Mixed Migration Review 2019

Highlights • Interviews • Essays • Data

Mixed Migration Futures

Mixed Migration Centre

The flag of Flanders is prominent as a crowd, estimated at about 5,000 people, hold a rally against the Global Compact for Migration, signed a week earlier by Belgium's minority government. According to the Flemish right-wing parties who organised the march, this went against the wishes of the Belgian people who are fearful that the pact will facilitate mass migration of unskilled labour from Africa and the Middle East. The march, which became violent and was broken up by police using tear gas, attracted many fringe nationalist and anti-Islamist groups. Recent years have seen the rise of right-wing parties as anti-migration and anti-refugee rhetoric plays an increasingly prominent role.

Photo credit: Rebekah Zemansky / Shutterstock

US/Mexico border fence -Tucson Sector Arizona.

Notable examples of countries that have recently erected fences and barriers specifically against immigration include: Belize, Botswana, Bulgaria, Equatorial Guinea, Hungary, India, Iran, Israel, Kenya, Mozambique, North Macedonia, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain (notably in its north African enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla), Turkey, the United States, and Uzbekistan. The list of border fences across the world is now longer than it has ever been, and it is likely to grow in the future. The number of those who successfully cross irregularly from Mexico into the US every year illustrates how ineffective fences can be when stretching through remote terrain. However, border fