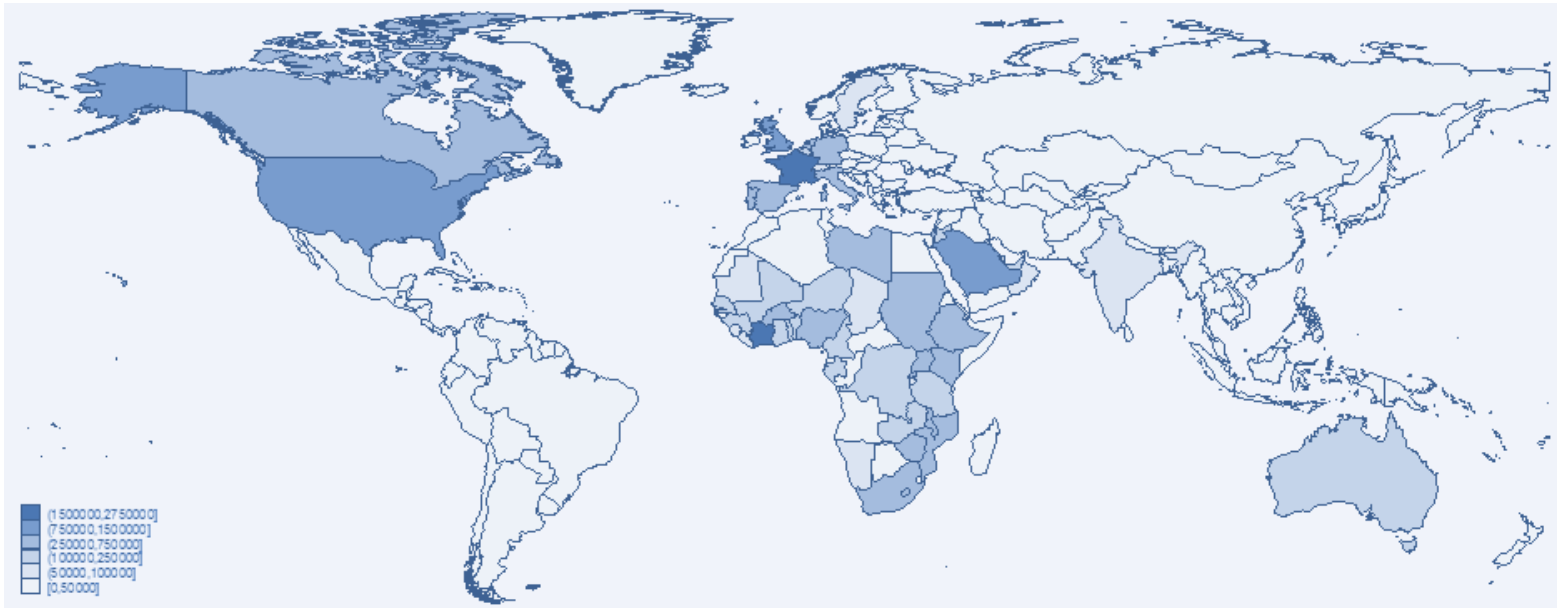
Source: Global Bilateral Migration Database
(in M.-L. Flahaux and H. De Haas, 2016)

Note: The figure shows the numbers of migrants in the countries of the world in 2000

when they do. Conversely, people living in richer countries have access to better infrastructures and transportation, which facilitates migration and enables movements of populations over greater distances. Actually, the countries with a higher level of extra-continental migration correspond to the relatively more "developed" countries, that are located on the coast, that have a higher level of urbanisation, a higher GDP per capita, and that are more advanced in the demographic transition (they have a lower level of both mortality and fertility)[8].

Analyses conducted at a micro level are along the same lines. Surveys on migration between different countries in Africa and Europe have shown that Congolese people living in households with sufficient resources are more likely to migrate to Europe than those living in poor households, and that Senegalese people who own some property (land, house, business, etc.) are also more likely to do so.[9] Similarly, individuals from these countries with a high educational level have greater chances to migrate than those with a lower educational level. An individual from the Democratic Republic of Congo with a superior educational level (i.e. someone who studied after secondary school) is ten times more likely to leave the country compared to a Congolese who has not studied beyond primary school. In the case of Senegal, we observe the same trend: a more educated individual is six times more likely to leave Senegal compared to someone who has never been to school or has a primary educational level. Educational level is thus a strong determinant explaining emigration. In detail, results indicate interestingly that the effect of education is more pronounced for African migration toward northern countries, including Europe, and less for migration within Africa, as revealed for Senegalese and Congolese migration[10].

---

[8] Ibid.

[9] A. González-Ferrera et al., *Factors of Migration between Africa and Europe: Assessing the Role of Resources, Networks and Context. A Comparative Approach*, MAFE working paper 22, 2013, http://www.ined.fr/fichier/s_rubrique/22089/wp22_determinantssynthesis.en.2.fr.pdf

[10] M.-L. Flahaux, C. Beauchemin, B. Schoumaker, "Partir, revenir: un tableau des

These findings confirm that people only migrate when they have the financial and human resources to do so, in particular for long-distance migration. Migrating requires resources. It explains why poor people are less likely to migrate, and not more likely to do so.

Is smuggling the cause of migration from Africa to Europe?

International organisations and governments often blame smugglers for the deaths of migrants in the Mediterranean or for the arrivals of migrants from Africa in Europe. Every time, they claim that they will again implement new measures to combat illegal migration in order to stop migrants from reaching Europe. However, implementing new measures in order to fight irregular migration is very likely to fail because it is the border controls that actually force migrants to take more risks and more dangerous routes to reach Europe, and to depend on smugglers to cross borders. In sum, smuggling is actually a reaction to border controls rather than a cause of migration[11].

Do African migrants return to their origin country?

Return migration is also a topic generating increasing public and policy attention. However, due to the dearth of data, very little is actually known about this phenomenon. The research using the *Migration between Africa and Europe* (MAFE) surveys indicates that there is an important gap between policy presuppositions and the realities of return migration to Africa[12].

---

tendances migratoires congolaises et sénégalaises", in C. Beauchemin, L. Kabbanji, P. Sakho, B. Schoumaker, *Migrations africaines: le co-développement en questions. Essai de démographie politique*, Paris, INED/Armand Colin, 2013, pp. 91-125.

[11] H. De Haas, "Smuggling is a reaction to border controls, not the cause of migration", 2013, http://heindehaas.blogspot.co.uk/2013/10/smuggling-is-reaction-to-border.html

[12] The analyses described in this section come from the following publication: M.-L. Flahaux, *Retourner au Sénégal et en RD Congo. Choix et contraintes au cœur des trajectoires de vie des migrants*, Université catholique de Louvain, Presses universitaires

Policy-makers often believe that African migrants travel one-way to destination countries in Europe and never return home. However, the analyses reveal that at the time of their arrival in Europe half of Senegalese and Congolese migrants intend to return to their country of origin, and that actual returns to Africa are not insignificant. However, migrants are less likely to intend to return at the beginning of their migration when the conditions in their home country are deteriorating, which is especially the case for migrants from DR Congo since 1990. Similarly, migrants are also less likely to return when the situation in their country is becoming more difficult. It shows that a particularly difficult context in origin countries encourages migrants to move permanently or to postpone their return. This is particularly the case for Congolese students. At the moment of their arrival in Europe, they had high prospects for planning to return (probably after the end of their studies), but in actual fact, their prospects for return are not as high as expected, which is probably due to the unstable context in their country of origin, at a political and economic level. This result does not appear true for Senegalese migrants who migrated to study and who are likely to return to Senegal, as the context there is more favourable[13].

Actually, migrants anticipate their reintegration. According to what they feel to be the most suitable for themselves and for their family, they can intend, from the beginning, to stay temporarily in Europe or to settle there definitely. In general, Senegalese and Congolese migrants who positively imagine a future reintegration in the origin country plan to return. Those who migrate to study, for example, generally intend to return because they know that a European diploma is likely to have a positive effect on their life after having returned. Senegalese migrants who migrate in order to improve their living conditions are also more likely to intend to return because they expect their savings to be useful to

---

de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, 2013, p. 348.

[13] M.-L. Flahaux, "Return migration to Senegal and DR Congo: intention and realisation", *Population*, vol. 70, no. 1, 2015, pp. 97-126.

living better in Senegal. The preparation for return is crucial for the return. It appears that migrants who intended to return are more likely to return than those who had not planned a return, and Congolese migrants who live in households with sufficient resources have higher prospects of returning[14].

Policy-makers in European countries also assume that it is necessary to encourage and to force migrants to return. However, the large majority of returns are voluntarily by the migrants themselves and are not forced or encouraged by the authorities in the countries of destination. As shown in Figure 6, it appears that returns linked to "problems with residence status" concerned just 11% of Senegalese and 3% of Congolese migrants who returned. It means that migrants are actually much more likely to return when they have prepared their return themselves. As Figure 6 also shows, the first motive for return to the Democratic Republic of Congo is professional, while it is related to family for returns to Senegal.

Fig. 6 - Main motive for return from Europe to Democratic Republic of Congo and Senegal (%)
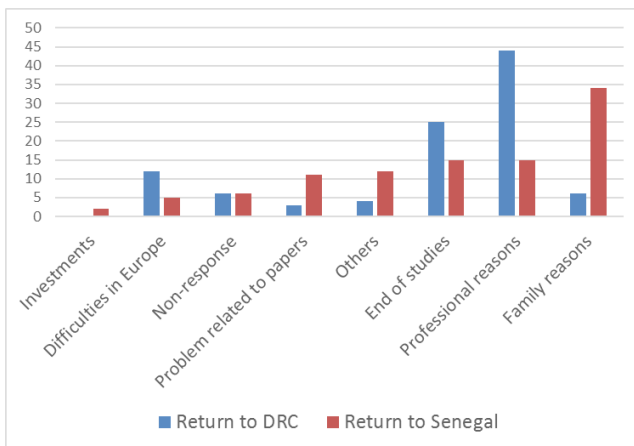
Source: MAFE-Congo and MAFE-Senegal biographical surveys, author's calculations

---

[14] M.-L. Flahaux (2013).

Another important result shows that undocumented Congolese migrants are less likely to return than those who are documented. It confirms that most of the returns are not forced and that restrictive immigration policies have a negative effect on the migrants' return. While governments of destination countries in Europe implement programmes in order to encourage migrants to return, analyses reveal that these measures do not have an impact on returns. These programmes are implemented together with policies restricting the access of migrants to Europe. In such a context, migrants are reluctant to return because they know that it will be difficult to migrate again if they decide to return and if their reintegration process is problematic. When policies are implemented to restrict migration, it is harder to migrate to Europe, but migrants are also less likely to intend to return or do return[15].

In sum, the situation prevailing in origin countries is crucial for the question of return. Migrants are more likely to return when the context is favourable, but much less if the political situation is unstable and the economic situation difficult, because they know that the difficulties that they could encounter after their return are likely. Secondly, it has been highlighted that documented migrants – and those who live in good conditions – in destination countries are much more likely to return. This suggests that a better integration of migrants in Europe would lead to more returns, since being better integrated allows for a better preparation for the return. Thirdly, it is demonstrated that restrictive migration policies, which aim to limit the inflows of migrants in Europe, have a negative impact on returns. Migrants tend to stay in Europe because they are not sure of having the possibility to migrate again after their return.

Discussing the effectiveness of migration policies

Since the economic crisis in Europe in the early 1970s, migration has more and more become a politicised topic in France,

---

[15] Ibid.

Belgium, Germany and the UK, the traditional countries of destination in Europe. Policy-makers consider that it is necessary to control the entry of immigrants from African countries to their territory (the recruitment of non-European labour migrants strongly decreased with the crisis of the early 1970s), to restrict their stay, for example through their access to the labour market (in particular in some countries), and to encourage or force them to return.

The evolution of the restrictiveness of migration policies toward Senegalese migrants in their three main countries of destination in Europe (France, Italy and Spain) has been the subject of recent research[16]. Findings regarding policies regulating the entry to Europe highlight that there is a trend toward stricter policies to prevent the arrival of irregular migrants, particularly since 1990. The migration policies regulating the arrival of migrant workers have become more restrictive since the 1970s, but they were liberalised in Spain in the middle of the 1990s, reflecting the need for foreign labour in the country at that time. Second, with regard to the regulation of the stay of migrants in France, Italy and Spain, different patterns are observed. France is the country that has implemented increasingly restrictive policies over time, especially for irregular migrants after 1980 and for workers, students, and asylum seekers after 1990. In comparison, the policies implemented by Spain and Italy to regulate the stay of migrants have been less restrictive, especially for workers in the late 1980s, and particularly in Spain. In the 1990s, the level of restrictiveness of the policies regulating the stay of migrants also decreased in Italy and Spain for asylum seekers and students. Third, policies of return shows that all three countries have adopted more and more measures since the 1990s to force or encourage irregular migrants to return, especially in France, but also in Italy, and to a lesser extent in Spain. Thus, migration

---

[16] These analyses have been developed thanks to the DEMIG POLICY database (University of Oxford). These findings are developed in this article: M.-L. Flahaux, "The role of migration policy changes in Europe for return migration to Senegal", *International Migration Review*, *International Migration Review*, Fall 2016, pp. 1-25.

policies vary not only over time, according to the type of mi-
grants, but also according to the countries of destination.
     Migration remains essentially defined at the national level by
the countries of destination, but there is a growing will at the
European level to control the EU's external borders.
     In the context of the Mediterranean crisis, there has been an
increase in the resources allocated for better control of European
borders. It is in this context that the FRONTEX agency was
created in 2005. It was decided that important resources had
to be put in place to try to prevent access to the territory of
the EU to migrants who have not obtained the visa required to
move to a member state. Figure 7 shows the evolution of the
size of the budget allocated to FRONTEX since 2005. The fig-
ures reveal a strong increase in the budget between 2005 and
2011, from €2.1 million to €118.2 million. In 2015, the annu-
al budget of FRONTEX amounted to just over €114 million.

Fig. 7 - Evolution of Frontex's budget between 2005 and 2015
(euros)
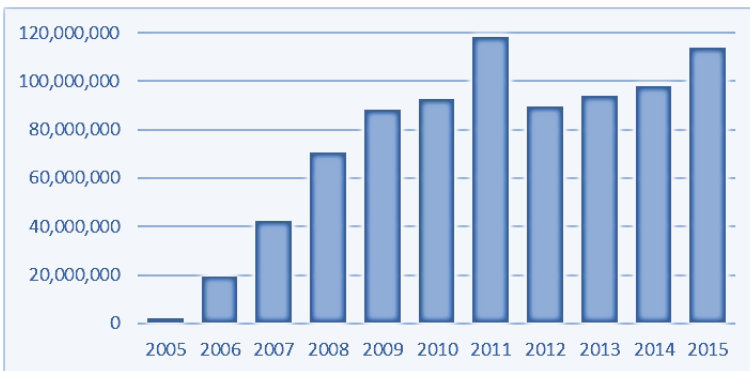
Sources: FRONTEX general reports 2005, 2012 and 2013,
and FRONTEX's budget 2015 (author's calculations)

However, it is not clear that more controls on immigration lead to less migration, as policy-makers expect. The effectiveness of migration policies is contested and remains a debated topic. Moreover, migration policies may generate unintended effects[17].

Firstly, due to the difficulty in migrating or to integrating into a destination country, migrants may choose to go to other countries where the regulations are less strict, which may give rise to a diversification of destination countries. African migration toward non-European countries (to North America, for example) and from traditional immigration countries to new countries of destination has been on the rise. This seems to be the case of Congolese who migrated to France and the United Kingdom (France being the major country of destination for Congolese migrants in Europe) and not only to Belgium, the former colonial state; or the case of Senegalese migrants in Spain and Italy, and not only in France[18]. The former colonial states were the first to implement more restrictive policies, and this may have pushed people to move to new destination countries close or not to the traditional one, despite the language differences. Other factors may have played a role, such as economic opportunities and, at a subsequent stage, the networks already established in these new destinations.

Secondly, the constraints on migrating directly to a specific country in Europe may encourage African people to migrate via transit countries. Restrictions may thus explain why migrants use more complicated routes to reach Europe and why migrating from Africa to Europe has become increasingly costly and risky. The same can be said about smuggling, an activity that develops as legal restrictions on migration increase.

Thirdly, to maximise their chances to reach Europe when entry through one particular channel becomes difficult, individuals may choose to migrate via another legal channel or illegally. As

---

[17] H. De Haas, *The Determinants of International Migration*, DEMIG Working Paper 2, Oxford, University of Oxford, International Migration Institute, 2011.

[18] M.-L. Flahaux, C. Beauchemin, B. Schoumaker (2013).

stated previously, unauthorised migration is developing because it has become more and more difficult to get a visa to migrate legally. Individuals may also devise other strategies to migrate legally (for family reasons even when their real objective is to work, etc.).

Fourthly, because of the constraints to enter or to work in the destination country, migrants may have to postpone the return they may have planned due to the fact that savings are more difficult to acquire, or they may not circulate or return at all because they are concerned about not being able to migrate again to Europe if they return home. This point has been confirmed empirically in the case of Senegalese migration. In particular, restrictive policies regulating the entry of migrants into the territory of the destination countries play a role in discouraging people to return. This implies, by extension, that restrictive migration policies may indeed affect migrants' ties with their origin countries.

Conclusion

This chapter began by demystifying African migration. Empirical findings highlight the gaps between the realities of African migration and the perceptions of both public opinion and policy-makers.

It has shown that African migration is not increasing and mainly directed to the North, as most of African migrants migrate within Africa. Emigration from the poorest regions, in particular, is predominantly directed towards destinations within the African continent, even though emigration out of Africa is higher from the North African region, where countries have relatively higher levels of human and economic development. Better infrastructure, higher income, better education and access to information increase the likelihood that people will migrate, and this is likely to continue in the future.

Following an analysis of the extent and destinations of African migration, and of the role of "development" and poverty in

migration processes, the chapter demonstrated that smuggling is not the cause of migration from Africa to Europe, but that it is the consequence of more restrictive migration policies.

Also, the issue of return migration to Africa was examined, and it was confirmed that returns are not negligible, that they are mainly decided and prepared for by the migrants themselves, and that restrictive migration policies may also prevent migrants from returning home.

After a review of recent empirical evidence on African migration contradicting common assumptions, the chapter focused on the trends of migration policies implemented by European countries for non-European migrants, including African migrants. A global trend toward more restrictiveness has been highlighted, despite the variation in categories of migrants and the countries of destination. However, it is not clear that more controls on immigration lead to less migration, as policy-makers think, but the debate is still open. Nevertheless, migration policies are likely to generate unintended effects. Policy-makers should consider these effects when implementing migration policies. Even if more research is needed to better understand the migration "behaviours" and choices of African migrants, it is important to consider the following points related to the restrictive migration policies implemented by European countries:

(1) *Destination choice.* Migrants are likely to choose to migrate to other destination countries rather than to their former colonising nation when this country has implemented restrictive migration policies, especially if they cannot migrate via family reunification or have experienced difficulties integrating into other destination countries.

(2) *Routes.* Migrants are likely to stay in transit countries before reaching Europe when migration policies regulating access to Europe become more restrictive, in particular those who are low-skilled (and consequently less likely to get a visa) and who cannot migrate via family reunification.

(3) *Channel.* Migrants are likely to pay smugglers, to use false documents to facilitate their migration, and to request asylum

when policies controlling the access of migrants to the destination countries become more restrictive.

(4) *Intention to return over time.* Migrants are less likely to intend to return after migrating to Europe if they know that entry policies to Europe have become restrictive, because they know that it will be difficult to migrate again. This is particularly the case for those having experienced difficulties in migrating or in being undocumented.

(5) *Circulation.* Migrants have less opportunities to go back and forth when entry and stay policies are more restrictive, especially those who are undocumented, have short-term residence permits or limited rights to work in the destination country, as circulating requires financial capital and freedom of movement.

3. Climate Change and Migration: Insights from the Sahel

Sara Vigil

The climate change-migration nexus

African populations are some of the most mobile in the world and also some of the most affected by both climate change and other environmental stressors. However, while there is agreement that climate change can influence population movements, the linkages between migration and climate change are polymorph with causal attribution being difficult to establish. On the one hand, no migration can be attributed to a single factor because it is a highly complex process in which social, political, economic, environmental, and demographic factors interact[1]. As a result, existing migration dynamics are modified or exacerbated by different climatic events rather than uniquely caused by them[2]. On the other, while it is well established that the intensity and frequency of natural disasters is rising as a result of anthropogenic climate change, not every single natural calamity can be solely

---

[1] R. Black, S.R.G. Bennett, S.M. Thomas, J.R. Beddington, "Climate change: Migration as adaptation", *Nature*, no. 478, October 2011, pp. 447-449; F. Gemenne, *Why the numbers don't add up: A review of estimates and predictions of people displaced by environmental changes*, Global Environmental Change Part A: Human & Policy Dimensions, vol. 21, no. 1, 2011, pp. 41-49.

[2] P. Dasgupta et al., "Rural areas", in C.B. Field et al. (eds.), *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Part A: Global and Sectoral Aspects*, Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2014, United Kingdom and New York, Cambridge University Press, pp. 613-657, cit. p. 623.

attributed to it. Moreover, and very importantly, the impact of climate change and other environmental changes on population movements depends on a combination of exposure to risk and pre-existing vulnerabilities. Even in the case of extreme natural events, whether or not people are forced to migrate permanently from their homes usually depends on pre-existing social relations (who is most vulnerable) and post-disaster responses (what kind of aid/relief is provided and who receives it)[3]. While natural hazards and increased climate variability can compound pre-existing problems, "vulnerability does not fall from the sky"[4].

The complexity of reaching conceptual agreement stems primarily from this impossibility to isolate climatic or environmental drivers from all the other factors that influence (im)mobility decisions. Indeed, migration is a highly complex process where multiple factors on various scales and levels interact and where social frameworks that influence how hazards affect population movements need to be seriously taken into account (Figure 1). With these important nuances in mind, the International Organisation for Migration offers, nonetheless, a working definition for "environmental migrants" who are defined as: "persons or groups of persons who, predominantly for reasons of sudden or progressive change in the environment that adversely affects their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their country or abroad"[5].

Taking these important multi-layered complexities into account, it is the combination of high geographical exposure to natural hazards, pre-existing socio-political and economic

---

[3] B. Wisner, P. Blaikie, T. Cannon, I. Davis, *At risk: natural hazards, people's vulnerability and disasters*, Routledge, London and New York, II edition, 2004; World Bank, *Harmonized List of Fragile Situations*, 2017, http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence/brief/harmonized-list-of-fragile-situations

[4] J. Ribot, "Cause and response: vulnerability and climate in the Anthropocene", *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, vol. 41, no. 5, April 2014, pp. 667-705.

[5] International Organisation for Migration (IOM), *Glossary on Migration, International Migration Law*, no. 25, 2nd Edition, IOM, Genève, 2011, cit. p. 33.

Fig. 1 - The complex drivers of migration

THE DRIVERS OF MIGRATION
Many factors influence whether a person or family will migrate. Their effects are closely intertwined, so it makes little sense to consider any of them in isolation.

SOCIAL DRIVERS
Education, family/kin

PERSONAL/HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS
Age, sex, education, wealth, marital status, preferences, ethnicity, religion, language

ENVIRONMENTAL DRIVERS
Exposure to hazard, ecosystem services such as land productivity, habitability, food/energy/water security

POLITICAL DRIVERS
Descrimination/persecution, governance/freedom, conflict/insecurity, policy incentives, direct coercion

THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE ON DRIVERS

MIGRATE

DECISION

STAY

ECONOMIC DRIVERS
Employment opportunities, income/wages/well-being, producer prices (such as in agriculture), consumer prices

DEMOGRAPHIC DRIVERS
Population size/density, population structure, disease prevalence

INTERVENING OBSTACLES AND FACILITATORS
Political/legal framework, cost of moving, social networks, diasporic links, recruitment agencies, technology

Source: UK Government Foresight Report 2011

vulnerabilities, as well as high population growth, which make African regions stand as some of the hardest hit by the impacts of climate change. However, even if broken down into regions, climate-related migration drivers, patterns and impacts are spectacularly heterogeneous in Africa[6]. Without diminishing the importance of climate change to other African regions, this short chapter focuses on examples from the Sahel to explain the aforementioned complexity. Due to high climate variability, chronic levels of poverty, conflict, and a very fast-growing population rate, the Sahel region has been dubbed "ground zero" for climate change[7]. This chapter will introduce the pre-existing and cumulated vulnerabilities that the region is facing before exploring the

---

[6] C. Zickgraf et al., *The Impact of Vulnerability and Resilience to Environmental Changes on Mobility Patterns in West Africa*, Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD), World Bank, Washington DC, 2016.

[7] Sahel stands at "ground zero" of climate change, top UN adviser warns, UN News Service Section, 2008, www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=26878&Cr=west%20africa&Cr1=climate%20change#.Wa5qxLJJbIU

linkages between climate change and migration through examples of droughts and floods. The chapter will then address the most recurrent patterns of mobility as well as its impacts. Lastly, the chapter will introduce the key policy advances and gaps, and suggest ways forward.

Cumulated vulnerabilities in the Sahel

The Sahel extends through the southern edge of the Sahara desert including countries, or parts of countries, as diverse as: Senegal, Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Algeria, Niger, Nigeria, central Chad, Sudan, South Sudan, Eritrea, Cameroon, the Central African Republic and the northern edge of Ethiopia. The Sahel presents the multiplicity and complexity of links between climate change and migration due to a high geographical exposure to calamitous events, and wide-ranging vulnerabilities that stem from high levels of poverty, weak governance, limited infrastructure, political instability, conflict, and a high level of natural-resource-dependent populations[8]. Moreover, the World Bank lists half of the nations of the Sahel as fragile states – which are low-income countries with weak governing capacity[9]. At the same time, the region represents one of the fastest-growing populations in the world with an increase of up to 120% in the last 30 years. Out of the 150 million people living in the region, approximately 30 million are suffering from severe food insecurity[10]. This is a result of both the high dependence on rain-fed agriculture (which employs approximately 60% of the population), a lack of institutional response, insecure tenure, and recurrent climatic hazards

---

[8] United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), *Livelihood Security: Climate Change Migration and Conflict in the Sahel*, 2011; K. Van der Geest, "North-South migration in Ghana: what role for the environment?", *International Migration*, IOM, vol. 49, no. 1, June 2011, pp. 69-94.

[9] World Bank (2017).

[10] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *2017. Sahel. Overview of humanitarian needs and requirements*, 2016.

– amongst others. On top of this, the region has witnessed increased levels of conflict, violence, and insecurity over the last years that have devastated the livelihoods of millions. Turmoil in Libya, deep instability in northern Mali, and spikes of violent attacks by Boko Haram in Nigeria have amplified an already extremely difficult situation[11].

Whilst media and policy circles continue to portray climate change as a driver of migration that leads to violent conflict, there is a lack of empirical evidence to support such claims[12]. Although these are not unimaginable future scenarios, this unilinear causality elides the fact that environmental change and concomitant population displacement can actually be the fundamental causes of war and insecurity rather than merely the triggers for them[13]. Yet, while in certain contexts added population pressure can increase conflict over scarce resources, it is often in countries such as Chad or northern Niger, which are already facing conflicts, where climate change becomes a threat multiplier rather than the root cause. Migration and displacements in themselves will not lead to conflict unless other structural problems are already in place. The supplementary stress that climate change brings thus amplifies an already difficult reality, upon which the distribution of and access to resources as diverse as water, land, infrastructure, capital, rule of law, kinship networks, education, aid, and mobility play decisive roles[14]. Taking only into account measurements of a country's exposure, sensitivity, and ability to adapt to the negative impact of climate change, Figure 2 shows the extreme vulnerabilities of this region to climatic shocks. In order

---

[11] Ibid.

[12] F. Gemenne, J. Barnett, W.N. Adger, G.D. Dabelko, "Climate and security: evidence, emerging risks, and a new agenda", *Climatic Change*, vol. 123, no. 1, 2014, pp. 1-9.

[13] G. Kibreab, "Environmental Causes and Impact of Refugee Movements: A Critique of the Current Debate", *Disasters*, vol. 21, no. 1, March 1997, pp. 20-38.

[14] C. Tacoli, "Crisis or adaptation? Migration and climate change in a context of high mobility", *Environment & Urbanization*, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), vol. 21, no. 2, 2009, pp. 513-525.

to achieve the measurements, the index considers vulnerability in six life-supporting sectors – food, water, health, ecosystem service, human habitat and infrastructure[15].

Fig. 2 - Vulnerability and adaptive capacity (ND-Gain Index)
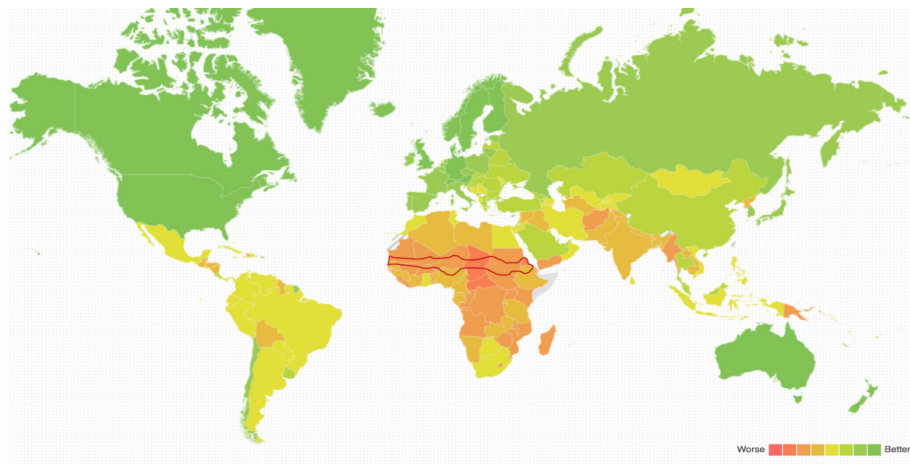
Source: E. Marino and J. Ribot (2012)

Migration, environment, and climate change in the Sahel

Human migration, whatever its motivations, has always been a hallmark of Sahelian populations. Amongst the many interlinked and complex drivers of migration, environmental changes in the region have historically led to a variety of migration strategies to adapt to rainfall's seasonality and the effects of periodic droughts[16]. Cross-border transhumance mobility – whose main routes are shown in Figure 3 – is particularly important in the

---

[15] ND-GAIN Index, http://index.gain.org/
[16] R.A. McLeman and L.M. Hunter, "Migration in the context of vulnerability and adaptation to climate change: insights from analogues", Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews, *Climate Change*, vol. 1, no. 3, May-June 2010, pp. 450-461.

region and is linked to seasonal changes[17]. Today, the Sahel presents not only high levels of internal, intra-regional, and international migration, but also constitutes a zone of transit for millions of migrants. Moreover, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), temperatures could increase between 3°C and 6°C in the Sahel, leading to a rise in the occurrence of natural disasters[18], which could change existing migration dynamics and make distress-based movements even more recurrent.

Fig. 3 - Cross-border transhumance routes in the Sahel and West Africa
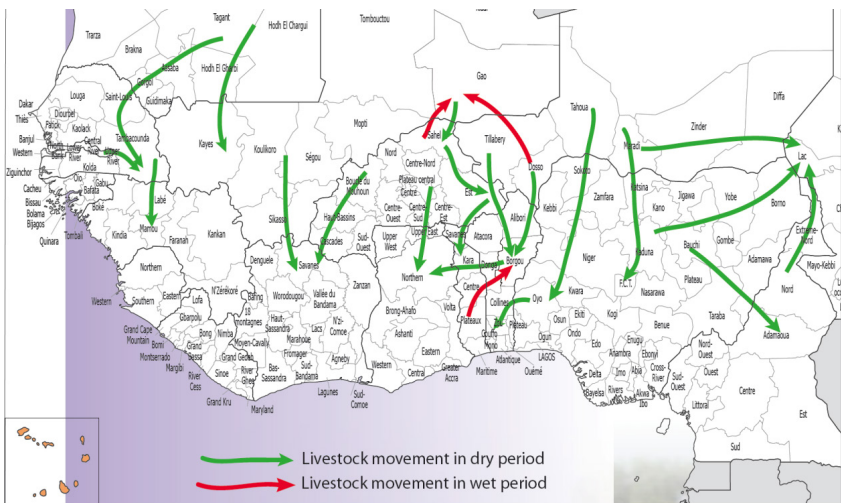
Source: SWAC, OECD, *Livestock in the Sahel and West Africa*, Policy Note 3, 2007

---

[17] F. Gemenne et al. (2014).

[18] I. Niang et al., "Africa", in I. Niang and O.C. Ruppel (eds.), *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability, Part B: Regional Aspects*, Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, Cambridge University Press, pp. 1199-1265.

Whilst avoiding simplistic causal relations, and not undermining the importance of the structural conditions in place, it is in the wake of sudden-onset events such as droughts and floods where we can see some of the clearest links between environmental change and migration[19]. Throughout the XX century, the Sahel experienced several droughts with dramatic consequences, and the impacts of droughts and soil depletion as drivers of migration have often been cited in the literature[20]. Moreover, it is important to note that climate change in the Sahel can become problematic because it can undermine normal mobility strategies. For example, with climate change impacts (amongst others), nomadic pastoralists are now obliged to move their herds further south from their usual pastures. The problem in this case is not migration *per se*, but rather the impacts of climate change in undermining migration strategies that have helped secure the livelihoods of populations[21].

Moreover, given the high dependence on rain-fed agriculture, it seems reasonable that a lack of rainfall affecting crop productivity would also incite farmers to move in search of alternative places on which to base their livelihoods[22]. However, and despite claims of millions of people expulsed by droughts and desertification, the evidence is scarce and often reaches contradictory conclusions. A review of several case-studies of migration related to drought in the Sahel highlights that population movements under conditions of environmental change appear to be progressive rather than sudden[23]. Moreover, environmental drivers

[19] W.N. Adger et al., "Are there social limits to adaptation to climate change?", *Climatic Change*, vol. 93, no. 3-4, 2008, pp. 335-354.
[20] For an overview see B. Barbier et al., "Human Vulnerability to Climate Variability in the Sahel: Farmers' Adaptation Strategies in Northern Burkina Faso", *Environmental Management*, vol. 43, no. 5, 2009, pp. 790-803.
[21] G. Jónsson, *The environmental factor in migration dynamics – a review of African case studies*, International Migration Institute (IMI), Working Papers, paper 21, 2010.
[22] S. Henry, B. Schoumaker, C. Beauchemin, "The Impact of Rainfall on the First Out-Migration: A Multi-level Event-History Analysis in Burkina Faso", *Population and Environment*, vol. 25, no. 5, 2004, pp. 423-460.
[23] G. Jónsson (2010).

tend to overlap with other recurrent drivers such as conflict. For example, irregular precipitation and an increase in temperatures contributed to the loss of 95% of the surface area of Lake Chad. This has led to more permanent movements from pastoralists and farmers towards already vulnerable mega-cities including Lagos, Kano and Abuja in Nigeria[24]. Yet this trend of permanent movement has been amplified once again by the spread of terrorism and social breakdown[25].

Additionally, many studies have found that long-distance migration to urban and international destinations actually decreases in periods of drought[26]. This is because people tend to use the very few assets they have left to cover immediate basic needs (primarily food), and lack the necessary capital to embark on longer distance migration journeys. In Burkina Faso, Henry and colleagues found that people from drier regions were more likely to engage in temporary and permanent migration to other rural areas, but that the likelihood of movement decreased when rainfall was scarcer, due to limited household resources[27]. This is congruent with findings from Van der Geest who found that migration is likely to be reduced in times of most pronounced environmental stress in Ghana[28]. Findings from Mali also show that it is only circular and short-distance movements that increase in times of drought[29]. In Ethiopia, evidence from the droughts during the 1980s showed that migration only became a livelihood strategy once all other in situ adaptation options had been exhausted[30].

---

[24] UNEP (2011).

[25] T. Afifi, *Niger: Case Study Report for the EACH-FOR Project*, United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security, Bonn, 2009; UNEP (2011).

[26] S.E. Findley, "Does Drought Increase Migration? A Study of Migration from Rural Mali during the 1983-1985 Drought", *The International Migration Review*, vol. 28, no. 3, Fall, 1994, pp. 539-553; S. Henry, B. Schoumaker, C. Beauchemin (2004).

[27] S. Henry, B. Schoumaker, C. Beauchemin (2004).

[28] K. Van der Geest (2011).

[29] S.E. Findley (1994).

[30] R. McLeman and B. Smit, "Migration as an Adaptation to Climate Change",

Although floods in dry lands might seem like an oxymoron, and have received much less attention than droughts in the Sahel, their impacts are extremely consequential. The Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC noted that high-intensity rainfall events and associated flooding in West Africa are expected to increase by 20% over the next decade[31]. Given the immediate destruction of households and livelihoods, the link of floods to displacement is more visible than in the case of droughts and represents one of the major environmental displacement drivers. This destruction of households and livelihoods is, however, not only linked to the flood, but often a consequence of poor infrastructure, low-quality construction materials, the high density of populations living in flooding-prone areas, and scarce preparedness (amongst many other factors).

In 2007 alone, Africa counted 2.5 million people displaced by floods, with 2012 being extremely violent in terms of flooding (Figure 4)[32]. Floods inside and on the outskirts of the Sahel created high levels of displacement in Niger, Chad and South Sudan, as well as in Nigeria[33]. These massive floods compounded the vulnerability of people that were already facing severe food insecurity, many of whom had already been displaced by conflict. In Nigeria alone, 6.1 million people were newly displaced by floods, compounding political insecurity following attacks by Boko Haram. On top of the pre-existing food crisis, a cholera epidemic occurred and refugees from Mali were also affected in flooded regions of Niger. Just as in Nigeria, many of the displaced took shelter in overcrowded schools, public buildings and mosques and returned home when the flooding ceased. In Chad, floods impeded humanitarian assistance to thousands of IDPs (International Development Programs) previously displaced by armed conflict. In South Sudan, the floods

Climate Change, vol. 76, no. 1-2, pp. 31-53.

[31] P. Tschakert, R. Sagoe, G. Ofori-Darko, S.N. Codjoe, "Floods in the Sahel: an analysis of anomalies, memory, and anticipatory learning", *Climatic Change*, vol. 103, no. 3-4, 2010, pp. 471-502.

[32] Ibid.

[33] IDMC (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre), *Global Estimates 2012. People displaced by disasters*, 2013.

came to further complicate decades-long internal conflicts and to add to the numbers of existing internally displaced persons[34]. These overlaps show the importance of considering natural disasters in the context of already existing conflicts, displacements and trends.

Whilst these sudden-onset events represent the most visible link between climate change and migration in the Sahel, slow-onset events including rising sea levels, increasing temperatures, ocean acidification, salinisation, land and forest degradation, loss of biodiversity and desertification, create and amplify risk through economic and social impacts that can drive what at first glance could appear to be voluntary labour migrations from rural areas[35]. However, given that it is even more difficult to isolate the environmental driver in cases of slow-onset events, data linking them to migration and displacement is lacking.

Fig. 4 - West and Central Africa internal "flood displacement" (June-October 2012)
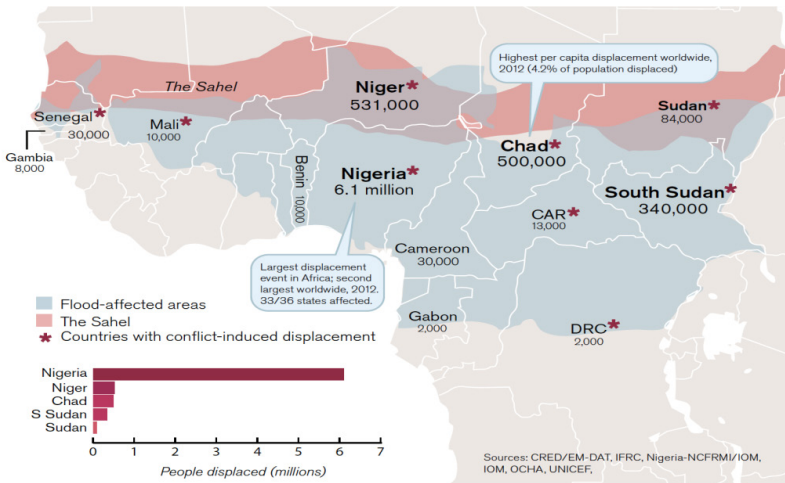
Source: IDMC (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre) 2013

---

[34] Ibid.

[35] F. Gemenne, S. Vigil, C. Zickgraf, *Climate Change and Migration: Food Security, Agricultural Livelihoods and Rural Areas*, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, Roma, forthcoming.

Additionally, people often move on the basis of their perceptions of environmental changes, rather than on actual changes. This is because people often have limited access to climate information and data. Research conducted in West Africa, for example, shows that perceptions of environmental changes such as rainfall variability did not match the changes observed on the ground[36]. Finally, it is of utmost importance to note that the most vulnerable populations are often those who are not in a position to migrate in times of environmental stress. Indeed, migration, requires human and financial capital that is not available to all[37] and it is often the elderly and destitute who are left behind and are unable to move out of harm's way[38]. Sudden- and slow-onset climatic hazards can deeply compromise the assets required to move, leading to involuntary immobility or trapped populations and putting millions of people in situations of increased risk (Figure 5).

Patterns and impacts

Patterns

The understanding of African migration is impeded by a lack of reliable official data[39]. However, evidence shows that when climate change interacts with other migration drivers, most migration remains internal, inter-regional, and south-south[40]. The bulk of African migration, all drivers considered, occurs within countries and to neighbouring countries because people need a higher amount of human, financial, social, and natural capital

---

[36] C. Zickgraf et al. (2016).

[37] R. Black, W.N. Adger, N.W. Arnell, "Migration and extreme environmental events: New agendas for global change research", *Environmental Science & Policy*, vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 1-3, 2013.

[38] C. Zickgraf et al. (2016).

[39] M.-L. Flahaux and H. De Haas, "African migration: trends, patterns, drivers", *Comparative Migration Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2016.

[40] Foresight, *Migration and Global Environmental Change. Future Challenges and Opportunities*, Final Project Report, The Government Office for Science, London, 2011.

GREEN GRABBING-INDUCED DISPLACEMENT

Green grabbing, defined as "the appropriation of land and nature for environmental ends"[1], has increased as a result of climate change mitigation and adaptation policies. Climate change response measures can also aggravate competition over natural resources, limiting access to land and other resources[2] required for people's livelihoods[3]. Although not generally recognised as a part of climate or environmental-induced displacement debates, the links with this category are twofold: 1) when climate change policies drive land grabs and the eviction of local populations; 2) when climate mitigation or adaptation projects destroy local resources, forcing people off their land in what could be seen as a form of tertiary displacement. When land that was previously used for agriculture and grazing is converted into biofuel plantations or forest conservation projects, communities may be displaced or left with few other options than to move[4]. For example, around the Lac du Guiers in Senegal, the livelihoods of 9,000 semi-nomadic herders have been infringed upon by a land acquisition that aimed at sweet potato cultivation for ethanol export to Europe[5]. With both "land grabs" and "green grabs" on the rise, we can hypothesise that more and more people will be involuntarily displaced from their lands in the years to come in what should be considered a new category in the environmental migration and displacement debate[6].

_____

[1] J. Fairhead, M. Leach, I. Scoones, "Green Grabbing: a new appropriation of nature?", *Journal of Peasant Studies*, vol. 39, no. 2, 2012, pp. 237-261.

[2] E. Marino and J. Ribot, "Special Issue Introduction: Adding insult to injury: Climate change and the inequities of climate intervention", *Global Environmental Change*, vol. 22, no. 2, 2012, pp. 323-328.

[3] W.N. Adger, et al., "Are there social limits to adaptation to climate change?", *Climatic Change*, vol. 93, no. 3-4, 2008, pp. 335-354.

[4] A. Popp, et al., "Land-use transition for bioenergy and climate stabilization: model comparison of drivers, impacts and interactions with other land use based mitigation options", *Climatic Change*, vol. 123, no. 3-4, 2014, pp. 495-509; S. Vigil, "Displacement as a consequence of climate change mitigation policies", *Forced Migration Review, Disasters and displacement in a changing climate*, no. 49, May 2015, pp. 43-45.

[5] S. Vigil, "Without Rain or Land, Where Will Our People Go? Climate Change, Land Grabbing and Human Mobility. Insights from Senegal and Cambodia", Presented at the Global governance/politics, climate justice & agrarian/social justice: linkages and challenges, International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), The Hague, The Netherlands, 2016.

[6] S. Vigil, "Displacement as a consequence of climate change mitigation policies"..., cit.

Fig. 5 - Trapped populations
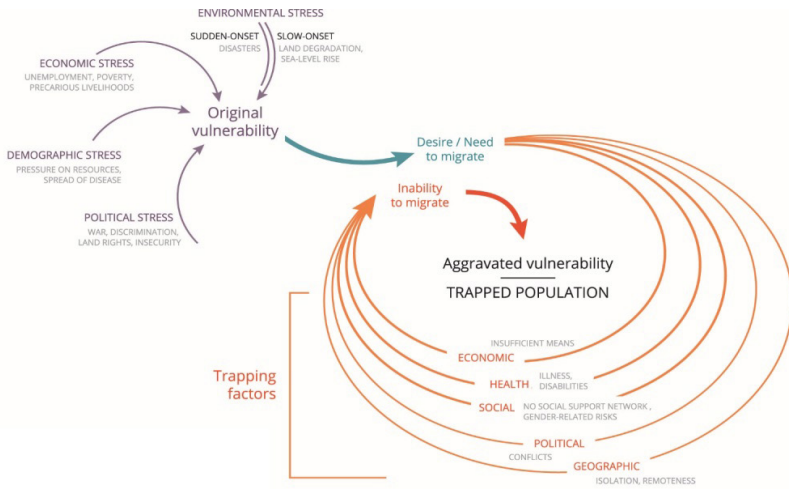
Source: MECLEP project
MECLEP infographics, https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/infographics

to be able to move longer distances[41]. Additionally, and importantly, policies (e.g. migration regimes) are much more likely to intervene in international movements than in internal ones[42]. Despite narratives of a south-north exodus of so called "environmental refugees" from Africa to Europe, most studies and evidence point to the fact that the vast majority of migration in Africa is not directed towards Europe, but towards other African countries[43].

Moreover, different threats tend to lead to different migration patterns and temporalities depending on the characteristics of the populations. In general terms, it is expected that extreme weather events displace populations in the short-term with only a

----

[41] M.-L. Flahaux and H. De Haas (2016).
[42] F. Gemenne et al. forthcoming.
[43] M.-L. Flahaux and H. De Haas (2016).

smaller proportion of such displacement becoming permanent[44]. However, returning is not always an option. It is now increasingly acknowledged that extreme weather events can lead to not only short-term but also long-term movement and protracted displacement[45]. Although urbanisation is expected to increase with rural, agricultural exodus, rural-rural migration dynamics are too often overlooked[46]. As in other types of movements, people tend to choose destinations where pre-existing social connections already exist. A major factor is the presence of family and social networks as well as similarities in culture, language and religion.

Impacts

When associated with environmental disruptions, migration is usually cast in a negative light, with dire prognoses of many millions of people forced to move, leading to tension and conflict[47]. However, there is a growing body of literature that acknowledges the positive role that migration can play as a strategy of adaptation to climate change (Figure 6)[48]. Firstly, migration is a crucial adaptation strategy for migrants who by moving can put themselves out of harm's way. In the event of sudden-onset disasters, it is immobility rather than mobility that represents a risk to life. Moreover, in cases of slower environmental degradations, the migration of some family members can help households diversify income, allowing them to remain in situ. For example, remittances in sub-Saharan Africa tend to increase after a natural calamity, supporting household incomes in times of disasters[49].

---

[44] Foresight (2011).

[45] F. Gemenne (2011), p. 184.

[46] C. Zickgraf and F. Gemenne, Background paper on migration, climate change and environment in West Africa. With a focus on Benin, Togo and Guinea-Bissau, ICMPD, 2016.

[47] F. Gemenne (2011).

[48] For a review see F. Gemenne and J. Blocher, "How can migration serve adaptation to climate change? Challenges to fleshing out a policy ideal", *The Geographical Journal*, 2017.

[49] W.A. Naudé and H. Bezuidenhout, "Migrant Remittances Provide Resilience

In Senegal, Zickgraf and colleagues found that labour migration by male fishermen to Mauritania generated financial and social remittances that enabled household relocation away from eroded coastal areas[50]. Remittances have also demonstrated their potential in financing innovation and intensified farming in Africa[51]. However, most migrant-generated remittances will be prioritised for meeting basic household needs such as food, clothing, and shelter.

The ability of migration to provide these adaptive possibilities is also highly dependent on the populations' pre-existing socio-economic assets, on the characteristics of the migrants (gender, age) and the type of employment found in destination areas (regular, irregular, salaried, etc). The often-precarious conditions found at both internal and international destinations and the inability of many migrants to send remittances to their communities does not make migration adaptive for all. In fact, it is often a last-resort option that does not necessarily improve the wellbeing of those who leave or of those who are left behind[52]. For example, in Ethiopia, Morrisey found that virtually none of the migrants were sending any remittances to rural areas[53]. Despite the expressed desire to send remittances, migrant circumstances at their destinations made it impossible. As Kothari states: "while migration can be understood as a strategy out of poverty, there is no guarantee that the strategy will be successful. The expectation that by moving they will find better employment and enjoy a better standard of living does not always materialise

---

Against Disasters in Africa", *Atlantic Economic Journal*, vol. 42, no. 1, 2014, pp. 79-90.

[50] C. Zickgraf and F. Gemenne (2016).

[51] C. Tacoli (2009); M. Tiffen, "Transition in Sub-Saharan Africa: Agriculture, Urbanization and Income Growth", *World Development*, vol. 31, no. 8, 2003, pp. 1343-1366.

[52] S. Vigil (2016).

[53] J.W. Morrissey, "Understanding the relationship between environmental change and migration: The development of an effects framework based on the case of northern Ethiopia", *Global Environmental Change*, vol. 23, 2013, pp. 1501-1510.

and subsequently, those who are poor and migrate can end up in the category of the chronically poor"[54]. Even when remittances are available, evidence shows that migration and remittances are no panacea for overcoming structural development constraints[55]. Moreover, evidence shows that many migrants are moving into high-risk zones and not out of them. With coastal cities already overcrowded, the migration of people out of rural communities into urban zones can exert additional pressures on already fragile ecosystems and urban infrastructure as well as on food security[56]. For example, major migrant-receiving cities such as Accra, Kano, Niamey, Nouakchott and Ouagadougou are located in areas affected by environmental changes.

Policy advances and gaps

In recent years, understanding the links between climate change and migration has grown into a major policy concern, and is now addressed through a variety of international policy forums, initiatives and processes. The international negotiations on climate change have long been perceived as the primary forum where to direct policy initiatives towards so-called climate-induced migration and displacement[57]. Combined advocacy efforts have led to migration being recognised as a possible strategy to adapt to climate change impacts in the Cancun Adaptation Framework, adopted in 2010[58]. Furthermore, the task force on this subject

[54] U. Kothari, *Migration and Chronic Poverty*, CPRC Working Paper 16, Manchester, Institute for Development Policy and Management, p. 15.
[55] E.J. Taylor, "The New Economics of Labour Migration and the Role of Remittances in the Migration Process", *International Migration*, vol. 37, no. 1, 1999, pp. 63-88.
[56] C. Zickgraf et al. (2016).
[57] K. Warner, "Global environmental change and migration: Governance challenges", *Global Environmental Change*, vol. 20, no. 3, 2010, pp. 402-413.
[58] The paragraph 14 (f) of the Framework invites parties to undertake "measures to enhance understanding, coordination and cooperation with regard to climate change induced displacement, migration and planned relocation, where

Fig. 6 - Migration and environmental change:
vulnerability and resilience scenarios
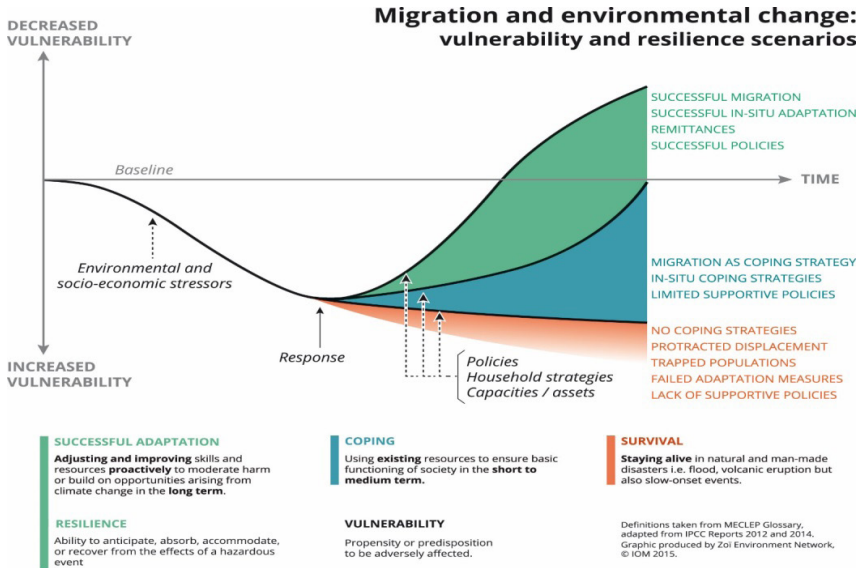
Source: MECLEP project

that was decided in the Paris Agreement is mandated "to develop recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimise and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change". Moreover, the Nansen Protection Agenda for people crossing national borders in the context of natural disasters was signed in 2016 and the Platform on Disaster Displacement now aims to implement it. The World Humanitarian Summit and the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction have also taken the matter as one of priority. From the migration side at the international level, the topic has been slower to take hold. However, important efforts are now under way. The New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants (2016) acknowledges the

appropriate, at the national, regional and international levels".

importance of migration, environment and climate change issues. Furthermore, the Global Migration Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration recently held a thematic session on the topic with member states and experts. In June 2017, the UN Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on the protection of human rights from the impacts of climate change – including those displaced in this context. Despite these progresses, national implementation remains weak to date, given economic and political hurdles.

Within the African Union, the Kampala Convention that entered into force in 2012 is an essential instrument that explicitly recognises the potential migratory challenges associated with climate change, within the context of disaster risk reduction and the prevention of displacement. The Convention not only seeks to protect the rights of those displaced, but also to prevent displacement. This should be achieved through the establishment of effective early-warning systems, disaster risk reduction strategies, and disaster preparedness management plans. To address these challenges, the Convention sets out benchmarks and mechanisms for coordination and information sharing, and provides a road map for states to establish their own national frameworks to develop comprehensive response strategies. At the sub-regional level, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment signed in 1979 and revised in 1986, recognises the long tradition of cross-border migration for pastoralists and their cattle. The ECOWAS free movement agreements have diminished the threats for migrants within the region who may otherwise be forced to rely on smugglers and dangerous routes (as compared to the Horn of Africa, for example). During the 2000s, a special document was designed for nomadic herders, the International Transhumance Certificate (CIT), which could be compared to a passport that facilitates cross-border transhumance for pastoralists and their livestock[59].

---

[59] J. Blocher, D. Gharbaoui, S. Vigil, "West Africa: a testing ground for regional solutions", *Forced Migration Review, Disasters and displacement in a changing climate*, no.

A similar scheme could be implemented in Eastern Africa as well, where cross-border nomadic transhumance is also a key element of the lifestyle of pastoralists. Whilst these initiatives are substantial ways forward, they still rely heavily on economic resources and political will for their implementation.

Conclusion

The effects of climate change on the mobility of African populations generally, and of sub-Saharan Africans more particularly, cannot be attributed to a single driver or outcome. Whilst environmental degradation and the effects of climate change have become increasingly important, artificially isolating the environmental variable from all the other intervening factors that can lead to displacement, is to risk separating "natural" hazards from the social frameworks that influence how such threats affect people. As in any other region, and as with any other social phenomenon, migration cannot be attributed to a single factor. Moreover, vulnerability in the face of climate change results from conditions and systemic power relations on the ground. It is not a pure product of climate variability or events[60]. Even within local populations affected by the same climatic threats, their vulnerability and likeliness to migrate is affected by their socio-economic status (with those having some form of financial and social capital more able to adapt locally and/ or through migration), their dependence on natural resources, and their demographic characteristics (age, gender, etc.)[61].

While it is impossible to predict how the struggles unleashed by the deterioration of socio-ecological environments will play out, there is a clear likelihood of deepening rural poverty and expanded distress migration, both of which will amplify the social stresses on a population that already experiences chronic levels of

---

49, 2015, pp. 18-20.

[60] S. Vigil (2016).

[61] C. Zickgraf et al. (2016); S. Vigil, "Une cause invisible de migrations : la tragédie de l'accaparement des terres", *Politiques du Capital*, no. 64, 2015, pp. 111-123.

material deprivation and employment vulnerability. Thus policy interventions need to not only make climate change mitigation and adaptation fundamental pillars for action, but equally address the more fundamental causes of distress movements rather than solely the triggering event which initiated them. Investing in rural communities, securing land rights for populations, strengthening disaster risk response measures, preparing destination areas, assuring the full enjoyment of human rights, and addressing the root causes of deadly conflicts are all necessary in order to avoid the distress migration of millions of people who see their livelihoods destroyed as climate change impacts worsen. Moreover, rather than as a problem to be avoided, migration should be promoted as an essential strategy of adaptation to climate change if safe and regular channels are in place.

4. The Hidden Side of the Story: Intra-African Migration

Blessing U. Mberu and Estelle M. Sidze

The number of international migrants worldwide has continued to grow over the past fifteen years reaching 244 million in 2015, up from 222 million in 2010 and 173 million in 2000[1] . In 2015, of the 244 million international migrants worldwide, 32.6 million or 13.4%, were born in Africa. Just about half of them – i.e. 16.4 million, or 50.4% – moved to African countries other than their place of birth. The figure jumps to 67% when we look at sub-Saharan Africa only (15.9m out of 23.9m remain in the region). African emigrants who left the continent, on the other hand, were primarily to be found in Europe (27%), followed by Asia (12%), North America (7%) and Oceania (2%)[2]. So, why do most African emigrants – notably, those from the sub-Saharan region – remain in Africa? In answering this question, within the broader objective of a comprehensive understanding of the major drivers of Africa's migration processes, as well as of key and prevailing trends, this chapter looks at the forms, rationales and drivers of intra-African migrations and emigration towards Middle East and North African (MENA) countries. In addressing these issues, the chapter is organised into three key sections. The first section primarily addresses the prevailing volumes and trends of African migration across countries in the region. This is

---

[1] Unless a different source is specified, the data in this paragraph are from Tables 1 to 16, United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), *Trends in International Migrant Stock: Migrants by Destination and Origin*, 2015 (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2015).

[2] Ibid.

followed by a focus on African migration towards MENA countries. The final section addresses the drivers of intra-African migration and migration to MENA countries, highlighting in the concluding section critical social policy and program issues.

Volumes and trends of intra-African migration

Africa's migration system has been characterised as dynamic and extremely complex, with multifaceted interactions and interconnections[3]. However, in terms of volumes and destinations, it shows no significant exceptionalism relative to the rest of the world. Rather, it is consistent with migration and urbanisation as major global demographic features of the XXI century[4]. Table 1 shows the relatively small size of Africa's international migration stock *vis-à-vis* the major areas of the world, as well as the relatively unexceptional levels of change on the continent over the last 15 years. According to United Nations estimates[5], out of the 244 million international migrants worldwide in 2015, 104 million, or 43%, were born in Asia and 62 million (25%) were born in Europe. The corresponding origin of other international migrants are as follows: Latin America and the Caribbean (37 million, or 15%), Africa (34 million, or 14%[6]), North America (4 million, or 2%) and Oceania (2 million, or about 1%). Between 2000 and 2015, the size of the migrant stock from Asia grew by 2.8% per year, compared to 1.2% for Europe, 2.7% for Africa, 2.5% for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2.4% for Oceania, and 2.1% for North America.

---

[3] A. Adepoju, "Migration in sub-Saharan Africa", *Current African issues*, vol. 37, Uppsala, NordiskaAfrikainstitutet, 2008, pp. 1-60; J. Baker and T. Aina, *The migration experience in Africa*, Uppsala: NordiskaAfrikainstitutet, 1995.

[4] M.J. White, *The demographic impact of migration: Evidence from Africa*, UN Expert Group Meeting, 3 December 2012, http://www.un.org/esa/population/meetings/EGM_MigrationTrends/Demographic%20impact%20migration%20MJW%20UN%203Dec2012%20rev1_SH.pdf

[5] UNDESA (2015).

[6] The 34 million figure in the UN Report 2015 is slightly higher than the 32.6 million obtained from the original UN dataset.

Tab. 1 - Size (millions) and average annual change of
international migrant stock by area of origin, 2000-2015

	2000	2015	Avg. change 2000-2015
World	173	244	2.3
Africa	23	34	2.7
Asia	58	104	2.8
Europe	52	62	1.2
Latin America and the Caribbean	26	37	2.5
North America	3	4	2.1
Oceania	1	2	2.4

Source: UN, Department of Economic and Social Affairs,
Population Division (2015)

A persistent feature of international migration trends in the region is that most migrants from African countries have other countries on the continent as destinations[7]. Table 2 summarised the origin of international migrant stocks and their respective destinations across the major regions of the world in 2015. What is evident is that Africa is not among the areas where most migrants live outside their region of birth. In fact, Asia is the area with the largest number of persons living outside their birthplace region. In 2015, there were 42 million international migrants born in Asia but living elsewhere. Of these, the majority were living in Europe (20 million), followed by North America (17 million) and Oceania (3 million). Migrants born in Latin America and the Caribbean represented the second largest diaspora group with 32 million people living outside their region of birth. The majority of these migrants were living in North America (26 million) and Europe (5 million). Europe, in turn, had the third largest

---

[7] M.J. White (2012).

number of persons living outside their major area of birth (22 million). These migrants were primarily residing in Asia and North America (8 million each) and Oceania (3 million), respectively. For Africa, migrants born in the region and living outside Africa were estimated at 16.2 million, with a majority living in Europe (9 million), and other substantial groups in Asia (4 million) and North America (2 million). Furthermore, while the region witnessed an increase in the share of African foreign-born persons living in Asia, Europe, Northern America and Oceania in 2015, the highest proportion of its migrant stock still remain in countries of the region. Again, Asia-to-Asia was the largest regional migration corridor in the world in 2015, with some 59 million international migrants. Europe-to-Europe was the second largest regional corridor in 2015, with nearly 40 million international migrants born in Europe living in another country of Europe. The Africa-to-Africa migration corridor had over 16 million international migrants in 2015, which represented the fifth largest in the world[8]. Accordingly, 16.4 million of 20.6 million foreign-born population living in African states (including those from outside the continent, such as the numerous Chinese diaspora) hail from other African countries. It is therefore important to highlight that there is no significant exceptionalism observed in Africa's international migration dynamics. The region's migration outcomes are consistent with the trends in Europe, Asia and Oceania, where the majority of international migrants are living in countries within the same region of origin. The exception observed from data relates to Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) as well as North America, where a majority of international migrants live outside their region of origin. In the case of LAC, as indicated above, over 84% of its international migration stock live outside the region, with about 70% of them residing in North America alone. Similarly, only 28% of North American international migration stock live in North America. The rest lives outside the region with over 53% resident in LAC and Europe.

---

[8] UNDESA (2015).

TAB. 2 - INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS (STOCK) BY MAJOR AREAS OF
DESTINATION AND ORIGIN, 2015 (MILLIONS)

Origin	Destination						
	Africa	**Asia**	**Europe**	**LAC**	**North America**	**Oceania**	**Total**
Africa	16.4	4.1	9.2	0.1	2.3	0.5	32.6
Asia	1.2	59.4	20.2	0.3	15.5	3.0	99.8
Europe	1.0	6.9	39.9	1.3	7.5	3.0	59.6
Latin America and the Caribbean	0.0	0.4	4.6	5.9	24.6	0.2	35.8
North America	0.1	0.5	1.0	1.3	1.2	0.2	4.3
Oceania	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.3	1.1	1.8
Other	1.9	3.6	0.8	0.3	3.1	0.1	9.8
Total	21	75	76	9	54	8	244

Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs,
Population Division (2015)

Evidence assembled from UNDESA shows that intra-African migration mostly follows global patterns, with international migrants more likely to be resident in countries in their sub-region than otherwise[9]. Sub-regional trends for 15.9 million international migrants within sub-Saharan Africa, summarised in Table 3, indicate that as many as 93.6% of the international migrants out of West Africa (who do not leave the sub-Saharan region) end up in other West African countries. The equivalent for other sub-Saharan Africa regions are southern Africa 89.7%, eastern Africa 73.5% and central Africa 45.8%. Less than 1% of intra-Africa migration out of western Africa and 52% out of central Africa end up in eastern and southern African countries, whereas few migrants out of eastern Africa countries end up in western or central Africa. Consequently, patterns of intra-African migration

_____

[9] Ibid.

significantly parallel intra-regional migration, which continues to chip away at the perspective of Africa's migration exceptionalism. What is also important to note from Table 3 is evidence that the much-hyped migration to southern Africa from West Africa – especially from Nigeria to South Africa in recent years – may be exaggerated, as most West African migrants remain in West Africa. Moreover, while the proportion of West Africans in South Africa out of this 15.9 million migrants is indeed 0.6%, international migrants in southern African mostly come from southern and eastern African countries.

TAB. 3 - ORIGIN-DESTINATION OF 15.9 MILLION SUB-SAHARAN
INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS BASED ON SUB-REGIONS

Origin	Destination			
	Eastern Africa	Central Africa	Western Africa	Southern Africa
Eastern Africa*	**73.5%**	9.9%	0.0%	16.7%
Central Africa	40.0%	**45.8%**	5.6%	8.6%
Western Africa	0.4%	5.4%	**93.6%**	0.6%
Southern Africa**	9.8%	0.6%	0.0%	**89.7%**
Sub-Saharan Africa (total)	5,387,268	2,034,915	5,864,933	2,568,393

* includes Sudan and South Sudan

** includes Zambia and Zimbabwe

Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs,
Population Division (2015)

The estimates in Table 3 are consistent with the most recent reports by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), which show that the profile of documented migrants entering South Africa – those who receive legal permits to work, study, live, receive medical treatment, do business, or even retire – show several significant variations from the origin-profiles of the larger sample of all international

migrants[10]. Indeed, the *2016 Community Survey* report shows that Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland and Namibia were among the top 10 "sending countries" (countries of origin of migrants), together with the United Kingdom, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, India, Pakistan, China and Bangladesh. Recent claims by a South African political party leader that there were 13 million international migrants living in South Africa is wildly incorrect. In particular, no data confirms that there were 800,000 Nigerians living in South Africa[11]. The 2011 Census estimated that there were only 2.2 million people living in South Africa who were born outside the country, whereas the country's *2016 Community Survey* estimated that the figure had dropped to 1.6 million. For Nigerians, the most recent data from the *2016 Community Survey* estimated that 30,314 people – or roughly 2% of foreign-born people living in South Africa – are from Nigeria. The 2011 census found this figure to be 26,341 and the United Nation's estimate for 2015 was even lower, at 17,753[12].

What is also important to interrogate is the perception that migrants to South Africa are mostly illegal and undocumented. Table 4 summarises the most recent Stats SA publication on documented immigrants in 2014, which shows that the largest number – just over 66% – of 69,216 temporary residence permits (visas, including work and study permits) issued that year were issued to nationals from countries as diverse as Zimbabwe, China, Nigeria, Pakistan and United Kingdom. The sample of documented migrants who received temporary permits in 2014 showed that, while Africa still made up the single largest region of origin (52.5%), nationals from South Africa Development Community (SADC)

---

[10] K. Wilkinson, "Claim That 13 Million International Migrants Live In SA Wildly Incorrect", *Africa Check*, 21 February 2017, https://africacheck.org/reports/claim-13-million-international-migrants-live-sa-wildly-incorrect/

[11] K. Wilkinson (2017); V. Bhardwaj, "No Data Shows That 800,000 Nigerians Live In South Africa", *Africa Check*, 21 February 2017, https://africacheck.org/reports/no-data-shows-800000-nigerians-live-south-africa/

[12] V. Bhardwaj (2017).

countries (33.3%) and the Asian region (30.6%) made up a nearly equal proportion of successful permit applications.

Tab. 4 - Documented migrants who received temporary permits in South Africa in 2014 by country of origin

Country	Number	%
Zimbabwe	12,521	18.1
India	6,195	9.0
Nigeria	6,087	8.8
China	5,739	8.3
Pakistan	4,551	6.6
Bangladesh	3,103	4.5
UK	2,391	3.5
Lesotho	2,375	3.4
DRC	1,614	2.3
Angola	1,571	2.3

Source: Statistics South Africa (2015)

In the same 2014 period, 4,136 permanent residence permits were issued. The majority of residence permits were issued to citizens from Zimbabwe (36.2%), followed by India (9.6%), China (8.1%), DRC (6.7%), Nigeria (4.2%), UK (3.9%), Lesotho (2.9%), Pakistan (2.1%), Germany (1.8%) and Zambia (1.7%). Furthermore, there were over 65,500 refugees and 230,000 asylum-seekers in South Africa in 2014, with major countries of origin for refugees being Somalia, the DRC, Angola and Ethiopia[13].

It is also important to highlight that there is no evidence of exceptionalism in relation to all the migration streams to South Africa, both from African origins and from outside Africa.

_____

[13] Statistics South Africa, *Documented immigrants in South Africa, 2014*, Statistical release P0351.4, Pretoria, 2015.

According to a Stats SA report on migration dynamics, the consistently high rate of migration from SADC countries to South Africa is due to a colonial and apartheid-era regional "history of labour migration, especially from Mozambique, Lesotho, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Swaziland". Moreover, the same report adds that South Africa is regarded as an "important destination for many people who seek better socio-economic opportunities" due to its relatively stable democratic government, good infrastructure and economic stability. Accordingly, issues like political unrest, economic instability and even "environmental degradation" in the African region have resulted in increased numbers of displaced persons, increasing the number of both documented and undocumented migrants in South Africa and other middle- and high-income countries globally[14].

Migration trends to MENA countries

About 34.5 million international migrants, including registered refugees, were living in Middle East and North Africa countries – the so-called MENA region – in 2015, the top destination countries being Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Kuwait and Lebanon[15]. About two thirds of these migrants originated from outside the region. The primary countries of origin of international migrants in the MENA region in 2015 were India (8.2 million), Bangladesh (2.8 million), Pakistan (2.8 million), Indonesia (1.8 million) and the Philippines (1.5 million). The North African countries of the MENA region – i.e. Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia – host significantly less international migrants (6%) than their counterparts in the

---

[14] Statistics South Africa, *Census 2011: Migration Dynamics in South Africa*, Report no. 03-01-79, Pretoria, 2011.

[15] IOM Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa, "Migration to, in, and from the Middle East and North Africa", Data snapshot, 2016, https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/country/mena/Migration-in-the-Middle-East-and-North-Africa_Data%20Sheet_August2016.pdf

Gulf (74%) or the Mashreq region (20%). Whereas "the oil-rich Gulf region has become a global magnet for migrants from poorer countries in the Middle East and North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa and an increasingly diverse array of Asian countries"[16], international migration towards the North African countries is more of a transit migration than a destination for labour migration, since Libya, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia are important sources of migrants to Europe as well as transit hubs for migrants from sub-Saharan Africa.

Specific data on sub-Saharan migration to states in the Middle East and North Africa is scanty, but migration from North African countries to the Middle East is very significant and well recorded. Table 5 shows more intense migration from the North African countries of Egypt, Morocco, Libya and Tunisia to the Middle Eastern countries of Israel, Jordan, Kuwait Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Qatar[17]. While specific data for many countries are not available, there is evidence of a significant migration from African-Arab countries to Middle Eastern countries. Historically, prospects of higher wages in the booming oil economy led to massive labour migration towards the Middle East countries beginning in 1973. Migrants were principally from Egypt, encouraged by an open-door policy that removed political obstacles to labour migration of Egyptians and a pro-active recruitment of Egyptians by Arab governments[18]. Egyptian migrants were predominantly hired as teachers and administrators. Other sources of migrants included Yemen and Sudan. Yemenis and Sudanese were for the most part unskilled migrants employed in the service and construction sectors. Massive movements from eastern and southern Asian countries, including India, Pakistan, South Korea, Philippines, Thailand, and to a lesser extent Bangladesh, China, Taiwan, and Indonesia, followed by 1975 to fill an ever-increasing labour demand. Migration from

---

[16] S. Castles, H. De Haas, M.J. Miller, *The age of migration: International population movements in the modern world*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, p. 172.

[17] UNDESA (2015).

[18] N. Choucri and P. Brecke, "Migration in the Middle East: transformation and change", vol.16, no. 2, 1983, pp. 16-27.

Fig. 1 - Main intra-African migration flows
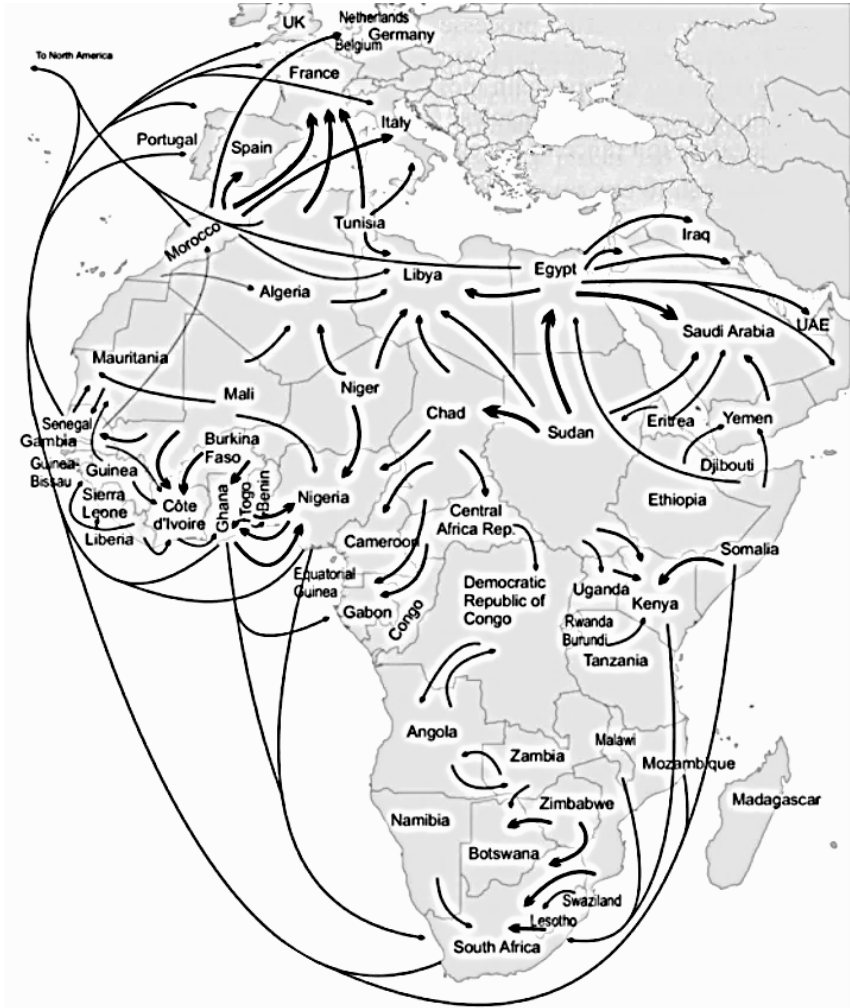
Source: S. Castles, H. De Haas, M.J. Miller (2014)

Tab. 5 - African migrant stocks by origin and Middle Eastern
destinations, 2015

	Destination									
Origin	Israel	Jordan	Kuwait	Lebanon	Oman	Qatar	S. Arabia	Turkey	UAE	Yemen
Egypt	11310	49968	69940	22827	8541	67	119711	1004	62372	3819
Morocco	80590	257	628	117	NA	352	NA	43	561	NA
Chad	NA	0	343	NA	NA	7334	NA	NA	306	NA
Eritrea	NA	75	1242	NA	NA	172	NA	NA	1108	0
Ethiopia	20028	9	874	NA	NA	246	20429	8	780	6629
Libya	9885	157	NA	72	NA		NA	303		NA
Nigeria	NA	9	457	NA	NA	183	NA	9	408	NA
Somalia	NA	9	832	NA	NA	41	NA	38	743	15729
South Africa	4436	13	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	32	NA	NA
South Sudan	NA	52	0	24	NA	164	NA	NA	1499	NA
Sudan	NA	423	15329	193	2063	860	59855	13	12171	8306
Tunisia	21025	116	379	NA		74		45	338	NA

Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2015).
NA (Data not available)

Asia was considered far more beneficial for business since Asian
workers were perceived to be more productive, better disciplined,
tendered lower bids for construction projects, and, more critically,
less prone to citizenship and political claims[19].

While the particular migration stream from North Africa to
Israel is not generally obvious in the heated political conflicts in
the region, it is consistent with the historical emigration from
these countries to Israel mainly from 1948 to the early 1970s fol-
lowing post-colonial political and related social, economic and
cultural changes[20].

---

[19] Ibid.; F. De Bel-Air, *Demography, migration and labour market in Saudi Arabia*,
GLMM, ExNote 01, 2014.

[20] M.H. Shulewitz, *The Forgotten Millions: The Modern Jewish Exodus from Arab Lands*,

For sub-Saharan African countries, their specific migration to Middle East countries is relatively recent and, as indicated above, information on migrants is scarce. For example, available United Nations data (see Table 5) estimate that 1,066 Nigerian citizens were living in the MENA countries in 2015, for the most part in Kuwait (457 people) and in the United Arab Emirates (408 people). Yet while Nigeria's Ministry of Foreign Affairs suggests official migration engagements and agreements between Nigeria and Kuwait, a huge gap in information remains[21]. Available online information indicates that international migration from Nigeria to Kuwait is through a sponsorship system, and Nigerians in the kingdom are mostly fully-employed and highly-qualified professionals held in high repute, working as doctors in their hospitals and professors in their universities, together with students offered scholarships by the Kuwaiti government[22]. However, beyond Nigerian experts in Kuwait, anecdotal evidence also suggests the presence of mobility related to human trafficking[23]. Sociodemographic data on international migrants in Kuwait indicate that despite plans by the Kuwaiti government to maintain a policy of importing skilled workers, the majority of migrants are employed in the private (63%) and domestic labour (30%) sectors and poorly educated (below the secondary level of education)[24]. International migration

---

Continuum, 2001, pp. 139 and 155; A. Aharoni, "The Forced Migration of Jews from Arab Countries", *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 53-60; S. Reeva, M.M. Laskier, S. Reguer, *The Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times*, Columbia University Press, 2003, p. 327; C.L. Ducker, *Jews, Arabs, and Arab Jews: The Politics of Identity and Reproduction in Israel*, The Hague, IDEAS, 2006; C. Shindler, *A History of modern Israel*, Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 63-64; J.M. Rosenberg, *The Rebirth of the Middle East*, Hamilton Books, 2009, p. 44.
[21] Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Nigeria-EU Relations*, 2017, http://www.foreignaffairs.gov.ng/index.php/kuwait/27-countries-and-regions/europe-nigeria-bilateral-relations
[22] R.W. Ahmad, "In Kuwait, Nigerians 'are prized immigrants'", *Daily Trust*, 2013, https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/news/travel/in-kuwait-nigerians-are-prized-immigrants/15786.html.
[23] IOM (2016).
[24] F. De Bel-Air, *The demographic and economic framework of migration in Kuwait*, GLMM,

from Nigeria to the United Arab Emirates is equally not well documented. Available data also indicate that while the United Arab Emirates attracts highly-skilled migrants from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, the vast majority of migrants from Asian and African countries are employed in domestic services and retail jobs through a similar sponsorship system prone to rights abuses by employers[25].

Forced migration: refugees, IDPs, asylum seekers and trafficked persons

Apart from civil wars, many countries in SSA are plagued with recurring droughts, famine, political conflicts and transitions, as well as unfavourable government policies and poor governance that often trigger population movements. These contexts, which are typical of several African countries, remain relevant for a more balanced and comprehensive understanding of Africa's migration systems, together with the relationships between internal and international migration and human wellbeing in the region[26].

In relation to refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), asylum-seekers and trafficked persons moving within and out of the region, the UNHCR reported that out of the 65.6 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, 22.5 million were refugees in 2016[27]. About 10.3 million people were newly displaced by

---

ExpNote 01, 2013; A. Ahmad, *Migrant workers in Kuwait: The role of State institutions*, Middle East Institute, Washington DC, 2010, http://www.mei.edu/content/migrant-workers-kuwait-role-state-institutions; N.M. Shah, "Migration to Kuwait: trends, patterns and policies", Conference on Migration and Refugee Movements in the Middle East and North Africa, The American University in Cairo, Egypt, 2007.

[25] F.T. Malit and A. Al Youha, "Labor migration in the United Arab Emirates: Challenges and responses", *The Online Journal of the Migration Policy Institute*, 18 September 2013.

[26] B.U. Mberu and R. Pongou, "Crossing Boundaries: Internal, Regional and International Migration in Cameroon", *International Migration*, vol. 54, no. 4, 2012.

[27] UNHCR, *Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2016*, 2017a, http://www.unhcr.

conflict or persecution, which comprises 6.9 million individuals displaced within the borders of their own countries and 3.4 million who were new refugees and new asylum-seekers.

At the global level, some countries were especially affected by forced displacements in 2016. Syrians continued to be the largest forcibly displaced population, with 12 million people at the end of 2016; that includes 5.5 million refugees, 6.3 million IDPs, and nearly 185,000 asylum-seekers. Colombians were the second-largest group, with 7.7 million forcibly displaced, mostly inside their country. A total of 4.7 million Afghans were also forcibly displaced, of whom 1.8 million were IDPs and 2.9 million were refugees or asylum-seekers. Countries in Africa that in 2016 had over 2 million people displaced, either internally or as refugees or asylum-seekers, include South Sudan (3.3 million), Sudan (2.9 million), the Democratic Republic of Congo (2.9 million), Somalia (2.6 million), and Nigeria (2.5 million). The refugee population from Burundi increased by 39% during 2016, while the IDP population in that country quadrupled to 141,200 people. Conflict and violence also continued in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Sudan leading to new displacements and inhibiting returns. In 2016, the South Sudanese refugee crisis was the fastest-growing in the world, with the latest evidence from UNHCR showing that out of a 2.27 million population of concern in South Sudan, 1.95 million registered as refugees[28].

Human trafficking has been acknowledged as the emerging dark side of migration in Africa[29]. Deepening poverty, persistent unemployment, conflicts, human deprivation and expectations of a dismal future have fostered an environment in which human trafficking can flourish[30]. Adepoju identified trafficking in chil-

---

org/dach/wp-content/uploads/sites/27/2017/06/2016_Global_Trends_.pdf

[28] UNHCR, *Regional overview of population of concern South Sudan Situation as of 30 June 2017*, 2017b http://data.unhcr.org/SouthSudan/download.php?id=3278.

[29] A. Adepojou (2008).

[30] International Labour Organisation (ILO), *Trafficking in human beings: New approaches to combating the problem*, Genève, ILO, 2003.

dren, mainly for farm labour and domestic work mostly within and across African countries and trafficking in women and young persons for sexual exploitation, mainly outside the region and particularly in the EU, Lebanon and the Gulf States, as two of the three main types of trafficking in the region[31]. Child trafficking in sub-Saharan Africa is a demand-driven phenomenon – the existence of an international market for child labour and the sex trade, coupled with an abundant supply of children from poor families. Children are recruited through networks of agents and parents are forced by poverty and ignorance to enlist their children to work as domestic servants in the informal sector or on plantations, hoping to benefit from their wages[32].

Drivers of intra-African, SSA migration to MENA and forced migration in the region

Beyond understanding the volumes, persistence and marginal changes over time *vis-à-vis* intra-African and SSA-MENA migration, as well as forced migration within and out of Africa, highlighting the drivers of these trends is critical in the search for pathways to inform policy and programme actions needed to address migration-associated challenges.

The overarching perspective in the African region is the view of migration as an intrinsic dimension of economic and social development, reflecting the rational decisions of millions of migrants to seek new opportunities away from restrictive local environments[33]. Contrary to a common perception, migrants from

---

[31] A. Adepojou (2008).

[32] "Borderline slavery: Child trafficking in Togo", *Human Rights Watch*, vol. 15, no. 8(A), 2003, http://hrw.org/reports/2003/togo0403/

[33] N. Chen, P. Valente, H. Zlotnik, "What do we know about recent trends in urbanization?", in R.E. Bilsborrow (ed.), *Migration, urbanization and development: New directions and issues*, New York, UNFPA and Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1998, pp. 59-88; C. Kessides, *The urban transition in sub-Saharan Africa*, Washington DC, The Cities Alliance, 2006; M. Montgomery, R. Stren, B. Cohen, R. Reed (eds.), *Cities transformed: Demographic change and its implications in the developing world*, Washington

the African region in general and from sub-Saharan Africa in particular are not solely or mainly looking for better socio-economic opportunities outside the continent. African migrants are also not passively pushed around by external factors such as poverty, environmental disasters or demographic pressure[34]. There is a long-standing, well-documented secular trend of labour migration within West Africa and southern Africa, with Côte d'Ivoire and South Africa being the major destinations[35]. Plantations and construction industries in Côte d'Ivoire have attracted thousands of workers from Burkina Faso, Mali, Nigeria, Liberia, Senegal and Ghana since the early 1990s[36]. Côte d'Ivoire's domestic labour force was small, hence the country's first post-independent President, ignoring colonial-era borders, encouraged immigration from these West African countries into the plantations[37]. Immigrants constituted 17% of the total population in 1965, 22% in 1975, 28% in 1988, and 25% in 1993. By 1995, there were 4 million immigrants out of a population of 14 million, with the right to work, vote, marry local people and own property[38].

By the mid-1970s, Nigeria had become a country of immigration as the oil-led expansion of road and building construction, infrastructure, education and allied sectors attracted workers, both skilled and unskilled, from Ghana, Togo, Benin, Cameroon,

---

DC, National Academy Press, 2003; M.J. White, B.U. Mberu, M.A. Collinson, "African urbanization: Recent trends and implications", in M. George, M.G. Gordon, M. Mark, F.-C. Rogelio (eds.), *The new global frontier urbanization, poverty and environment in the 21st century*, London, Earthscan, 2008.

[34] M.-L. Flahaux and H. De Haas, "African migration: trends, patterns, drivers", *Comparative Migration Studies*, vol. 4, no. 12016, p. 1.

[35] A. Adepoju (2008); S. Castles, H. De Haas, M.J. Miller (2014).

[36] M. Touré, "Country Report: Côte d'Ivoire. Regional meeting of experts on International Migration in Africa: Trends and Prospects for the 21st Century", UNESCO Network on Migration Research in Africa, Gaborone 2-5 June 1998.

[37] Ibid.

[38] A. Adepoju, "Reflections on international migration and development in sub-Saharan Africa", *African Population Studies,* vol. 25, no. 2, 2011, pp. 298-319; Ibid.

Niger and Chad and numbered about 2.5 million by 1982[39]. The relatively small geographic size of the countries, the similarities of ethnic groups across borders and visa-free movements between the Economic Community of West African States are also some of the reasons why intra-regional movements in western Africa tend to be of higher intensity compared to other African regions[40].

Labour migration towards South Africa was encouraged from the apartheid period to meet labour demand in mining, agriculture and domestic services[41]. Most of the migrant workers were recruited from Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique and Malawi. South Africa after independence in 1994 is also recognised as a major migration hub linking intra- and extra-African migration[42].

Despite the fact that thousands of Africans voluntarily migrate to work or re-settle in other African countries, choosing therefore to remain on the continent, movements from country to country are also often steps in a series of journeys towards countries outside the continent. The stepwise migration of refugees and asylum seekers is a phenomenon confirmed by the latest UNHCR report to be on the rise, for example, of refugee and migrant flows through Libya[43]. The North African country is by far the preferred jumping off point for refugees and migrants hoping to reach Europe, although it is particularly unsafe. Although Libya has for decades drawn people from neighbouring countries, as it offered the best employment opportunities and highest salaries in the region during the heyday of Muammar Gaddafi,

---

[39] A. Adepojou (2008).

[40] H. De Haas, *Migration transitions: a theoretical and empirical inquiry into the developmental drivers of international migration*, DEMIG, Working Paper No. 24, International Migration Institute, University of Oxford, 2010; *The Web Atlas of Regional Integration in West Africa: Migration*, Paris, ECOWAS-SWAC/OECD, 2006.

[41] A. Adepoju, "The Forced Migration of Jews from Arab Countries", *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, 2003; M.-L. Flahaux and H. De Haas (2016).

[42] Ibid.

[43] UNHCR, *Refugee and migrant flows through Libya on the rise*, Report, 3 July 2017c, http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2017/7/595a470d4 /refugee-migrant-flows-libya-rise-report.html

around half of those travelling to Libya do so believing they can find jobs there, but end up fleeing onwards to Europe to escape life-threatening dangers and difficult economic conditions, alongside widespread exploitation and abuse[44]. Consequently, the foreign nationals going to Libya are part of mixed migration flows, of refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants, unaccompanied minors, and environmental migrants, victims of trafficking and stranded migrants[45]. In recent years, the number of people crossing the Mediterranean Sea from North Africa to southern Europe has increased, along with the deadly risks. In 2016, 181,436 refugees and migrants were reported to have arrived in Italy through the Central Mediterranean Route, which in 90% of cases means passing through Libya, and this represented an 18% increase compared to 153,842 arrivals in 2015[46]. What is also important to highlight is evidence that countries of origin and profiles of refugees and migrants have also evolved, with many of those on the move being young men, particularly from West Africa. The consequence of these evolving dynamics is the increasing vulnerability of these refugees and migrants, exacerbated by a decrease in support services and deteriorating security situations[47]. Available evidence also suggests that trafficking for sexual exploitation seems to be increasing, affecting Nigerian and Cameroonian women in particular, and there is an increase in the number of unaccompanied and separated children travelling alone in Libya mainly from Eritrea, the Gambia and Nigeria, which represents some 14% of total arrivals in Europe via the Central Mediterranean Route[48].

Forced intra-African migration due to environmental or climate-related disasters has increased over the past two decades[49].

---

[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.
[48] UNHCR (2017b).
[49] V. Kolmannskog, *Climate change, disaster, displacement and migration: initial evidence from Africa*, UNHCR, Policy Development and Evaluation Service, 2009.

In the case of Somalia, against a backdrop of weak governance, protracted insecurity and chronic poverty similar to the pre-famine situation in 2010 and 2011, severe and persistent drought conditions have taken a heavy toll and engendered cross-border displacement of pastoralists from Somaliland and from the Somali region of Ethiopia into the small neighbouring state of Djibouti, which is an important transit point for migrants and displaced people heading for the Gulf states and beyond[50].

Conclusion

Our analysis of contemporary data on migration volumes within and from Africa, confirm that contrary to the common characterisation in the media of a mass exodus of African migrants to Europe, most African migrants remain on the continent. Two thirds of sub-Saharan migrants, in particular, move from one nation to another within the region Intra-regional migration is thus significantly higher than extra-continental migration and is particularly intense within the western and southern African regions. In addition, extra-continental migration from Africa remains low compared to the volumes of international migrations from other regions. Furthermore, the common perception that African migrants remain in the region because they are constrained to do so by lack of opportunities or other factors are partly contradicted by evidence of a long history of, and contemporary, labour migration towards countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and South Africa.

African migration to the MENA region remains relatively small, with few data available. While skilled migration is documented, anecdotal evidence suggests streams of low-skilled migration, human trafficking and clandestine migration activities. Further, the stepwise migration from Africa to Europe or

---

[50] Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), *Global Report on Internal Displacement*, 2017, http://www.internal-displacement.org/assets/publications/2017/20170522-GRID.pdf

other regions has mainly taken place though the Libyan corridor. Although relatively less important, Europe as a destination has elicited widespread attention and highlighted the need for enhanced cooperation to promote the mutual benefits of legal migration and to counter illegal migration. Similarly, the spectre of human trafficking continues to hang over migration dynamics in and out of Africa and remains a challenge screaming for understanding and policy and program interventions.

Current restrictive migration policies in the global North have had an impact on the patterns and dynamics of extra-continental migration out of Africa in two ways: first, the restrictions provided opportunities for traffickers to bud and blossom[51]. Consequently, migrants are adopting more sophisticated, daring, and evasive methods to elude increasingly tight border controls to enter countries in the developed North. While many are reported to have perished during perilous attempts to cross the sea to Europe in rickety boats, those who manage to find their way into Europe are often apprehended and deported on arrival or soon thereafter[52]. Second, the restrictions have engendered spatial substitution through the diversion of migration towards new destinations such as Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. African migrants moving to Middle Eastern countries are, however, still predominantly originating from North African countries – including Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya and Sudan – which are equally part of the MENA region and share sociocultural traits. Migration from Ethiopia to the Gulf States, particularly Saudi Arabia – largely encouraged through agreements signed in 2011 – is currently threatened by increases in flows of irregular migrants, massive expulsions and a migration ban instituted by the Ethiopian government[53].

---

[51] J. Carling, *Trafficking in women from Nigeria to Europe. Migration information source*, Migration Policy Institute, Washington DC, 2005.
[52] B.U. Mberu and R. Pongou, *Nigeria: Multiple forms of mobility in Africa's demographic giant. Migration information source*, Migration Policy Institute, Washington DC, 2010.
[53] B. Fernandez, "Irregular migration from Ethiopia to the Gulf States", in P.

Finally, recent analyses tend to suggest that intra-African migration will be affected by visa restrictions adopted by many African countries and therefore lessen in intensity in the coming years. It was estimated in 2013 that about 78% of Africans needed a visa to enter another African country[54]. What these restrictions would mean for millions of African citizens who have acquired the capabilities and aspirations to migrate through processes of development and social transformation, and for both origin and destination countries' economies, should be well analysed in national and regional forums.

Fargues and N.M. Shah (eds.), *Skilful Survivals: Irregular Migration to the Gulf,* Gulf *Labour Markets and Migration*, (GLMM) Programme, Gulf Research Center, Cambridge, 2017.
[54] M. Czaika and H. De Haas, *The Effect of Visa Policy on International Migration Dynamics*, Working Paper, University of Oxford, International Migration Institute, Oxford, 2014.

5. Fleeing Repression: Inside Eritrea

Nicole Hirt

Eritrea, a small and relatively marginal country in spite of its strategic location on the Red Sea coast, made headlines in recent years when tens of thousands of Eritrean refugees arrived in Europe, mainly through the Mediterranean route. However, those who reach European shores are only a small minority of hundreds of thousands of Eritreans who have been fleeing the open-ended military and national service introduced in 2002. This service constitutes a form of systematic forced labour. This chapter seeks to explain how Eritrea, once a beacon of hope when it gained independence from Ethiopia in 1993 after thirty years of armed struggle, ended up as an undemocratic political system headed by a President who established a harsh autocracy and a command economy based on the militarisation of society and the systematic use of forced labour provided by national service conscripts. In conclusion, it briefly reflects on current EU policy towards the Horn of Africa aiming to curb the mass exodus.

The troubled birth of Eritrea: between war and oppression

Italian colonial rule

When Italy joined the scramble for Africa in the late XIX century, the territory of its future colony Eritrea was ruled by different powers: the hot coastal region had come under Egyptian rule after centuries of Ottoman domination; the western lowlands lacked any form of centralised rule, and the central highland

was under the control of Ras Alula, a representative of Ethiopian Emperor Yohannes IV. After several military confrontations, the Italians declared Asmara in the central highlands to be the capital of their first colony, Eritrea. However, when they tried to use Eritrea as a base to make advances on Ethiopian territory, they were defeated by Ethiopian troops in the battle of Adwa in 1896. Consequently, they started to develop their colony economically and invested heavily in infrastructure, commercial agriculture and the search for precious materials. A substantial part of the local population received military training and served in the colonial wars in Libya, Somalia and later Ethiopia. The colonial administration made few changes to the traditional structures of local rule, and Eritrea's nine ethnic groups continued to manage their affairs based on their respective customary laws, which to date continue to play an important role in conflict resolution. When Mussolini came to power, he tried to realise his short-lived dream of a larger Italian East Africa and occupied the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa in 1936. Eritrea was used as a military base and witnessed an economic boom during World War II. However, Italy lost all her colonies in 1941, and the territory came under British military administration[1].

A short democratic episode: the British Military Administration

The British ruled Eritrea from 1941 until its federation with Ethiopia in 1952. During that period, the former Italian colony's destiny was at stake. During the last years of World War II, Eritrea had reached its highest level of economic development with more than a thousand factories producing both military and consumer goods. However, after 1945 there was a recession and rising

---

[1] For details about Eritrea's colonial history, see T. Negash, *Italian Colonialism in Eritrea, 1882-1941. Politics, Praxis and Impact*, 1987, Uppsala University; S.H. Longrigg, *A Short History of Eritrea*, London and New York, Oxford University Press, 1945; I. Taddia, *L'Eritrea Colonia 1890-1952. Paesaggi, Strutture, Uomini del Colonialismo*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 1986.

unemployment. At the same time, the British administrators allowed the foundation of political parties that were supposed to express the people's opinion in relation to Eritrea's future. Possible options were unification with Ethiopia, independence, and the separation of the territory between Sudan and Ethiopia, an option favoured by the British. It was the only time in history when Eritreans enjoyed freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

The Eritrean population was deeply split in regard to the future prospects for their country: the Tigrinya-speakers in the highlands preferred unity with Ethiopia because they had close cultural relations with the Ethiopian province of Tigray across the border. In addition, both Emperor Haile Selassie and the Christian Orthodox Church conducted intensive pro-Ethiopian propaganda campaigns and supported the Unionist Party that was founded in 1946. Its youth organisation had an armed wing that intimidated supporters of independence. In 1947, the Muslim League came into existence as a pro-independence party, because Muslims felt historically discriminated against and marginalised by the Ethiopian Empire, which had proclaimed Christianity as its state religion. Various UN Commissions visited Eritrea during the 1950s, but due to the deep rifts within the population, they did not reach a common conclusion. As a compromise, Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia but received its own, democratic constitution[2].

Eritrea under Ethiopian rule: Haile Selassie and the *Derg* Military Council

Shortly after Eritrea's federation with Ethiopia, Emperor Haile Selassie began to undermine the Eritrean constitution and opponents of unification were systematically harassed and had to flee the country in the 1950s. Accordingly, the Unionists acquired the majority in parliament. Strikes and student protests were also violently broken up and the clandestine underground Eritrean Liberation Movement was shattered. When Haile Selassie

[2] G.K.N. Trevaskis, *Eritrea: A Colony in Transition: 1941-52*, London, Oxford University Press, 1960.

annexed Eritrea in 1962, the only democratic period the country has ever witnessed came to an end without protests by the international community.

At that time, Ethiopia had a centralistic political system, and protests in the peripheries were crushed by force. Eritreans, who had experienced democracy and civil liberties, protested more energetically against suppression by the Ethiopian government than other marginalised groups. The Muslim population had opposed unity with the Ethiopian Empire from the beginning because of their centuries-old experience of being plundered by Abyssinian warlords and their treatment as second-class citizens[3]. Resistance against Ethiopian rule emerged among the Orthodox Tigrinya-speakers when their mother tongue was replaced by Amharic as the official language and when they started to experience increasing economic marginalisation. Marxist resistance movements became stronger in many parts of Ethiopia, and in 1974 Haile Selassie was overthrown by a Military Council (*Derg* in Amharic). Soon, radical forces under the leadership of Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam gained the upper hand and a wave of Red Terror swept through Ethiopia, including the Province of Eritrea. The situation declined sharply, and politically motivated murders, torture and forced disappearances became the rule of the day. Against this background, increasing numbers of Christians joined the Muslim-dominated Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), which had initiated an armed struggle for independence in 1961[4].

Thirty years of struggle for independence

From 1961 to the early 1970s, the armed struggle was dominated by Muslim fighters, but since the *Derg* had come to power, some Christian-dominated groups split from the ELF and founded the

---

[3] M. Abdulkader Saleh, *The Saho of Eritrea: Ethnic Identity and National Consciousness*, LIt-Verlag, Berlin, 2013, pp. 182-204; R. Reid, *Frontiers of Violence in North-East Africa. Genealogies of Conflict since 1800*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2011.
[4] J. Markakis, *National and Class Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) under the leadership of today's President Isaias Afewerki. It was overshadowed by a civil war between both movements and by ideologically cloaked power struggles. Isaias mobilised Christian fighters against the ELF and cooperated with the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) in northern Ethiopia to oust the ELF from the field. In the early 1980s, both movements succeeded in driving ELF fighters to Sudan[5].

In 1977, the EPLF adopted a Marxist program and organised itself along the principles of democratic centralism with a Political Bureau and a Central Committee under the leadership of a Secretary General. Mass organisations for women and workers were founded to mobilise the people inside Eritrea and those who had fled abroad. Isaias Afewerki dominated the front from the very beginning. The EPLF changed its name into People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) in 1994, but kept its organisational structure. The Politburo and the Central Committee were never formally dismissed, even if many members are meanwhile dead, in exile or arrested.

In a nutshell, the people of Eritrea were the victims of numerous wars and armed struggles, and their experience of democracy was limited to the short period of British administration from 1941 to 1952. During the armed struggle, hundreds of thousands of people lost their lives due to war, famine and political persecution; close to one million Eritreans fled abroad during this challenging time[6]. Accordingly, there was overwhelming joy when Ethiopian troops surrendered, the EPLF entered Asmara peacefully in 1991, and the fighters were welcomed as the liberators of Eritrea. However, the period of joy and relief was to be short-lived.

---

[5] D. Connell, *Against all Odds. A Chronicle of the Eritrean Revolution*, New Jersey-Asmara, Lawrenceville, 1997, p. 208.

[6] World Bank, *Eritrea: Options and strategies for growth*, World Bank Report no.12930-ER, Washington DC, 1994, p. ii.

A hopeful start: the first years of independence

The EPLF had joined forces with the TPLF in the 1970s in its fight against the *Derg* regime, although there had been various ideological issues that separated both Marxist organisations. The TPLF originally aimed at declaring independence of the northern province Tigray from Ethiopia, but took over power of the entire country with the help of the ruling coalition Ethiopia People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Since the TPLF agreed to Eritrea's split from Ethiopia, the UN endorsed independence, and in a referendum held in 1993 an overwhelming majority of Eritreans voted in favour of the emerging state[7]. However, this was to remain the only election being held at the national level. The EPLF took over the provisional government and Isaias Afewerki became Eritrea's unelected president, while the EPLF departments were transformed into line ministries. The new government faced immense challenges: during the long years of war most of the infrastructure had been destroyed or damaged, and the educational and health sectors lay in shambles. Once flourishing industry was in tatters. The population was not only split along ethnic and religious lines, but there were additional rifts between former fighters and civilians, and between those inside the country and in the diaspora.

The government had quite detailed plans for how to rebuild the country and to develop the economy[8]. In the political arena, it behaved with authoritarianism from the very beginning and banned the splinters of the former ELF from becoming active inside the country, thus depriving a large part of the population, most of them Muslims, of their right to political participation in their homeland[9].

---

[7] Referendum Commissioner of Eritrea, "Referendum '93. The Eritrean People Determine their Destiny", Trenton, New Jersey, 1993.

[8] G.H. Tesfagiorgis (ed.), *Emergent Eritrea. Challenges of Economic Development,* Trenton, New Jersey, 1994.

[9] D. Connell, "From Resistance to Governance. Eritrea's trouble with transition", *Review of African Political Economy*, vol. 38, no. 129, 2011, pp. 419-433, cit. p. 421.

The political program of the PFDJ and the non-implemented constitution

Following independence, a Constitutional Commission composed of renowned experts was installed with the task of drafting a constitution in dialogue with the population. Among them were members of different ethnic and religious groups, regions and experts in customary law. The resulting constitution was ratified in 1997, but never implemented.

The EPLF/PFDJ also adopted a new program at its congress in Nakfa in 1994, which was supposed to cement its strong role in the new state. The organisation defined itself as a mass movement that was destined to dominate not only politics, but also the economy to foster development[10]. Accordingly, former EPLF fighters took over central posts in the administration, and in the economic sphere the party left little space for private entrepreneurship: the import and export sectors, construction industries and all financial institutions were controlled by the PFDJ. Nevertheless, the first years of independence were characterised by a sense of optimism, and significant progress was made in the fields of education and health. Yet, everything was to change when a new war erupted between Eritrea and Ethiopia in 1998. The ruling elites on both sides can be held responsible for the ensuing devastating two-year long conflict over a hunk of barren land[11].

In the early 1990s, it seemed that the former brothers in arms of the EPLF and TPLF would cooperate politically and economically after having taken over the government in Eritrea and Ethiopia, respectively. But conflicts related to economic policies, re-exports of goods and other issues soon emerged and the situation deteriorated further when Eritrea introduced its own

---

[10] Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), "A National Charter for Eritrea. For a Democratic, Just and Prosperous Future", Nacfa, Eritrea, 1994.

[11] For analyses of the war, see: P. Gilkes and M. Plaut, "The war between Ethiopia and Eritrea", *Foreign Policy in Focus*, vol. 5, no. 25, 2000, pp. 1-6; T. Negash and K. Tronvoll, *Brothers at War. Making Sense of the Eritrean-Ethiopian War*, Eastern African Studies, 2001.

currency, the nakfa, in 1997. There were unresolved conflicts between the ruling elites of both countries, and in Ethiopia, the new TPLF-led ruling coalition was under pressure from political actors who opposed Eritrea's independence, which had made Ethiopia a land-locked country. The boundary between both countries was determined in contracts between Italy as the former colonial power and Ethiopian Emperor Menelik II, but had never been demarcated on the ground. Ultimately, some relatively minor border issues developed into a devastating war that took the form of World War I-style trench warfare and cost some 100,000 lives[12]. In the year 2000, Ethiopian troops occupied large portions of Eritrean territory for several weeks, before a peace treaty was signed in Algiers in December. The Eritrea Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC), an international body based in The Hague was established to find a final and binding ruling for the border. Two years later, it handed down its decision and awarded the border town of Badme to Eritrea. However, Ethiopia has since refused to implement the EEBC's decision, which resulted in a "no war no peace" situation between both countries.

From authoritarian system to personal autocracy

The political crisis of 2001 and the shift to one-man rule

In the aftermath of the war, there were heated discussions in Eritrea regarding the conduct of the war, and calls for national elections, the implementation of the constitution and political liberalisation became louder. The President faced growing criticism of his autocratic style of rule and his lack of cooperation with other members of the ruling elite. Among the population, the myth of an invincible liberation front was shattered, while the economy was heavily affected by the war, the internal

---

[12] D. Connell and T. Killion, *Historical Dictionary of Eritrea*, 2nd ed., Lanham, Scarecrow Press, 2011, p. 130.

displacement of hundreds of thousand people and the arrival of about 100,000 Ethiopians with Eritrean roots, who had been deported by the government in Addis Ababa during the war[13].

Dissent also grew among the PFDJ leadership, and many high-ranking cadres, including ministers, ambassadors and members of the military challenged the rule of President Isaias. In 2001, a group of prominent PFDJ members, who were to become known as the G15 wrote an open letter to Isaias, demanding democratic reforms, the implementation of the constitution and national elections. In addition, they called for a critical assessment of war conduct. The emerging free press participated actively in the ongoing political discussions and gave the reformers a public voice for their pleas. At the same time, a student movement made some cautious demands to improve the rights of students. The Chief Justice also criticised the accumulation of power in the hands of the president and demanded political non-interference in the judiciary.

President Isaias did not tolerate these events for a long time, and in September 2001 he cracked down on all dissenters and arrested the G15 except for four persons, three of whom had been abroad at the time and one who had renounced membership in the group. The journalists of the free press faced the same fate, and all of them have been languishing in jail without trial ever since. It its believed that most of them have died due to the abysmal conditions of detention[14].

The crackdown severely weakened the PFDJ as a political organisation, and the President did not hesitate to dismantle all the political institutions that could challenge his personalised rule. The National Assembly that consisted mainly of members of the ruling party's Political Bureau and Central Committee met for the last time in 2002, for the purpose of condemning the actions

---

[13] Human Rights Watch, "The Horn of Africa War. Mass expulsions and the nationality issue (June 1998 - April 2002)", vol. 15, no 3 (A), 2003.

[14] Amnesty International, *Report 2014/15 - Eritrea*, http://www.refworld.org/docid/54f07df7c.html; D. Connell, *Conversations with Eritrean Political Prisoners,* New Jersey, Trenton, 2005.

of the G15. The PFDJ was never to hold a congress again. The Chief Justice, Teame Beyene, was dismissed and the Supreme Court dismantled. Press freedom was strictly limited, and the state-owned media are only allowed to report alleged progress in development and the celebration of national holidays. Eritrea was ranked last in press freedom from 2007 to 2016 by Reporters Without Borders; in 2017 it changed places with North Korea and is now second to last.

As of today, the president rules with the support of a very small group of advisers, PFDJ cadres and high-ranking military personnel. The Cabinet of Ministers has consisted mainly of the same group of persons for many years, and can best be described as a clique of yes-men and yes-women who do not pose any danger to the power of their boss. Obviously, in this kind of political system, laws are issued by decree of the president[15].

The elimination of the judiciary: legal arbitrariness as political principle

In the absence of an implemented constitution, Eritrea's judiciary was divided into a civil branch including so-called Community Courts (which rule mostly on the base of customary law), a so-called Special Court rung by military men with the task of fighting corruption, and the remains of the Ethiopian legal system. In 2014, new civil and penal law codes were introduced, but have not been implemented since[16]. In reality, most arrests take place without due process of law: people just disappear, and if they are lucky they are released several months later, mostly without even having been formally accused of an offence. Behind the scenes, secret committees of the national security apparatus, the police and the military interrogate the suspects and decide

---

[15] P.B. Ogbazghi, "Personal Rule in Africa: the case of Eritrea", *African Studies Quarterly*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2011, http://asq.africa.ufl.edu/files/Ogbazgh-V12Is2.pdf
[16] US Library of Congress, "New Eritrean Codes now Available for researchers", March 2016, https://blogs.loc.gov/law/2016/03/new-eritrean-codes-now-available-to-researchers/

their fate without any reference to a legal procedure[17]. There are reports about prisoners who were "forgotten" behind bars. Simultaneously, Eritrea is controlled by State Security, which has woven a close-knit network of surveillance, and large numbers of omnipresent spies create a climate of fear and mutual mistrust[18].

The limitation of religious freedom: Christians and Muslims as enemies of the state

Officially, the EPLF did not intervene in religious affairs and opted for a secular state, in which practising one's faith should be a strictly private matter. However, many Muslims and ELF supporters stress the fact that back in the 1970s, Isaias Afewerki founded the EPLF as a Christian organisation with the ultimate aim of chasing the Muslim-dominated ELF from Eritrean territory with the support of the equally Christian-dominated TPLF. After independence, hundreds of Muslims were arrested as alleged jihadists. For instance, 180 persons, most of them teachers, were imprisoned in 1993 because they refused to accept the government-supported mufti. They have remained in custody without trial ever since[19]. Large numbers of Muslim elders and traditional community leaders have been arrested over the years for criticising the government's policies.

However, the fate of many Christians was not better, since the President was ready to crack down on any Christian denomination which he considered dangerous to his rule. Members of the small community of Jehovah's Witnesses became his first victims. According to their religious conviction, they did not vote in the referendum for independence and refused to participate in military training. Accordingly, their citizenship was revoked in 1994, and 73 of them were arrested and have been in prison ever since.

---

[17] K. Tronvoll and D.R. Mekonnen, *The African Garrison State. Human Rights and Political Development in Eritrea*, Woodbridge, James Currey, 2014, p. 52.

[18] D. Bozzini, "Low-Tech Surveillance and the Despotic State of Eritrea", *Surveillance &Society*, vol. 9, no. 1-2, 2011, http://library.queensu.ca/ojs/index.php/surveillance-and-society/article/view/low-tech/low-tech

[19] K. Tronvoll and D.R. Mekonnen (2014), p. 110.

The remaining members of the community are not allowed to hold business licences and face exclusion and marginalisation[20].

The next victims of religious persecution became the evangelical or Pentecostal communities, which had started to spread in the country after the border war. Eritrean Christians make up about one half of the population. The majority belongs to the Orthodox Church; about 10% of the population is Catholic or Lutheran. At the beginning of the millennium, the Pente churches, as they are called in Eritrea, became attractive for many of the war-traumatised young Eritreans who regarded them as an alternative to the militaristic ideology of the state. The government reacted harshly to the spread of the evangelical movement: in 2002, all religious faiths except Sunni Islam, Orthodoxy, Catholic and Lutheran Christianity were prohibited, and thousands of adherents of the Pente churches were imprisoned. Their number reached 2,000 to 3,000 in 2010, among them 40 pastors[21]. Even a reform movement within the Orthodox Church was suppressed, and in 2007 the Orthodox Patriarch Abune Antonios was discharged due to his alleged interference in state affairs. He has remained under house arrest ever since, despite his old age and poor health. In today's Eritrea, the general climate of fear turns even practising one's religion into a possible act of treason, and most critically-thinking religious leaders have been silenced. The only exception are the four Catholic bishops of the country, who published a Pastoral Letter in 2014 that presents a critical analysis of the sad state of society and clearly points out the reasons for the ongoing mass exodus[22].

---

[20] "Eritrea: 20 Years and Counting – The Exceptional Persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses", *Human Rights Concern Eritrea*, 2014, http://hrc-eritrea.org/eritrea-20-years-and-counting-the-exceptional-persecution-of-jehovahs-witnesses/

[21] US Commission on International Religious Freedom, *USCIRF Annual Report 2010 - Countries of Particular Concern: Eritrea*, 2 April 2010, www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4be284091a.html

[22] "Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Bishops of Eritrea: 'Where is your Brother'", Asmara, 2014, http://www.eparchyofkeren.com/topics/WHERE%20IS%20YOUR%20BROTHER.pdf

The political repression-economic hardship circle behind a mass exodus

The militarisation of society and the introduction of a command economy

It has become a well-known fact that most Eritreans flee their homeland to escape the open-ended military and national service. However, it is more complicated to comprehend the full picture of the underlying organisational principle of the Eritrean nation-state: a combination of societal militarisation, a command economy, and recently we have been seeing an attempt to de-monetise the economy. The growing diaspora is a stabilizing factor, because it sustains the system financially and serves as a valve for political frustration: young people are busy planning their escape instead of working out strategies for how to topple the government, especially after the failed coup of 2013[23].

But let us follow the events that led to the current state of affairs in chronological order: shortly after President Isaias emerged victorious from the political crisis that had challenged his supremacy in 2001, the EEBC pronounced its decision that the border town of Badme belonged to Eritrea in spring 2002. The Ethiopian government accepted the decision "in principle", but refused to implement it despite its final and binding character, demanding a dialogue instead. The Eritrean government refused to engage in any process of negotiation and took the situation as another proof of Eritrea being a victim of international conspiracies and being let down by the guarantors of the Algiers Peace Agreement, namely the US, the EU, and the AU[24].

---

[23] N. Hirt, "Eritrea", in A. Mehler, H. Melber, S. Elischer (eds.), *Africa Yearbook*, vol. 10, Leiden, 2014, pp. 309-319, cit. p. 309.

[24] See for example F. Amahazion, "Justice Deferred: The 15th Anniversary of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission Verdict", *Foreign Policy Journal,* 14 April 2017, https://www.foreignpolicyjournal.com/2017/04/14/justice-deferred-the-15th-anniversary-of-the-eritrea-ethiopia-boundary-commission-verdict/

It decided to take measures that were to change the character of Eritrean society and the lives of the common people from the bottom up. At the end of the same year, the regime introduced the so-called Warsay-Yikealo Development Campaign (WYDC), which is a synonym for the indefinite duration of national service[25]. This means that all men of productive age and women between 18 and 27 must work for the state, for the ruling party or for military enterprises for pocket money and for undefined periods of time. The campaign implies the systematic use of forced labour by a government that deprives its population of the personal freedom to choose one's work and place of residence freely and is severely curtailing freedom of movement[26].

All students, both male and female, who want to finish secondary education are supposed to spend their last school year at the Sawa military training camp, which simultaneously serves as a boarding school. Only a fraction of the students are allowed to continue their education at one of Eritrea's colleges, the only institutions that provide higher education since the University of Asmara was closed in 2006. Those who do not make it are kept in the military, some of them having to serve as soldiers, others as workers on plantations that are run by generals, and many are employed at infrastructure projects. Some of the recruits have the chance to get some vocational training, others do not. Those who finish college are not exempted from national service: they work as teachers or in the administration, but they are still national service recruits who cannot freely choose their place of work. They receive only pocket money, which is insufficient to support their families. So it is not surprising that most of those who are trapped in the service try to flee the country, many of

---

[25] The term "Yikealo" refers to a wise and knowledgeable person – denoting the fighter generation who struggled for independence. "Warsay" means heir or follower – referring to the young generation.

[26] G. Kibreab, "Forced Labour in Eritrea", *Journal of Modern African Studies,* no. 47, 2009, pp. 41-72; N. Hirt and M. Abdulkader Saleh, "'Dreams Don't Come True in Eritrea': Anomie and family disintegration due to the structural militarization of Eritrean society", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 51, no. 1, 2013, pp.139-168.

them with the support of human smugglers. There are substantial numbers of unaccompanied minors among Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia and Sudan, because many try to leave the country before they reach the conscription age of eighteen years.

The militarisation of society came along with a change of the economic structure. At the time of independence, the government had taken over the socialist system of its predecessor, the Ethiopian *Derg* regime, which had nationalised all larger enterprises. On the other hand, about 80% of the population continued to practice subsistence agriculture or pastoralism and were largely excluded from the modern economy. During the 1990s, the government's Macro Policy aimed at a cautious path towards privatisation and liberalisation of the economy, although the PFDJ leadership under the firm hand of Hagos Ghebrehiwot "Kisha", its Head of Financial Affairs, kept its firm grip on the economy, on the financial sector and on import-export trade. Many diaspora Eritreans who had hoped to invest in the emerging market economy and to start their own business were disappointed and left the country for good. Things turned worse after the border war and the introduction of the WYDC. In 2005, the government ousted almost all foreign donors and NGOs from the country, and in 2006 all private firms were banned from working in the construction sector. Many state-run companies such as beverage factories (Coca Cola, Asmara brewery) or food processing plants became non-operational and the private sector was reduced to small and micro business such as groceries, footwear and clothing shops, stationery stores, bars and restaurants or market stalls. What remained of the economy was distributed among the power-holders within the political elite: the PFDJ continues to control the construction sector and runs various construction companies, dominates the import-export business via the Nacfa Corporation, and transnational financial transactions via the Himbol money exchange. The military has emerged as a powerful economic actor, running cash-crop farms, and is also active in infrastructure construction. However, Eritrea's military does not function as one strong corporation, but is instead divided into fiefdoms run by generals, many

of whom are deeply corrupt and involved in illegal businesses like the smuggling of goods and people and black-market trade[27]. The Ministry of Defence has been powerless since the post-war period and currently the post of minister is vacant. This system led to a sharp deterioration of the economy and a shortage of all sorts of basic consumer goods such as sugar, cooking oil and fuels, and a breakdown in electricity supply.

These developments caused an ongoing mass exodus from the country because people were no longer able to earn a living from their work and to support their families, be it in the traditional agricultural and pastoral subsistence sectors or in the wage economy. Even government employees such as teachers, administrative workers and health personnel are unable to support themselves. Consequently, the diaspora has become the main provider of cash for Eritreans inside the country. Not only does the government raise about one third of its budget from a 2% diaspora tax[28], but most Eritreans abroad support their families at home by sending remittances.

Eritrea's currency, the nakfa has been tied to the US dollar at a rate of 1:15 for many years, which means it is severely overvalued. This led to the development of a flourishing black market that provided rates of up to 1:50 nakfa. The government's approach to containing this market has been inconsistent, because many officials are involved in black market operations, and the diaspora mainly remits through the black market. However, since illegal activities such as contraband trade and human trafficking have become rampant in recent years, the government decided to introduce a "currency reform" in late 2015, namely the exchange of the existing nakfa bank notes against new ones. All nakfa notes in circulation were declared invalid and had to be turned in. In exchange, only 20,000 nakfa per person could

---

[27] For details of Eritrea's opaque economy, see United Nations, Security Council, *Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea submitted in accordance with resolution 1916 (2010)*, S/2011/433.

[28] D. Styan, "Discussion Paper: The evolution, uses and abuses of remittances in the Eritrean economy", in *Eritrea's Economic Survival Conference Proceedings*, Chatham House, London, 2007, pp. 13-22.

be obtained in cash, the rest had to be deposited at a bank. Since then, it has been impossible to withdraw more than 5,000 nakfa per month and household, and businessmen are required to perform their transactions by using cheques (Eritrea's banking system has remained rudimentary and lacks ATM's, online banking and other modern ways of transferring money). This can be seen as an attempt by the ruling group to increase its control over cash flows, but the system has been hollowed out by the continuing influx of remittance money through the black market. Eritreans in exile pay to financial intermediaries in hard currencies, and their relatives at home collect the exchange in nakfa from black market traders, most of whom are close to the government. This kind of command economy stifles any kind of market-based economic development, and Eritrea's once-promising industrial enterprises remain under-utilised or are simply left to decay.

One of the major reasons for the mass exodus[29] of the population shown in Figure 1 is the government's attempt to control the economy via the military and the PFDJ, and to use the population inside the country as forced labourers in the name of national security. Initially, it tried to prevent people from fleeing by shoot-to-kill orders at the borders and by punishing relatives for the flight of their children through hefty fines or imprisonment. However, it seems that the ruling clique has now come to terms with the phenomenon and relies on its sophisticated transnational structures to control the diaspora and to indoctrinate and mobilise Eritreans abroad for its purposes. In addition, Eritreans who live outside the country are forced to maintain their relatives at home, who suffer under an inhumane and unsustainable political and economic system[30].

---

[29] The sharp decrease in the number of Eritrean refugees in 2003 (Figure 1) is due to UNHCR's decision to end refugee status for many Eritreans still outside of the country. The cessation of refugee status took effect on 31 December 2002. See "UNHCR declares cessation of refugee status for Eritreans", 8 May 2002, http://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2002/5/3cd9111e4/unhcr-declares-cessation-refugee-status-eritreans.html

[30] N. Hirt and M. Abdulkader Saleh, "By Way of Patriotism, Coercion or Instrumentalization: How the Eritrean regime makes use of the diaspora to

Fig. 1 - Total number of Eritrean refugees as recorded by Unhcr, 1991-2015
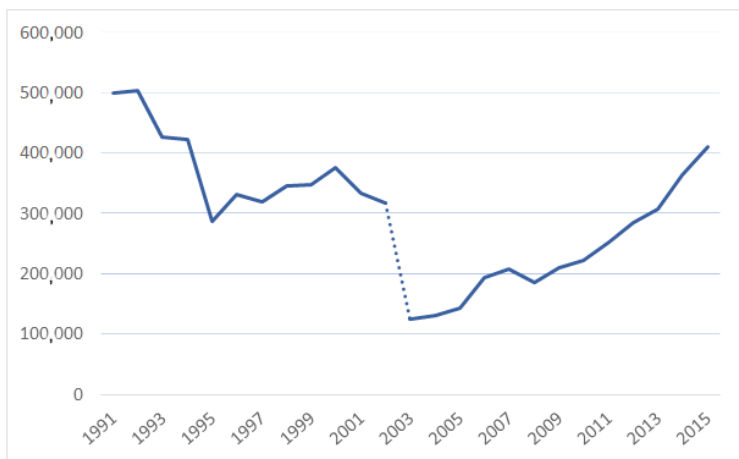
Source: UNHCR

Flight routes

Flight from Eritrea as a mass phenomenon started during the struggle for independence, when an estimated one million Eritreans left their homeland due to the atrocities of war. The majority settled in neighbouring Sudan, but hundreds of thousands made their way to Europe, the US, Canada, Australia and to the Persian Gulf countries. Following independence, only a fraction of these former war refugees returned, and even the staunchest supporters of the EPLF preferred to remain in the safety of their host countries, where many had become naturalised citizens after decades of exile. The existence of this established diaspora has also been shaping the current mass exodus, because many Eritrean refugees try to reach the countries where diaspora Eritreans enjoy good living conditions.

stabilise its rule", *Globalizations*, 1 March 2017.

However, it is a new development that Eritreans are now fleeing to the alleged enemy Ethiopia, which is currently hosting about 160,000 Eritrean refugees, mostly in camps in the northern regions of Tigray and Afar. Sudan is hosting similar numbers of Eritrean refugees, although it is impossible to know exact figures, since many of them regard Sudan not as their final destiny, but as a stepping-stone and transit country on their way to Europe. Similarly, most Eritreans in Ethiopia do not see prospects for their future in the host country, especially those who do not profit from the government's out-of-camp policy that allows some Eritreans to study at universities or to make a living in the cities, mostly in the capital Addis Ababa, if they are able to provide for themselves[31].

The classical flight route (Figure 2) leads from Ethiopia to Sudan and from Sudan to Libya, where boats are used to transport people to the shores of Italy under significant risks, which have become well known to the European public, yet without triggering an adequate response. Human traffickers are involved in almost all cases in arranging the journeys through Sudan and Libya and arranging boat trips to cross the Mediterranean.

A short but tragic *intermezzo*: destination Israel and human trafficking to the Sinai Peninsula

In 2009, Silvio Berlusconi as Italy's Prime Minister and Libya's dictator Muammar Gaddafi signed a billion-euros deal: Italy pledged to pay large sums of money as a compensation for its colonisation of Libya, and in return Gaddafi promised to curb the influx of refugees to Italy. Initially, the agreement worked as intended, and thousands of stranded refugees were detained in Libya, which was no party of the Geneva refugee convention. Consequently, Eritreans and a number of Sudanese refugees escaping from the Darfur crisis discovered Israel as a new destination, which could be reached without a hazardous sea journey.

---

[31] R. Mallett et al., *Journeys on Hold: How policy influences the migration decisions of Eritreans in Ethiopia*, ODI Shaping policy for development, Working Paper 506, 2017.

Israel reacted by building a wall along its border with Egypt on the Sinai Peninsula for the purpose of stopping the flow of refugees once and for all, which was finalised in 2012. The Israeli government regards the refugees as infiltrators, and has not been granting them refugee status, forcing a considerable number to stay in prison-like facilities like the Holot camp. In the meantime, a vicious network of human trafficking developed, in which members of the nomadic Rashaida tribe that inhabits areas inside Eritrea and the Sudan sold Eritrean refugees to Bedouins on the Sinai Peninsula, who tortured them while they were forced to phone relatives in Europe or elsewhere to extract ransoms up to US\$ 50,000 before they were released[32]. These crimes have not been persecuted by the Egyptian authorities.

European policies to curb migration: the Khartoum Process and its consequences

Following the fall of Gaddafi in 2011 and the end of functioning statehood, the refugees' flight routes returned to Libya, where different actors have since been involved in the smuggling business. Many of them are also forcing refugees to pay ransoms before they are allowed to try their luck and board a boat heading for Italian shores[33]. In 2014 Europe was not only overwhelmed by the influx of hundreds of thousands of Syrians and other refugees via the Balkan route, but numbers of Eritrean refugees reaching Italy also touched a peak of 30,000 people (although only 480 sought asylum there, while the vast majority decided to move to other European countries, see Figure 3)[34].

---

[32] M. Van Reisen, E. Merson, C. Rijken, *Human Trafficking in the Sinai. Refugees between life and death*, Tilburg University and Europe External Policy Advisors, Bruxelles, 2012.

[33] *Human Trafficking and Smuggling in the Horn of Africa – Central Mediterranean Route*, SAHAN/IGAD Report 2016, https://igad.int/attachments/1284_ISSP%20 Sahan%20HST%20Report%20%2018ii2016%20FINAL%20FINAL.pdf

[34] Eurostat data from GSDRC, *Rapid fragility and migration assessment for Eritrea (Rapid*

Fig. 2 - Migration routes of Eritrean asylum seekers

FLEEING ERITREA
migration routes of asylum seekers

459,000
ERITREAN REFUGEES
(TOTAL MIGRANT STOCK: 500,000*)

300,000+
REMAIN IN AFRICA

20,718
Eritreans crossing
the Mediterranean
in 2016

ISRAEL
Holot camp
wall (2012)

ASIA+
<30,000
Eritrean migrants

AMERICA+
<40,000
Eritrean migrants

SUDAN
103,176
Eritrean refugees

ETHIOPIA
165,548
Eritrean refugees

LEGEND

— MAIN MIGRATION ROUTES USED BY ERITREANS
— TRANSIT/DESTINATION COUNTRIES IN AFRICA
— TOP RECIPIENTS OUTSIDE AFRICA (10,000+)
— OTHER MAIN DESTINATIONS OUTSIDE AFRICA
— REFUGEE CAMPS/LOCATIONS
— BORDER DISPUTES
— AREAS OF INSTABILITY

100,000 UNHCR DATA REFERRING TO STOCKS OR FLOWS
OF ERITREANS IN 2016 (*UNDESA 2015)

— PROTECTION APPLICATIONS IN 2008-2016 BY
ERITREANS (EUROSTAT)

50,000
25,000
15,000

Data: CFR, UNHCR, UNDESA, IOM, Eurostat, ISPI Report Out of Africa (2017), www.ispionline.it

ISPI
ISTITUTO PER GLI STUDI DI POLITICA INTERNAZIONALE
TIZIANA CORDA/ISPI

Consequently, the EU engaged in the Khartoum Process, which is meant to engage with African heads of state, including ruthless dictators like Isaias Afewerki and Sudan's Omar al Bashir, both of whom are accused of having committed crimes against humanity. One aim is to enhance border controls, which sounds odd in the case of the Eritrean-Sudanese border, where shoot-to-kill orders are in place on the Eritrean side, even if they are no longer consistently applied. In Sudan, the infamous militias that were formerly known as Janjaweed, which had carried out numerous atrocities in Darfur, are now patrolling the border with Egypt, and in the past two years at least hundreds if not thousands of Eritreans have been arrested on their journey towards Libya, while some of them were reportedly deported back to their homeland and arrested[35].

On the other hand, little has been achieved by European politicians to tackle the roots of the mass exodus from Eritrea, which is mainly the open-ended national service that has developed into a system of institutionalised forced labour for the military and the PFDJ ruling party. The EU approved a new aid package worth € 200 million in late 2015, mainly to boost the renewable energy sector. Little to no pressure has been exerted on the government to improve its appalling human rights record, to reform the command economy, to develop a program for the demobilisation of conscripts, many of whom have been serving for two decades without compensation, and to return to a path of democratisation. Europe as a guarantor of the Algiers Peace Agreement has not even bothered to engage in pressuring for a solution of the lingering border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia, which serves as an excuse by the government to hold the entire population captive unless they manage to flee the country[36].

Literature Review), The Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (GSDRC), Birmingham, University of Birmingham, 2016.

[35] K. Siegfried, "Sudan and Eritrea crack down on Migrants amidst Reports on EU Incentives", IRIN, 25 May 2016, www.irinnews.org/news/2016/05/25/ sudan-and-eritrea-crackdown-migrants-amid-reports-eu-incentives

[36] N. Hirt, "No Lessons Learned: Europe's unconditional engagement with the

Fig. 3 - Main European countries by international protection applications by Eritreans, 2008-2016
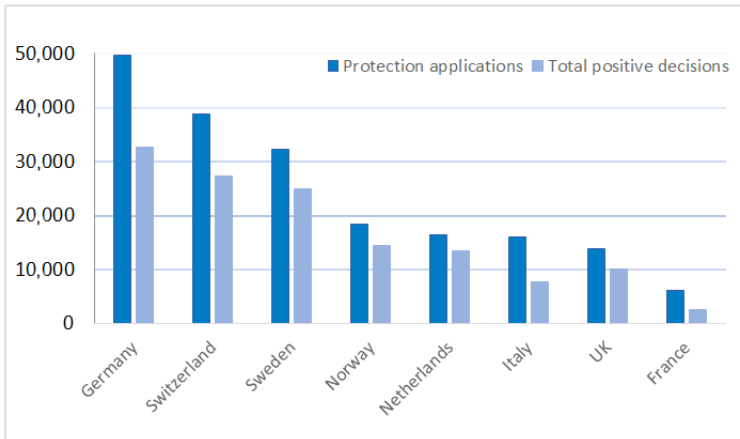
Source: Eurostat

Conclusion

Retrospectively, Eritrea has witnessed few periods of peace and stability and has been involved in bilateral and civil wars throughout history. However, what we have been witnessing since 2001 is a deliberate state of "no war no peace" that is used to justify the imposition of a temporally unlimited national and military service on the population, which has disrupted most normal economic activities and prevents people from becoming breadwinners in their own homeland. The government, which profits from the growing diaspora through a 2% rehabilitation tax imposed on all Eritreans abroad and from the remittances that they send to their kin at home, has shown no readiness to solve the political conflict with Ethiopia, which serves as justification

Eritrean regime", *Horn of Africa Bulletin*, vol. 28, no. 5, 2016, pp. 22-27.

for its failed policies. Ethiopia in turn has shown no readiness to leave the town of Badme, which has been awarded to Eritrea, but serves as a national symbol rather than having any material value. By doing so, it avoids possible internal protests and can simply watch how the Eritrean regime engages in self-destructive policies that have brought development to a halt. If Europe is serious in its attempts to curb the refugee influx by combatting the causes of flight, it should engage in a political process to solve the border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia and should abide by its own human right standards instead of giving financial support to autocratic governments to hunt down refugees on the run. In addition, the EU must pressure for reforms of the national service as preconditions for financial support for a government that is still attributing the flight of its people to vicious international conspiracies[37] instead of critically reflecting on the results of its policies.

---

[37] See for example Press Statement by the Government of Eritrea, 13 October 2013, available at http://shabait.com/news/local-news/14893-press-statement-by-the-government-of-eritrea

6. Nigeria: Leaving Africa's Giant

Aderanti Adepoju

The power of demographic and economic trends in Africa's largest economy

Nigeria is Africa's demographic giant and the seventh most populous country in the world. With an estimated population of over 186 million in 2016, one African in five is a Nigerian, and over half of the west African population lives in the country. Growing annually at 3%, the country's population is projected to become the third largest in the world by 2050[1]. About 44% of the population is under age 15, while 35% are between ages 15 and 30, in the prime of productivity and reproduction. This youthful population constitutes both opportunities and challenges for development. At this rate, government will be faced with the daunting challenge to triple facilities in education, health, housing and employment simply to cope with the demands of the rapidly growing, young population.

Rapid population growth places a tremendous strain on development as the disparity between labour force growth and job creation creates migratory pressures by generating high rates of under- and un-employment. Instability resulting from political, religious and ethnic conflicts is another strong migration-determinant factor. Widespread poverty and human deprivation, and the deterioration of the wellbeing of the vast majority of the Nigerian population have created sustained pressure for labour emigration.

---

[1] UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), *World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision*, New York, 2017.

Nigeria has a large number of out-of-school children and young adults with limited literacy and numeracy skills who have little prospect of joining the formal workforce. The transition rate from secondary to higher-education institutions is low, throwing millions of youths prematurely into the labour market. Indeed a recent World Bank Group report on Nigeria's labour market cautioned that the country needs 40 to 50 million additional jobs to absorb its rapidly growing population[2]. The polarised job market ensures that only a small proportion of the population benefits from economic growth while the vast majority is trapped in low-productivity and traditional subsistence activities. Decades of neglect of the rural agricultural sector have resulted in impoverished rural areas and fuelled urban growth, resulting in almost half of the population (48%) living in congested urban areas, especially the large cities – Lagos, in particular.

In 2014, Nigeria also became Africa's economic giant, overtaking South Africa as a result of the reclassification and expansion of its service sector. The oil and gas sector accounts for about 35% of gross domestic product and revenue from petroleum exports represents over 90% of total export revenue[3]. The private sector, normally the engine of economic growth, has been handicapped by epileptic power generation, forcing manufacturing industries to operate at a quarter of capacity and thus rendering their production uncompetitive. Many have relocated to neighbouring countries, especially Ghana.

The globally declining price of oil since late 2014 means that the government's revenue has shrunk below sustainable levels, leading to inflation, devaluation of the national currency, wage freezes and widespread unemployment.

Poverty is widespread in Nigeria and the situation has worsened over the years. As income inequality persists and increases, the notion of enhancing of people's quality of life by improving

---

[2] World Bank Group, *More, and More Productive Jobs for Nigeria: A Profile of Work and Workers*, Washington DC, 2016.

[3] OPEC, *Annual Statistical Bulletin*, Austria, 2017.

basic human capabilities – knowledge, longevity and income – and expanding access to education, health and job opportunities has become largely a mirage. The Human Development Index that measures improvement in basic human capabilities for Nigeria has been consistently among the worst globally since 1980, in spite of the substantial growth of the economy in recent years[4].

Although Nigeria recorded remarkable economic growth in the last decade and especially in the 2000-2014 period, this growth was neither inclusive nor translated into significant social and human development; instead it was characterised by persistent poverty and unemployment, a situation aptly called "jobless growth"[5].

The Structural Adjustment Programme implemented by the government from 1986 on led to drastic reductions in spending, especially in the education and health sectors, leading, not surprisingly, to inadequate facilities, low wages, frequent strikes and closures. Thousands of students were unable to complete their courses on time, and employers complained that many university graduates were simply unemployable. Parents who could not afford the increased cost of schooling simply withdrew their children.

Nigeria's politics has been marred by instability and corruption, which stalls development and erodes investors' confidence. Transitions between regimes are erratic and precarious and lead to uncertainties about the country's future, forcing many people, especially the young, to seek alternative and better livelihoods abroad. It is precisely the feeling of a dismal future that fuels the desperation of people – both skilled and unskilled, men and women alike – in seeking greener pastures abroad[6].

---

[4] Republic of Nigeria-European Community, *Country strategy paper and national indicative programme for the period 2009-2013*, Delegation of the European Commission to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Abuja, 2009.

[5] A. Ajakaiye, A.T. Jerome, D. Nabena, O.A. Alaba, *Understanding the relationship between growth and employment in Nigeria*, UNU-WIDER, May 2016.

[6] A. Adepoju and A. Van der Wiel, *Seeking Greener Pastures Abroad. A Migration*

How many...? The problematic estimates of Nigerian migrants

Estimates of migration flows based on information provided by border control posts are generally inadequate. Border regulations can be circumvented and Nigeria's extensive and porous land borders make monitoring of cross-border migration very difficult.

Information on the stock and flow of Nigerians abroad is not available in statistical organisations within the country. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not have such information, and also claims that Nigerian missions abroad do not maintain a register of nationals in their respective jurisdictions. Embassy sources claim that they usually track only nationals who have been detained or imprisoned, and those awaiting deportation who need urgent assistance from the missions[7].

Estimates of the numbers of Nigerians living in developed countries are more available in the destination countries than they are in Nigeria. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) annually publishes statistics on international migration in member states, for those resident in regular situations, and especially highly skilled professionals. The United Nations Population Division also publishes global data on international migration, as does the Migration Policy Institute, based in Washington DC. The Sussex Centre for Migration Research also maintains a database on international migration. But figures from these sources often underestimate the total stock of immigrants from Nigeria, as is the case with other nationals resident abroad, principally because an unknown number reside in destination countries in irregular situations.

Another indirect source of estimates on the flow of Nigerian emigrants to the EU countries and other destinations in Africa,

---

Profile of Nigeria. Ibadan, Safari Books Ltd., 2010.

[7] A. Adepoju, "Facilitating a coherent migration management approach in Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya by promoting regular migration and preventing further irregular migration", *Report on Nigeria.* AENEAS 2006, International Organisation for Migration. Genève, 2010.

Asia and Latin America can be obtained through the numbers of visa applications. But this information is often classified and is not readily accessible to researchers. With respect to intra-regional migration, the major source of current information is derived from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission's publications.

Nigerians abroad

Nigeria is a country with a variety of migration configurations, including cross-border movements, migration of contract workers, labour migrants (especially from rural to urban situations) and migration of skilled professionals. To this list must be added irregular migration and human trafficking. In the latter case, as with the situation across the country, a variety of factors, including deepening poverty, deteriorating living conditions, persistent unemployment, conflicts and human deprivation have fostered an environment in which human trafficking flourishes.

Estimates of the number of Nigerians abroad range from 0.9 million (according to OECD statistics) to twenty million (as stated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nigeria). This vast discrepancy is partly related to the poor definition of who is classified as a migrant – in either regular or irregular situations – and the definition of the diaspora. The diaspora includes second- and third-generation Nigerians who were born overseas and are foreign passport holders, but still maintain close ties with, and send remittances to, their families at home[8].

As indicated in Table 1 and Figure 1, Nigerians are widely dispersed in many countries of the world. While they are to be found living and working in large numbers in Europe and North America, by far the largest concentration is in sub-Saharan Africa where an estimated 3 million or more live.

---

[8] A. Adepoju, "The Case of Nigeria", in A. Mohamoud (ed.), *Building Institutional Cooperation between the Diaspora and Homeland Governments in Africa: the cases of Ghana, Nigeria, Germany, USA and the UK. Netherlands: African Diaspora*, African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC), 2010.

The emigration of Nigerians is mainly intra-regional within the ECOWAS community, largely facilitated by the protocol on the free movement of persons. Nigeria also hosts large numbers of nationals from ECOWAS countries as well as from other parts of the continent. Beyond the west African sub-region, important destinations include South Africa and some other African countries. There is a large stock of Nigerians residing in Sudan, Cameroon and Gabon. Officials estimate that there are millions of Nigerians in the diaspora in Sudan and Cameroon.

Tab. 1 - Estimate of migrants from Nigeria
living in different world regions

Region	Nigerian population	Percentage
East Asia and Pacific	37,878	0.7
Europe and Central Asia	954,154	18.5
Latin America and Caribbean	10,950	0.21
Middle East and North Africa	145,703	2.8
North America	763,401	14.8
South Asia	61,776	1.19
Sub-Saharan Africa	3,197,540	61.8
Total	5,171,405	

Source: "Global Migrant Origin Database, Development Research Centre on Migration", *Globalization and Poverty*, March 2007, Version IV

Figure 1, compiled from a household survey that asked respondents to indicate the country of residence of their relatives, friends and others living abroad, shows the spread of destinations for Nigerian emigrants. By far, the US comes out top, followed at a distance by the UK, South Africa and the Gambia.

From the middle of the XX century, emigration from Nigeria was directed towards the UK and the US. Beginning from the

Fig. 1 - Top countries in which Nigerians abroad reside

Country	Percentage
United States of America	67%
United Kingdom	43%
South Africa	31%
Gambia	31%
Canada	16%
Malaysia	12%
Germany	12%
Switzerland	7%
United Arab Emirates	6%
China	6%
Spain	5%
Ghana	5%
Uganda	4%
India	4%
Italy	4%
Sweden	3%
Brazil	2%
Australia	2%
Others	14%

In which country is your relative/friend living?

Others:	Ivory Coast (1%)	Holland (1%)	Chad (1%)	Algeria (1%)	Denmark (1%)	Korea (1%)	Ukraine (1%)
	Egypt (1%)	Iceland (1%)	Thailand (1%)	Portugal (1%)	Zimbabwe (1%)	Cyprus (1%)	Luxembourg (1%)

Source: NOIPolls – April 2015

Source: NOIPolls, May 2015

1980s, however, the collapse of the price of oil led to a sharp decline in government revenue and a rapid deterioration in living conditions as mentioned above – forcing many professionals to market their skills internationally. During 1987 and 1989, over 100,000 professionals and technicians emigrated from Nigeria to the UK, US, the Gulf States and Canada[9].

From trickles to a stream

Before the 1986 Structural Adjustment Programme began to bite hard and deep, local/domestic salaries were internationally

---

[9] A. Adepoju, "Trends in international migration in and from Africa", in D.S. Massey and J.E. Taylor (eds.), *International Migration Prospects and Policies in a Global Market*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004.

competitive. The naira, the local currency, was strong, almost at par with the US dollar. Inflation was low and so was the cost of living. All that changed, and in the 1990s, paramedics, nurses and doctors were easily recruited to work in the oil-rich countries of the Middle East (Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates). An emigration that had started in trickles became a stream.

Nigerian emigration soon diversified to Europe, America, Canada and other previously unconventional destinations such as Australia and Asia. Then followed the next stream of less skilled workers who emigrated as construction labourers and workers in the "3D" – Dirty, Dangerous and Demeaning – jobs that nationals scorn. Most of these found their way via irregular situations and without proper documentation. Their relatively huge earnings and the remittances they were sending home, as well as their investment in real estate in their home place, provided a spur for others to emulate them. As the domestic situation deteriorated in the 1990s, professors, engineers, medical personnel and other specialists chose to emigrate to South Africa, Botswana, Kuwait, the US, Germany, the UK and other EU countries[10].

More than half of the 247,500 Nigerians resident in OECD countries in 2002 were highly skilled professionals. By mid-2003, one third of the 25,000 doctors registered in Nigeria had emigrated – that year alone, 2,855 doctors registered with the American Medical Association. Also 20% of registered pharmacists had emigrated. Indeed, between 2000 and 2006, almost 22,000 health workers had left the country. The draft National Policy on Health in 2006 estimates that about 26% of Nigerian doctors are either working abroad or have changed professions and were in more financially rewarding jobs[11].

The exodus of professionals also had a gender dimension. Globally, women represent about half (48%) of international migrants. Female international migration from Nigeria has been increasing, with women representing 46.5% of the total

[10] A. Adepoju and A. Van der Wiel, *Seeking Greener Pastures Abroad. A Migration Profile of Nigeria*, Ibadan, Safari Books Ltd., 2010.

[11] U.C. Isiugo-Abanihe and IOM Nigeria, *Migration in Nigeria. A Country Profile 2014*, International Organisation for Migration, Genève, 2016.

international migrant stock from Nigeria in 2005, compared to 36.2% in 1960. The demographic pattern of ageing populations in developed countries has also created a demand for workers in the elderly-care industry. Nigerian nurses and caregivers, along with Ghanaians and Filipinos have flooded this sector[12].

Since the 1990s, a significant proportion of women, single and married, have emigrated independently from rural areas in search of employment in the cities, and, increasingly, also to developed countries. In June 1990, for example, about 5,000 female nurses were interviewed in Lagos for job placements in the US and Canada. Earlier, 936 nurses or midwives and 246 doctors were recruited in Port Harcourt by agencies that had established recruitment centres in several parts of the country[13]. Once set in motion, the emigration of female nurses took firm root. In 2004, the National Association of Nigerian Nurses and Midwives received requests for the verification of 5,619 nurses seeking employment abroad. This number had risen to 57,722 in 2005[14]. In addition, an unknown number were recruited by private agencies to work in care homes for the elderly.

The major countries of destination for Nigerian international migrants are the US and the EU – specifically the UK, Germany, Spain, Netherlands and France. Based on visas issued in 2007, the corresponding figures are the UK (121,747), France (20,703), Germany (16,973), the Netherlands (13,421), Spain (4,833), Italy (4,725), and Ireland (4,200). The US also issued 27,000 visas in 2007. The figures derived from OECD sources indicate that in 2001 the foreign-born population of Nigerians in the UK

[12] A. Adepoju, *Changing configurations of migration in Africa*, Migration Information Service, Washington DC, 1 September 2004.

[13] O. Adegbola, *Demographic effects of economic crisis in Nigeria: the brain drain component*, Spontaneous paper for UAPS Conference on the Role of Migration in African Development: Issues and Policies for the 51677696; February. Dakar, Union for Africa Population Studies, 1990.

[14] National Association of Nurses and Midwives in Nigeria, *Past trends, future imperfect? A review of the UK nursing labour market in 2004/2005*, RNC Labour Market Review, Royal College of Nursing, 2005.

was 86,958, and in Ireland 8,900 in 2002[15]. By 2005, an estimated 9,000 entered the UK, rising to 10,000 in 2010, and a slight decline to 8,000 in 2015. Correspondingly, 2,200 Nigerians entered Canada in 2005, 3,900 in 2010 and 4,100 in 2015. In Italy, the figures are 2,700, 4,800 and 8,900, respectively[16]. But these figures underestimate the total stock of Nigerians as an unknown number are also resident in irregular situations in these countries.

Figure 2 shows the increasing emigration of Nigerians to the top destination countries – the US, UK, Italy, Canada and Ireland over the period from 2005 to 2012, according to the statistics from both OECD and the World Bank, a period that also corresponds to the "jobless growth" (economic growth that failed to generate employment) and political challenges in the country. The "highly skilled professionals" programme in the UK and the diversity green card lottery programme and family unification schemes in the US have offered opportunities for Nigerian skilled workers to migrate in large numbers to these countries.

Key drivers of Nigerian migration

Issues usually considered as important factors in causing migration are demographic pressures, political instability, bad governance, low economic performance, and high poverty levels. Rapid population growth, combined with unstable politics, escalating ethnic conflicts, persistent economic decline and poverty, have shaped the trends and patterns of international migration in Nigeria as elsewhere in Africa. Unemployment, which is profoundly concentrated among young people – male and female – in urban areas, is the major driver of migration. Initially localised among secondary school leavers, the pool of unemployed persons has stretched gradually to encompass even graduates of higher-education institutions.

---

[15] A. Adepoju and A. Van der Wiel (2010).

[16] OECD, *International Migration Outlook 2017*, 41st Edition, Paris, OECD Publishing, 2017.

Fig. 2 - Migrants from Nigeria to selected countries
2005 and 2012 (000s)

Source: *The Economist*, based on World Bank and OECD data

The lack of decent wages for the majority of workers also propels emigration since few earn a living wage – the others becoming the "working poor" whose wages and salaries are often not paid regularly and even then are insufficient for a minimum decent living standard.

Underemployment, especially in the informal sector, and the skills deficit amongst young job seekers also reflects the above-mentioned deterioration in the education sector that lacks modern training facilities, equipment and, most importantly, motivation amongst teachers. Strikes are frequent, closures of school widespread and the output of students has been deteriorating in

quality. Youth's perception of the future is bleak and tainted with uncertainty.

Deteriorating infrastructure, especially power deficiency, has led many industries to operate at very low and unsustainable capacity. Many firms, especially the textile and manufacturing companies, have had extra expenses to cover the costs of generating their power, as well as of water and security needs. They thus find their products uncompetitive and many have had to close their ventures. Insecurity in many parts of the country – Boko Haram in the north-east, militants in the Niger Delta region – have scared off investors and resulted in fewer employment-generating enterprises[17]. Corruption is widespread and has had a severely negative impact on employment generation so that doing business becomes unnecessarily expensive in both time and cost – and through the skimming off of investible funds into private treasuries.

The internet has facilitated communication but it has also increased the flow of false and exaggerated information regarding living conditions abroad, and many young people are under undue peer pressure as a result.

The post-2014 downturn in the economy resulted in a lower level of funding to all three levels of the education sector. An outcome of this, affecting teachers as well as students, was an increasing trend of college-level lecturers – and even some at the secondary level – migrating to other countries in Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the United States, to seek better-paying opportunities[18]. As the education system collapsed, Nigerian students started seeking admission to universities and higher institutions of learning in other parts of Africa and in Western countries, in part to enhance their employability in the labour

---

[17] A. Adepoju, *Ensuring Coherence between the 3Ds 7rket in 2004/2005ia; gratand Democracy tents in Africa: the c://shabait.com/n*, HRDC Research Paper no. 6, Concept Publications Limited for Human Resources Development Centre, Lagos, 2014.
[18] M. Kritz, "African International student mobility: Country differences in numbers and destinations", in J. Oucho (ed.), *Migration in the service of African development: Essays in honour of Professor Aderanti Adepoju*, Ibadan, Safari Books Ltd., 2011.

market. After such migration, these students tend to stay on to obtain employment, thus draining Nigeria of their skills and education.

The precise number of migrating students is unknown but is believed to be between 50,000 and 100,000, making Nigeria by far the largest supplier of African students to universities in developed countries, especially the UK and US. Currently about 25,000 Nigerian students are studying in the UK. In 2016, Nigeria was reckoned to be the leading source of African students and fourteenth-largest source of international graduate students in the UK. According to a recent US Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange, 10,674 Nigerians were studying in the United States during the 2015-16 academic year. Nigeria is followed by Ghana (3,049 students), Kenya (3,019), and South Africa (1,813)[19].

The year 1994 provided yet another opportunity for destination diversification for Nigerian emigrants. Political independence in South Africa opened huge opportunities in the education sector, commerce and industry which Nigerian professors, artisans and those with related skills quickly occupied. Many found this a convenient alternative to migrating to Europe, which was becoming more restrictive in its immigration policies[20]. The situation soon turned sour, however, with immigrants being blamed for the ills in society, especially general crime and drug trafficking. Other areas included unemployment, urban congestion and housing shortages, leading to heightened xenophobia and sporadic attacks on immigrants, especially Nigerians and Somalis who were visible in trade and commerce. In 2014 and, to a lesser extent in 2017, violent xenophobic attacks targeted foreigners, mostly Nigerians, in several cities in South Africa[21].

[19] *U.S. Open Doors*, Report on International Educational Exchange, Washington DC, 2016.

[20] A. Adepoju, "Continuity and Changing Configurations of Migration to and from the Republic of South Africa", *International Migration*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2003.

[21] Nigerians face fresh attacks in South Africa", *Punch Newspaper*, 19 February 2017, http://punchng.com/nigerians-face-fresh-attacks-in-south-africa/

Libya was also a focal point – both as a destination and transit country – for migrants heading towards Europe. But with the collapse of the Gaddafi regime, many of these migrants were stranded, apprehended and deported. In 2017, on top of the several hundreds earlier repatriated, about 155 people were being repatriated monthly by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in chartered planes[22]. Several were reportedly killed, maimed and robbed of their property. Others attempted the dangerous trip in rickety boats that often capsised, drowning many. The most fatal was in April 2015 in which 800 people, mostly Nigerians, perished off the coast of Italy[23].

Irregular migration and the West's "closed door" policies

The limited capacity of the country's labour market and poor governance and human rights abuses have fuelled the emigration of young educated persons in a desperate bid to reach EU countries. Many youths have entered the Maghreb in the hope of crossing to Europe via southern European outposts, especially the Spanish Canary Islands and the Italian island of Lampedusa[24].

As youth unemployment has worsened and socio-political and economic conditions and poverty have deteriorated, in desperation, many youths risk everything to fight their way hazardously to rich countries with the assistance of traffickers and bogus agencies, in search of the illusory green pastures. Increasingly, undocumented migrants find their way clandestinely to developed

---

[22] A. Hanafi, "5,500 trafficked Nigerians to be deported from Mali, Libya – NAPTIP", *Punch Newspaper*, 12 May 2017, http://punchng. com/5500-trafficked-nigerians-to-be-deported-from-mali-libia-naptip

[23] A. Adepoju, *Migration within and from Africa: Shared policy challenges for Africa and Europe*, Research Overview 2016:5, Delmi and The Migration Studies Delegation, Swedish Government Inquiries, Stockholm, 2016.

[24] A. Adepoju, *The challenges of labour migration flows between West Africa and the Maghreb*, ILO Migration Research papers, International Labour Organisation, Genève, 2006.

Fig. 3 - Drivers and routes of Nigerian migration

LEAVING AFRICA'S GIANT
key drivers of Nigerian migration

Data: Afri-dev.info, FAO, IOM DTM, ISPI Report Out of Africa (2017), www.ispionline.it
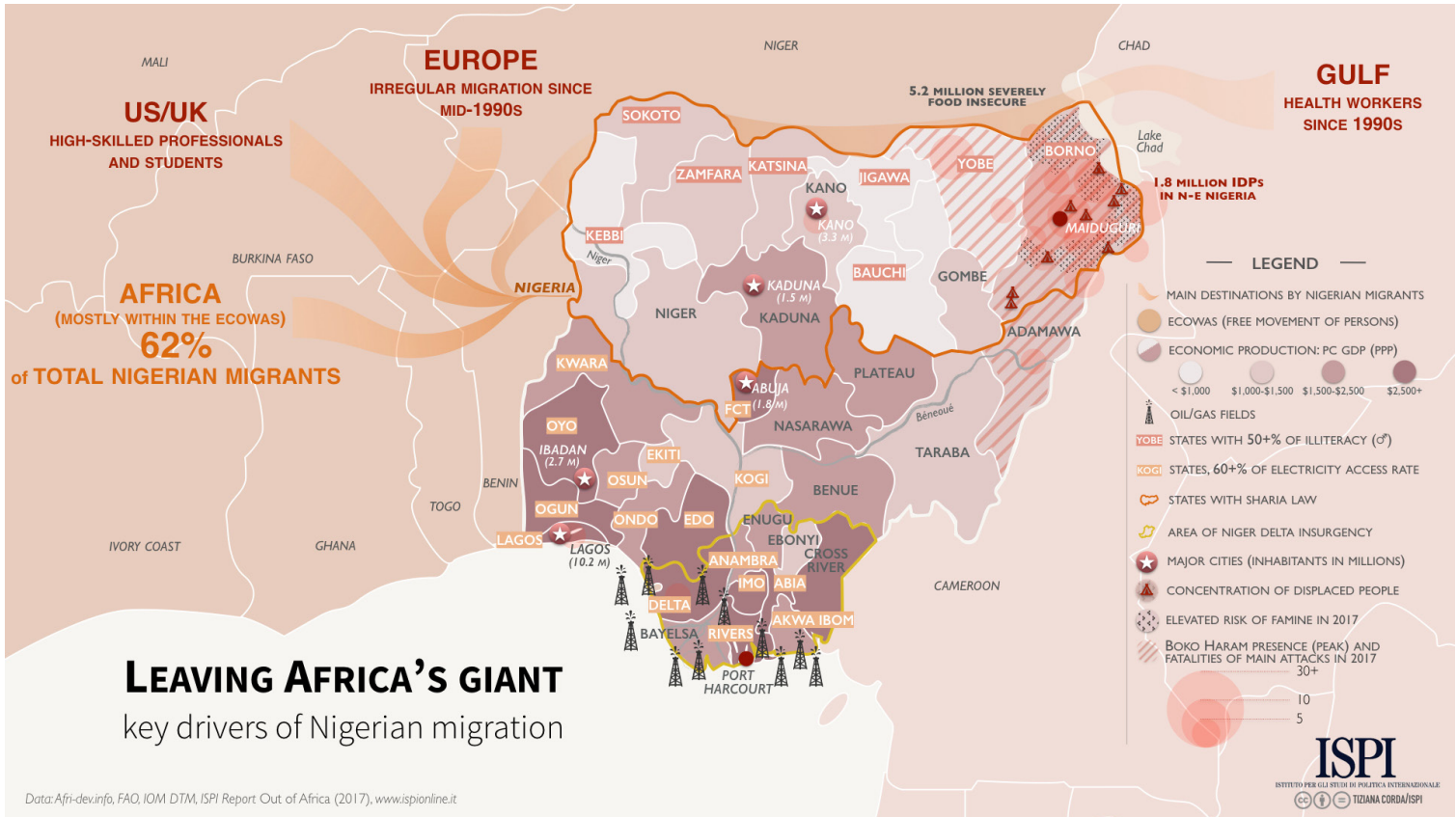
Source: ISPI

countries through intermediate countries and are to be found in southern Europe, the US, the Middle East, and central and southern Africa.

The "closed door" policy of the EU has inadvertently – though not surprisingly – boosted irregular migration by youths bent on securing entry into these more prosperous countries. Faced with strict immigration control measures and tightened barriers to legal entry in what has become a fortressed Europe, a growing number of young people are involved in daredevil ventures, stowed away beneath ships' decks or in the luggage compartments of commercial aircraft – manifestations of their desperation to enter Europe.

In theory, young people face four options, none of which seems to be in their favour: to acquire a high level of education – which many cannot access; to go back to the rural agricultural sector – which is not attractive; to learn a trade and be self-employed, or to migrate. The latter option has been the choice for many youths, even as opportunities for regular migration to developed countries have been severely curtailed by strict entry and immigration rules, by economic deterioration and by adverse public opinion and xenophobia against immigrants. Many young people who opt for irregular migration are confronted with severe challenges, including life in slave-like situations, apprehension and deportation in inhumane circumstances, humiliation on return. And of course the highest price is death, either at sea or along the Mediterranean route. For many of these unsuccessful irregular migrants, the financial cost is also enormous. Resources that could have been otherwise invested in SMEs to generate self-employment for sustainable livelihood at home were used to organise botched migration.

The migration crisis of 2015 was the peak of migration calamities as thousands of would-be migrants and refugees swarmed the Mediterranean routes in an attempt to forcibly enter Europe. Of the estimated 1.2 million asylum seekers and mixed migrants, some 14,000 claimed to be Nigerians – this excluding the 4,000 people reported dead during the year due to dehydration as they

attempted to cross the Sahara desert and fatalities on rickety boats in the Mediterranean. The UNHCR estimates that in 2016 over 37,000 Nigerians arrived in Italy via the Mediterranean at which time they constituted about 31% of migrant arrivals, followed at a distance by Eritreans at 11%[25]. The situation has been made more difficult due to the thousands of displaced persons arriving in south-eastern Europe from war-ravaged Syria, Afghanistan and other Middle Eastern countries.

Trafficking in persons

Recent years have witnessed a gradual increase in the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings within, to and from Nigeria. The human trafficking and smuggling map is complicated, involving diverse places of origin within the country. Nigeria's vast and porous borders make the job of effectively policing immigration and emigration a Herculean task.

Trafficking in human beings involves intermediaries or third parties, especially in criminal gangs. Indeed, in recent years the trafficking of women and children as commercial sex workers or as exploited domestic servants, has assumed alarming proportions, infringing on the human rights of the victims[26].

It is estimated that 40,000 to 45,000 Nigerian women have become victims of trafficking since the beginning of the century. Of these, approximately two-thirds have gone to Europe and the remaining third to the Gulf States[27]. Traffickers offer young women a passage to Europe, usually luring them with promises of good jobs, which all too often ends in prostitution. The pact is sealed through religious rituals and is perceived by the migrant as binding. Once these migrants have repaid their debt, it is not

---

[25] C. Hawthorne, "In Search of Black Italia", *Transition*, no. 123, pp. 152-74, 2017.

[26] A. Adepoju, "Review of Research and Data on Human Trafficking in sub-Saharan Africa", *International Migration*, vol. 43, no. 1-2, 2005, pp. 75-78.

[27] A. Adepoju, *Migration within and from Africa: Shared policy challenges for Africa and Europe*, … cit.

uncommon for those who have become prostitutes to enter the trafficking networks themselves, and to begin recruiting new women.

The media is awash with reports of the trafficking of Nigerian girls to southern Europe, especially to Italy, under the guise of a promise of a better life, work, marriage and education. In 2003, the National Agency for the Protection of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) was established, with a renewed mandate in 2005 to arrest, detain and prosecute offenders trafficking in persons in Nigeria. But so far the scourge has continued, with the destinations becoming more diversified. In 2007 the Nigerian government initiated moves to articulate a National Migration Policy. Over several months, the policy – aimed at addressing several pertinent migration problem areas – was reviewed and revised, culminating in its adoption in early 2015[28]. Like irregular migration, human trafficking and the smuggling of persons has become highly organised and extremely complex.

Many parents and their children still do not recognise trafficking as a problem, and child trafficking is usually perceived as less severe than trafficking in women. Parents or guardians of trafficked children are under the illusion that they are being offered work and lodging, and may be unaware of the severe exploitation to which their offspring are often subjected. The general public is also not sufficiently aware of trafficking in human beings in all its aspects, nor the extent to which organised criminal groups are involved in trafficking in human beings. A blind eye is often turned to the fate of trafficking victims.

Remittances and the Nigerian diaspora

One of the major benefits of migration is the return flow of migrants' remittances to their home countries. From $10 billion in 1990, remittances by Nigerians abroad jumped to $21 billion in 2016, surging to such an extent that it has surpassed Official Development Assistance and is now second only to oil revenue.

---

[28] U.C. Isiugo-Abanihe and IOM Nigeria (2016).

Many migrants maintain relationships with their homeland through financial remittances, as well as through social and political remittances. Financial remittances that flow through official routes are not the whole story, as an unknown volume finds its way into the country through informal channels and may be as much as, or larger than, the official total.

Remittances are used to pay for siblings' education and family health, as well as to refurbish accommodations, and to invest in real estate. Government is currently exploring opportunities for diaspora bond and investment in large-scale low-cost housing. Nigerians in the diaspora have also undertaken regular medical missions to the home country to provide free healthcare services, and exchange skills and networks with their colleagues there.

Nigeria is Africa's largest remittance recipient and is the sixth-ranking remittance recipient country in the world[29]. Partly for this reason, the Nigeria in Diaspora Organisation (NIDO) has been recognised by government as an instrument for transferring skills, knowledge and enterprise. Such is the key role of the diaspora that the government has dedicated July 27 as a "celebrate Nigeria diaspora day" and is in the process of articulating a diaspora policy to harness the potential of the Nigerian diaspora for national development[30].

Conclusion

Nigeria is a country richly endowed with abundant human and natural resources. It is also a country of a variety of migration configurations, including cross-border movements, migration of contract workers, labour migrants and migration of skilled

---

[29] World Bank Group, *Migration and Remittances: Recent Developments and Outlook. Special Topic: Global Compact on Migration*, Migration and Development Brief 27, Washington DC, April 2017.

[30] A. Adepoju, "Formulating Migration Policy at the Regional, Sub-regional and National Levels in Africa", in A.A. Yusuf (ed.), *African Yearbook of International Law*, vol. 16, 2010.

professionals. The problems associated with irregular migration and human trafficking seem to overshadow consideration of the emigration of highly skilled professionals and the fact that Nigeria is concurrently a country of immigration, emigration and transit.

In spite of the general lack of current information on both stock and flow of migrants within and outside the country, a few generalisations have been observed. High unemployment among the large youth population has led to emigration, both intraregional and intercontinental. In recent years there has also been a diversification of destinations for migrants eager to explore opportunities in countries with which they have hitherto had very limited historical, cultural, political or even economic links. Among such new destinations countries are Germany, Italy, Spain, Ireland, South Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Gulf States.

The introduction of tougher rules regarding Nigerian entry into and residence in Europe for regular migration, has, since the mid-1990s, inadvertently pushed irregular migration and the use of complex routes through the Maghreb to enter Europe clandestinely.

Nigerian migrants, in particular those going to the UK and the US, have been characterised by the high level of their professional training. However, the majority of irregular migrants are less skilled and are employed in the lower ranks of the economy.

The traditionally male-dominated pattern of migration is increasingly becoming feminised as more and more women migrate independently. A significant proportion of these women are educated migrants who move independently to fulfil their own economic needs.

Migration within Nigeria remains very much a family matter, with non-migrant family members intimately involved in and affected by migration decision-making.

The high and growing level of remittances is a good indication of the social and cultural connections that the people in the diaspora have retained.

And finally, because of the closed-door policy of the North, there is a growing criminalisation of migration. Smuggling people has become a large and lucrative business. Thousands of women and children fall prey to traffickers and are transported for the purposes of exploitation within and outside Nigeria.

To enhance the management of migration within the country, in 2014 and 2015 respectively, government endorsed the National Labour Migration Policy and the National Policy on Migration as legal frameworks for addressing issues relating, among others, to the diaspora and remittances, the migration of skilled professionals, irregular migration and trafficking in persons, female migration, student mobility and so on.

This has also strengthened NAPTIP's operational capacity to apprehend, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of trafficking, and to rehabilitate their victims into society. However, many officials – police, judges, lawyers – need to be sensitised to, even trained in handling cases of, human trafficking and smuggling in persons. This could help redeem the country's image, damaged as it has been, by the illegal and extra-legal activities of some of its emigrants. Probably more than other Africans, Nigerians are stigmatised and collectively treated as potential irregular migrants, criminals and traffickers. The journey ahead does not look easy.

Conclusions.
Policy Implications for the EU

Giovanni Carbone and Tiziana Corda

Europeans tend to be concerned about migrants only when they are on their journey towards the borders of the European Union – or have already entered the EU – without much attention given to a key area many of them departed from, namely sub-Saharan Africa. This ISPI Report looked beyond North Africa to investigate some of the conditions that favour sub-Saharan migrants' decisions to leave their home countries.

The report shows that, in spite of the prevailing media and public opinion representations of a continent virtually ready to pour its population into Europe, the reality of migration from a more Africa-centred perspective is different. It is only a minor fraction of the people of sub-Saharan Africa that decide to leave their country of origin. Their absolute number did increase from 16.3 million in 2000 to 23.9 million in 2015. Yet migrants remained a relatively stable share of the sub-Saharan population, around 2.5% between 2000-2015. This is down from 3.2% back in 1990 and is lower than the 3.3% share of the world's population that migrants represent at a global level.

What also remains below the radar of Western public opinions is that, in spite of an overall acceleration of Africans' extra-continental migration and of a growing diversification of their destinations, a large majority of sub-Saharan migrants do not actually leave Africa. Most of them typically travel only short distances – from their place of origin to neighbouring states – and as many as two-thirds settle in other countries in the wider region, whether

close by or further away. Major destinations include places such as Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, South Africa, Mozambique, Kenya and Ethiopia. For sub-Saharan emigrants, Europe only comes after Africa as a continent of destination.

In a huge region larger than the combined areas of the EU, the US and China, a variety of situations exist. Thousands of Eritreans, for example, continue to flee the harsh political repression and economic difficulties they experience in their country. Yet while conventional wisdom has it that vulnerability to poverty, political violence and adverse climatic events push Africans to leave home in droves and look for better living conditions in Europe's rich and attractive economies, the exact contrary may often be the case. Migrants are hardly ever the poorest people moving towards the wealthiest places. Africa's extreme poverty, violent conflicts or deteriorated environmental conditions, which remain comparatively extensive, may actually make mobility harder – particularly for international migration, which generally requires substantial financial and human resources – and thus cause many people to be *de facto* trapped where they are. As observed in chapter two of this report, in Africa the "populations of the least developed countries are less able to move, and tend to migrate over shorter distances when they do... actually, the countries with a higher level of extra-continental migration correspond to the relatively more 'developed' countries, that are located on the coast, that have a higher level of urbanization, a higher GDP per capita, and that are more advanced in the demographic transition". Notable exceptions include Ethiopia (with significant migration towards the Gulf states), Côte d'Ivoire (with many immigrants, but few emigrants), and South Africa (a peculiar intersection of intra-continental and extra-continental migration).

Sub-Saharan Africa remains the poorest among world regions. Contrary to widespread perceptions in the West, however, the area is far from static. Recent transformations have occurred through political reforms, vast demographic expansion, impressive economic growth (if currently slowed down),

technological progress, and social advances. What do such processes imply for African migration? Africa's rapidly swelling youth cohorts have high expectations of socio-economic improvement, fuelled all the more by the use of new technologies and social media. A decade-and-a-half of sustained but jobless growth was not enough to meet these expectations. Moreover, the slowdown that hit some key sub-Saharan economies since 2014 made growth trajectories in the region more diversified. The increasing diversity of growth performances and the relatively few jobs that are being created make it difficult to predict whether the net effect of Africa's development processes will augment migration (particularly in the medium and short term), or contain it (especially in the long term). As African countries' performances diverge, for example, intra-continental migration patterns will be inevitably affected. Meanwhile, jobless growth may not help many Africans access significant new resources, possibly dampening the impact of "development" on migration. Similarly, the multiparty reforms of the 1990s almost entirely redesigned Africa's political landscape. But repressive political regimes and violent crises still crucially increase risks and hardship in a number of areas, thus contributing to shaping migration processes. Political factors also intertwine with (economic and) environmental ones, increasing the vulnerability of the sub-Saharan region to climate-change events and influencing human mobility, as the 2017 food crisis in places such as South Sudan and north-eastern Nigeria vividly illustrate.

From this, the following policy recommendations could be drawn for the EU.

- **The EU should promote a grown-up view of contemporary sub-Saharan Africa**. A view that avoids a uniform and static reading of the different realities across Africa. An Afro-pessimistic perception of the continent, which has long been dominant, has been challenged only in the last ten years by an opposite narrative, that of an Africa rising, which yet has been similarly disputed

by the recent economic downturn. Sub-Saharan Africa is both a land of opportunities and one of instability, and such diversity and evolution across the region needs to be acknowledged.

- **The EU should consider the diverse consequences of development policies towards Africa**. Western policy proposals are filled with notions that reversing "development failures" in the continent would reduce Africans' reasons to leave. An increased availability of economic resources – whether via a country's growth and socio-economic progress, foreign aid, international trade and investments, education improvements and the like – may expand local opportunities to the benefit of "those who stay". But, as pointed out in this volume, things may turn out to work the other way round. To the extent that new economic resources lift countries and people out of poverty, migration may become an affordable option for a greater number of individuals.

- **Similarly, rather than focusing solely on the pace of Africa's economic growth, the EU should pay attention also to its distribution**. In Africa, the impressive growth performances of the first decade and a half of the new millennium did not come with an equally sizable expansion of employment opportunities. To a significant extent, the continent's growth was largely "jobless" and not inclusive enough for the poor and disadvantaged.

- **The EU should revise some of its restrictive migration policies that have failed to solve the issues they tried to tackle**. **Policies aimed at better patrolling the external borders of the EU have actually generated unintended consequences**, such as changing the migrants' choices of destination countries, the routes they follow and the ways they set out to enter Europe (i.e. legally or irregularly), and even their ability and willingness to return home temporarily or for good.

In the second half of 2017, for example, as the central Mediterranean route to the EU via Libya or Tunisia was made increasingly less practicable for migrants, it appeared that the Western Mediterranean route – via Morocco to Spain – was somewhat on the rise, albeit probably as the result of multiple factors. The massive migration of Eritreans towards Europe is also a case in point. Little has been achieved from addressing only the enhancement of border controls without tackling the deeper roots of the phenomenon. In this respect, inducing Asmara and Addis Ababa to fully solve their border dispute and to better respect human rights – notably by reforming Eritrea's open-ended national service, a system of institutionalised forced labour for the Eritrean military and ruling party – would affect the local political economy and relieve would-be asylum seekers from key pressures to leave.

- **Finally, the EU should recognise that climate-change policies also have a potential for affecting African migration**. They should incorporate the notion that the climate change-migration nexus hinges on the existing social, political and economic conditions in the migrants' home areas. To avoid the destruction of livelihoods and to contain distress migration, policy should not only reinforce disaster-risk response measures or prepare destination areas, but also, more broadly, invest in rural communities, better secure land rights, ensure the protection of human rights, and address the political and economic roots of armed conflicts. Migration in the context of climate change should not be seen simplistically as problem-generating, but also as a vital strategy of adaptation that needs to be supported through safe and licit migration channels.

Annex*

TAB. 1 - SUB-SAHARAN COUNTRIES, SELECTED INDICATORS

	Political		Economic		Socio-economic		Socio-environmental		
	Repression	**Conflict**	**Growth**	**Level of development**	**Poverty**	**Unemployment**	**Climate change**	**Demographic expansion**	**Urbanisation**
	Democracy index	Conflict intensity	GDP growth rate	Human development index	Multi-dimensional poverty index	Total unemployment rate	Natural resource depletion	Population growth rate	Urban growth rate
	2016	**2016**	**avg. 2012-2016**	**2016**	**2005-2015**	**2015**	**2016**	**avg. 2010-2015**	**avg. 2010-2015**
Angola	4.3	4	3.9%	0.533	-	7.6	51.32	3.3	4.97
Benin	7.6	2	4.9%	0.485	0.343	1.1	43.66	2.7	3.67
Botswana	8.3	2	4.1%	0.698	-	18.6	70.72	2.0	1.29
Burkina Faso	4.7	6	5.1%	0.402	0.508	2.9	43.71	2.9	5.87
Burundi	4.6	7	1.9%	0.404	0.442	1.5	43.37	3.3	5.66
Cameroon	3.8	7	5.3%	0.518	0.260	4.6	57.13	2.5	3.60
Cape Verde	-	-	1.5%	0.648	-	10.8	51.98	1.2	1.99
CAR	3.2	8	-6.1%	0.352	0.424	7.6	46.46	2.0	2.59
Chad	3.5	6	3.2%	0.396	0.545	5.6	37.83	3.3	3.42
Comoros	-	-	2.3%	0.497	0.165	19.6	49.20	2.4	2.67
Congo, DRC	3.4	8	6.8%	0.435	0.369	3.8	42.05	3.2	3.96
Congo, ROC	3.5	7	2.7%	0.592	0.192	7.2	59.56	2.6	3.22
Côte d'Ivoire	5.5	5	8.9%	0.474	0.307	9.5	59.89	2.4	3.69
Djibouti	-	-	5.8%	0.473	0.127	53.9	45.29	1.3	1.60
Eq. Guinea	-	-	-3.0%	0.592	-	9.4	69.59	3.0	3.12
Eritrea	2.1	6	4.7%	0.420	-	8.4	36.73	2.2	5.11
Ethiopia	3.2	8	9.5%	0.448	0.537	5.5	45.83	2.5	4.89

Gabon	-	-	4.3%	0.697	0.073	20.5	67.37	2.2	2.70
Gambia, The	-	-	3.6%	0.452	0.289	30.1	52.09	3.2	4.33
Ghana	7.9	4	5.7%	0.579	0.147	6.3	58.89	2.4	3.40
Guinea	5.8	7	2.2%	0.414	0.425	1.8	55.40	2.7	3.82
Guinea-Bissau	-	-	2.5%	0.424	0.495	7.6	48.20	2.4	4.13
Kenya	6.3	7	5.4%	0.555	0.166	9.2	62.49	2.7	4.34
Lesotho	5.7	7	3.5%	0.497	0.227	27.5	47.17	1.2	3.05
Liberia	6.6	4	3.2%	0.427	0.356	4.2	43.42	2.6	3.36
Madagascar	5.4	5	3.2%	0.512	0.420	2.2	37.10	2.8	4.69
Malawi	6.5	4	3.6%	0.476	0.273	6.7	49.69	3.1	3.77
Mali	5.9	6	3.9%	0.442	0.456	8.5	41.48	3.0	5.08
Mauritania	4.3	5	4.0%	0.513	0.291	31.1	46.31	2.5	3.54
Mauritius	8.6	2	3.4%	0.781	-	7.9	70.85	0.4	-0.08
Mozambique	5.6	5	6.3%	0.418	0.390	22.3	41.82	2.8	3.27
Namibia	7.8	4	4.5%	0.640	0.205	25.5	70.84	2.3	4.16
Niger	6.7	5	6.4%	0.353	0.584	2.8	37.48	4.0	5.14
Nigeria	5.4	9	3.4%	0.527	0.279	5.8	58.27	2.7	4.66
Rwanda	3.8	6	7.2%	0.498	0.253	2.4	50.34	2.4	6.43
São Tomé and P.	-	-	4.2%	0.574	0.217	14.0	48.28	2.2	3.58
Senegal	7.2	4	5.1%	0.494	0.278	9.3	63.73	3.1	3.59
Seychelles	-	-	5.0%	0.782	-	-	64.92	0.7	1.14
Sierra Leone	6.4	4	3.9%	0.420	0.411	3.4	45.98	2.2	2.75

Somalia	1.5	9	-	-	-	-	27.66	2.4	4.06
South Africa	7.6	5	1.6%	0.666	0.041	25.1	70.52	1.1	1.59
South Sudan	3.3	9	-11.4%	0.418	0.551	-	-	4.1	5.05
Sudan	2.5	9	2.3%	0.490	0.290	13.6	42.25	2.2	2.54
Swaziland	-	-	2.5%	0.541	0.113	25.6	60.63	1.5	1.32
Tanzania	6.2	5	6.6%	0.531	0.335	3.2	58.34	3.2	5.36
Togo	4.8	5	5.5%	0.487	0.242	7.7	46.10	2.7	3.83
Uganda	6.6	6	4.3%	0.493	0.359	3.6	57.56	3.3	5.43
Zambia	6.3	4	4.6%	0.579	0.264	10.7	66.06	3.1	4.32
Zimbabwe	4.2	5	4.0%	0.516	0.128	9.3	59.25	2.2	2.30

Definitions and main data sources

Repression: the Democracy Status of the Transformation Index BTI 2016 quantifies on a 1-10 scale how close a country is to democracy. It is a measure of stateness, political participation, rule of law, stability of democratic institutions, political and social integration.

Conflict: the conflict intensity indicator (from 1 to a maximum of 10) is from the Transformation Index BTI 2016.

Economic growth: average GDP growth rate (2012-2016), determined using Compound Annual Growth Rate data from the *World Economic Outlook 2017* of the International Monetary Fund.

Underdevelopment: the Human Development Index (HDI) is a "summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and have a decent standard of living". The index ranges from 0, the lowest score, to 1, the highest. Data from the *Human Development Report 2016*.

Poverty: Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI: low 0 - 1 high) from the *Human Development Report 2016*.

Unemployment: the total unemployment rate, as the percentage of the labour force population older than 15 who is "not in paid employment or self-employed but is available for work and has taken steps to seek paid employment or self-employment". Data from the *Human Development Report 2016*, obtained from the ILOSTAT database.

Climate change: natural resource depletion (% Gross National Income) is the "monetary expression of energy, mineral and forest depletion, expressed as a percentage of gross national income (GNI)". Data from *Environmental sustainability of Human Development Report 2016*, obtained from the World Bank's World Development Indicators database.

Demographic growth: average annual rate of population growth (%) for the period 2010 to 2015. Data from Population trends in *Human Development Report 2016*.

Urbanization: the urban growth rate measures the average annual rate of growth (%) of the urban population for the period 2010 to 2015. Data from *UN World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision*.

* Data collected by Tiziana Corda.

Tab. 2 - African Migration Flows

	Incoming	Origin	Outgoing	Destination	Net migration rate	Stock of immigrants
		top 3 countries		top 3 countries	per 1,000 people	% of population
	2015	2015	2015	2015	avg. 2010-2015	2015
Angola	106,845	Congo DRC Portugal Cape Verde	555,403	Congo DRC Portugal Congo ROC	0.9	0.4
Benin	245,399	Niger Togo Nigeria	615,852	Nigeria Togo Côte d'Ivoire	-0.2	2.3
Botswana	160,644	South Africa Zimbabwe Zambia	58,346	South Africa United Kingdom Zimbabwe	1.9	7.1
Burkina Faso	704,676	Côte d'Ivoire Mali Ghana	1,453,378	Côte d'Ivoire Ghana Mali	-1.5	3.9
Burundi	286,810	Congo DRC Rwanda Tanzania	284,187	Tanzania Rwanda Uganda	0.8	2.6
Cameroon	381,984	CAR Nigeria Chad	328,604	France United States Chad	-0.5	1.6
Cape Verde	14,924	Guinea Bissau Sao Tomé and P Senegal	165,732	Portugal United States France	-4.4	2.9

CAR	81,598	Sudan Congo DRC Chad	440,745	Cameroon Chad Congo DRC	0.4	1.7
Chad	516,968	Sudan CAR Cameroon	208,137	Sudan Cameroon Nigeria	1.5	3.7
Comoros	12,555	Madagascar Reunion France	116,516	Mayotte France Madagascar	-2.7	1.6
Congo, DRC	545,694	Angola Rwanda CAR	1,403,757	Uganda Rwanda Congo ROC	-0.3	0.7
Congo, ROC	392,966	Congo DRC Angola Mali	220,501	France Mali Tanzania	-2.8	8.5
Côte d'Ivoire	2,175,399	Burkina Faso Mali Guinea	850,105	Burkina Faso France Liberia	0.5	9.6
Djibouti	112,351	Somalia Ethiopia Yemen	15,927	France Ethiopia Canada	-3.7	12.7
Equat. Guinea	10,825	France Sao Tomé and P Spain	81,029	Gabon Spain Cameroon	5.1	1.3
Eritrea	15,941	Somalia Congo DRC Uganda	499,916	Sudan Ethiopia United States	-6.5	0.3

Ethiopia	1,072,949	Somalia South Sudan Eritrea	753,492	United States Saudi Arabia Israel	-0.1	1.1
Gabon	268,384	Equat. Guinea Mali Benin	63,209	Mali France Congo ROC	0.6	15.6
Gambia, The	192,540	Senegal Guinea Guinea Bissau	89,639	United States Spain United Kingdom	-1.5	9.7
Ghana	399,471	Togo Nigeria Burkina Faso	801,710	Nigeria United States United Kingdom	-0.4	1.5
Guinea	228,413	Mali Liberia Senegal	426,941	Côte d'Ivoire Sierra Leone Senegal	-0.2	1.8
Guinea-Bissau	22,333	Senegal Guinea Gambia	101,828	Senegal Portugal Gambia	-1.2	1.2
Kenya	1,084,357	Somalia Uganda South Sudan	455,889	United Kingdom United States Uganda	-0.2	2.4
Lesotho	6,572	South Africa India Pakistan	363,763	South Africa Mozambique Botswana	-1.9	0.3
Liberia	113,779	Côte d'Ivoire Guinea Sierra Leone	276,630	Côte d'Ivoire United States Guinea	-0.9	2.5

Madagascar	32,075	Comoros France China	169,984	France Reunion Comoros	0.0	0.1
Malawi	215,158	Mozambique Zambia Zimbabwe	302,515	Zimbabwe Mozambique South Africa	-0.4	1.3
Mali	363,145	Gabon Congo ROC Burkina Faso	1,005,607	Côte d'Ivoire Nigeria Niger	-3.7	2.1
Mauritania	138,162	Mali Senegal Guinea	119,334	Senegal France Mali	-1.0	3.4
Mauritius	28,585	India Bangladesh China	168,255	United Kingdom France Australia	0.0	2.2
Mozambique	222,928	Malawi Zimbabwe South Africa	713,867	South Africa Zimbabwe Portugal	-0.2	0.8
Namibia	93,888	Angola Zimbabwe Germany	145,852	South Africa United Kingdom Botswana	-0.1	3.8
Niger	189,255	Mali Nigeria Burkina Faso	356,793	Nigeria Benin Togo	-0.3	1.0
Nigeria	1,199,115	Benin Ghana Mali	1,093,644	United States United Kingdom Cameroon	-0.4	0.7

Rwanda	441,525	Congo DRC Uganda Burundi	315,866	Congo DRC Uganda Burundi	-1.4	3.8
São Tomé and P.	2,394	Cape Verde Angola Gabon	35,833	Portugal Angola Gabon	-6.2	1.3
Senegal	263,242	Mauritania Guinea Mali	586,870	Gambia France Italy	-1.4	1.7
Seychelles	12,791	India Madagascar Philippines	11,772	United Kingdom Australia Canada	-3.3	13.3
Sierra Leone	91,213	Guinea Liberia Gambia	145,003	United States United Kingdom Guinea	-0.7	1.4
Somalia	25,291	Ethiopia Eritrea Afghanistan	1,998,764	Kenya Ethiopia Yemen	-7.9	0.2
South Africa	3,142,511	Zimbabwe Mozambique Lesotho	841,120	United Kingdom Australia United States	2.3	5.8
South Sudan	824,122	Sudan Uganda Congo DRC	634,613	Ethiopia Sudan Kenya	15.4	6.7
Sudan	503,477	Eritrea South Sudan Chad	1,890,861	South Sudan Saudi Arabia Chad	-4.2	1.3

Swaziland	31,579	South Africa Mozambique United States	95,671	South Africa United Kingdom Botswana	-1.0	2.5
Tanzania	261,222	Burundi Congo DRC Kenya	294,531	United States Rwanda Kenya	-0.8	0.5
Togo	276,844	Benin Niger Ghana	446,982	Nigeria Ghana Côte d'Ivoire	-0.3	3.8
Uganda	749,471	Congo DRC Sudan Rwanda	736,017	Kenya South Sudan Rwanda	-0.8	1.9
Zambia	127,915	Zimbabwe Angola Congo DRC	238,121	South Africa Malawi United Kingdom	-0.5	0.8
Zimbabwe	398,866	Malawi Mozambique Zambia	856,345	South Africa United Kingdom United States	-3.0	2.6

Definitions and main data sources

Incoming migration flows: quota and top 3 countries of origin. Data from *UNDESA, Origins and Destinations of the World's Migrants, from 1990-2015*.

Outgoing migration flows: quota and top 3 countries of destination. Data from *UNDESA, Origins and Destinations of the World's Migrants, from 1990-2015*.

Net migration rate: the total number of immigrants minus the total number of emigrants, expressed per 1,000 inhabitants. The 5-year average refers to the years 2010 to 2015. Data from the *Human Development Report 2016*, taken from the World Bank's World Development Indicators database.

Stock of immigrants: the ratio of the stock of a country's immigrants (foreign people without citizenship), expressed as a percentage of the country's population. Data from the *Human Development Report 2016*, taken from *UNDESA, Origins and Destinations of the World's Migrants, from 1990-2015*.

Tab. 3 - African Forced Displacements

	Incoming refugees	Origin	Outgoing refugees	Destination	IDPs	Total population of concern
		top 3 countries		top 3 countries		
	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016
Angola	15,555	Congo DRC Côte d'Ivoire Sierra Leone	8,404	France Brazil Switzerland	-	45,693
Benin	809	CAR Côte d'Ivoire Sri Lanka	489	Italy United States Canada	-	1,035
Botswana	2,093	Namibia Zimbabwe Somalia	272	Canada United Kingdom France	-	2,832
Burkina Faso	32,552	Mali CAR Chad	2,357	United States Italy France	-	32,676
Burundi	57,469	Congo DRC Rwanda Somalia	408,085	Tanzania Rwanda Uganda	141,221	208,049
Cameroon	348,672	CAR Nigeria Chad	10,374	United States Canada Italy	198,889	595,935

Cape Verde	-	-	3	-	-	115
CAR	12,115	South Sudan Congo DRC Sudan	490,892	Cameroon Congo DRC Chad	411,785	458,607
Chad	391,251	Sudan CAR Nigeria	14,193	Sudan Cameroon France	124,342	554,248
Comoros	-	-	576	-	-	-
Congo, DRC	451,956	Rwanda CAR South Sudan	537,265	Uganda Rwanda Burundi	2,232,900	3,319,006
Congo, ROC	46,457	CAR Congo DRC Rwanda	13,302	South Africa France United States	15,303	71,598
Côte d'Ivoire	1,399	Liberia CAR Congo DRC	46,813	Liberia Ghana Italy	-	715,353
Djibouti	17,683	Somalia Yemen Ethiopia	1,440	Canada Belgium United States	-	25,862
Equat. Guinea	-	-	142	Spain France Germany	-	-

Country						
Eritrea	2,342	Somalia Sudan Ethiopia	431,704	Ethiopia Sudan Germany	-	2,367
Ethiopia	791,631	South Sudan Somalia Eritrea	83,966	Kenya South Africa United States	-	794,133
Gabon	931	Chad Congo ROC Congo DRC	171	France United States Italy	-	2,841
Gambia, The	7,940	Senegal Côte d'Ivoire Sierra Leone	11,600	Italy United States United Kingdom	-	7,940
Ghana	11,865	Côte d'Ivoire Togo Liberia	15,541	Togo Italy France	-	13,236
Guinea	5,068	Côte d'Ivoire Liberia Sierra Leone	17,548	France Belgium United States	-	5,176
Guinea-Bissau	9,263	Senegal Sierra Leone Côte d'Ivoire	1,653	France Italy Switzerland	-	9,295

Country					
Kenya	451,099	Somalia South Sudan Ethiopia	7,534	Ethiopia United States Canada	-	514,867
Lesotho	45	Congo DRC Ethiopia Eritrea	12	United States Brazil	-	48
Liberia	18,990	Côte d'Ivoire Sierra Leone Mali	6,566	Ghana United States Côte d'Ivoire	-	20,486
Madagascar	28	Pakistan Yemen Côte d'Ivoire	297	France Italy United States	-	55
Malawi	9,392	Congo DRC Rwanda Burundi	427	United Kingdom Ireland United States	-	30,415
Mali	17,512	Mauritania CAR Côte d'Ivoire	156,428	Niger Mauritania Burkina Faso	36,690	100,247
Mauritania	48,148	Mali Western Sahara CAR	36,266	Mali Senegal France	-	74,735
Mauritius	-	-	111	-	-	5

Mozambique	4,671	Congo DRC Burundi Rwanda	50	Germany France Ireland	15,128	38,534
Namibia	1,757	Congo DRC Burundi Rwanda	1,366	Botswana Canada United States	-	3,490
Niger	166,093	Nigeria Mali Chad	1,235	Chad Italy United States	121,391	302,227
Nigeria	1,367	Congo DRC CAR Mali	202,564	Niger Cameroon Italy	2,219,272	2,911,012
Rwanda	156,065	Burundi Congo DRC Chad	286,073	Congo DRC Uganda Congo ROC	-	164,080
São Tomé and P.	-	-	29	-	-	-
Senegal	14,584	Mauritania Rwanda CAR	23,061	Guinea-Bissau Gambia Italy	-	17,803
Seychelles	2	-	14	-	-	2
Sierra Leone	683	Liberia Côte d'Ivoire Sudan	4,679	Netherlands United States France	-	693

Country						
Somalia	11,574	Yemen Ethiopia Syria	1,012,323	Kenya Yemen Ethiopia	1,562,554	1,623,185
South Africa	91,043	Somalia Congo DRC Ethiopia	450	United Kingdom Canada Ireland	-	309,342
South Sudan	262,560	Sudan Congo DRC Ethiopia	1,436,651	Uganda Ethiopia Sudan	1,853,924	2,870,538
Sudan	421,466	South Sudan Eritrea Chad	646,036	Chad South Sudan Ethiopia	2,225,557	2,704,048
Swaziland	728	Congo DRC Burundi Rwanda	229	Canada United Kingdom Ireland	-	1,123
Tanzania	281,498	Burundi Congo DRC Somalia	594	Canada United States United Kingdom	-	458,828
Togo	12,491	Ghana Côte d'Ivoire CAR	8,310	Ghana Germany Italy	-	13,279

Uganda	940,835	South Sudan	6,233	United States	-	1,162,715
		Congo DRC		United Kingdom		
		Burundi		Sweden		
Zambia	29,350	Congo DRC	265	United Kingdom	-	57,209
		Burundi		South Africa		
		Somalia		United States		
Zimbabwe	7,426	Congo DRC	18,156	United Kingdom	-	10,064
		Rwanda		South Africa		
		Burundi		Canada		

Definitions and main data sources

Incoming refugees: quota and top 3 countries of origin. Data from *UNHCR Global trends 2016 – Annex.*

Outgoing refugees: number of people who have fled their country of origin due to fear of persecution (as indicated by the 1951 Convention related to the status of refugees) and top 3 countries of destination. Data from *UNHCR Global trends 2016 – Annex.*

IDPs: number of internally displaced people, per thousand. Data from *UNHCR Global trends 2016 – Annex.*

Total population of concern: sum of refugees, people in refugee-like situations, asylum-seekers, IDPSs and other individuals to whom UNHCR extends its assistance services. Data from *UNHCR Global trends 2016 – Annex.*

The Authors

Aderanti Adepoju, professor and economist-demographer, received his PhD in Demography in 1973 from the London School of Economics. He spent several years lecturing and researching migration issues at the universities of Ife and Lagos, Nigeria, and while working for the ILO (Addis Ababa), UN (Swaziland) and UNFPA (Dakar). A former President of the Union for African Population Studies, and member of the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on Migration, he is now Chief Executive, Human Resources Development Centre in Lagos, a member of The Hague Process on Refugee and Migration Policy, and CEO/Coordinator, Network of Migration Research on Africa. He also serves on the editorial advisory boards of key international migration journals. He belongs to several scientific associations, including IUSSP. He has published numerous scientific articles, books and monographs on aspects of Africa's complex development agenda, especially on international migration and regional integration. These include: *International migration within, to and from Africa in a globalised world* (2010); *Migration within and from Africa: Shared policy challenges for Africa and Europe* (2016); *Migration in the service of African Development: Essays in honour of Professor Aderanti Adepoju* (edited by John Oucho, 2011) acknowledged his four decades of research on African migration issues.

Giovanni Carbone, Head of Africa Programme at ISPI and Professor of Political Science at Università degli Studi di Milano. He was previously a Research Associate at the Crisis States Programme of the London School of Economics (LSE) and the Principal Investigator of an European Research Council (ERC) project. His publications include: *Political Leadership*

in Africa, Cambridge University Press (forthcoming 2018; co-authored with A. Pellegata); "Are lions democrats? The impact of democratisation on economic growth in Africa, 1980-2010" (*Democratization*, 2016, co-authored with V. Memoli and L.Quartapelle); *Leoni d'Africa. Come l'Italia può intercettare la crescita subsahariana* (2015) (co-authored with M. Montanini); *L'Africa. Gli stati, la politica, i conflitti*, (2012, II ed.).

Marie-Laurence Flahaux is a Researcher at the French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD and LPED, Aix-Marseille University), and a Research Associate at Oxford University (Department of International Development). She holds a PhD in Demography from the University of Louvain-la-Neuve (UCL, Belgium). She investigates the patterns and drivers of African migration, return migration, the effect of migration policies, and the relationship between family and migration in the African context. She has authored several articles and publications on these topics. She has contributed to the Migration between Africa and Europe (MAFE), the Determinants of International Migration (DEMIG), and the Family Strategies of Migrants in West Africa projects.

Nicole Hirt is a political scientist and an independent researcher concentrating on the Horn of Africa, specifically on Eritrea, Ethiopia and Djibouti. She conducted several research projects in Eritrea with a focus on the role of customary law in conflict resolution, the consequences of the government's policy of societal militarisation and the effects of international sanctions on regime stability. Her current research interests include processes of political opinion formation among diaspora communities, as well as transnational governance through mechanisms of repression and co-optation, and the persistence of authoritarian rule. She is also interested in the dynamics of European migration policies. Nicole Hirt is associated with the GIGA (German Institute of Global and Area Studies) in Hamburg, Germany.

Blessing Uchenna Mberu is a Research Scientist and Head of the Urbanisation & Wellbeing Research Program at the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), Nairobi, Kenya. He is Honorary Professor of Demography and Population Studies, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. He earned MA and PhD degrees in Sociology, with specialisation in Demography from Brown University. Prior to Brown, he was a Graduate Assistant in 1988 and a Senior Lecturer from 1999-2002 in the Department of Sociology, Abia State University Uturu, Nigeria.

Estelle Monique Sidze is an Associate Research Scientist at the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC). She holds a Master's degree and a PhD in Demography from the University of Montreal, Canada. She joined APHRC in 2011 as a Post-doctoral Fellow prior to which she worked as a Teaching and Research Associate in the Department of Demography at the University of Montreal. Her current research interests include analysis of policy instruments, needs, barriers and rights to sexual and reproductive health services among migrants and mobile populations in sub-Saharan Africa, focusing mainly on women whose human and maternal health rights are at risk of violation. She has published several peer-reviewed papers and opinion pieces, and serves as reviewer and guest editor for various peer-reviewed journals.

Sara Vigil is a Research Fellow of the Belgian National Fund for Scientific Research (F.R.S- FNRS) at the University of Liège (Belgium) and at the International Institute for Social Studies (ISS) (The Netherlands). Her PhD research analyses the interconnections between climate change politics, land grabs, and migration and she has conducted fieldwork in Senegal and Cambodia. She is involved in various international projects on these topics and has consulted on environment and migration issues for the World Bank, the Nansen Initiative, and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. She lectures

on international cooperation, migration governance, and environmental politics at SciencesPo Paris, Paris 13 Sorbonne, and at the Institut des Hautes Études des Communications Sociales (IHECS), Brussels.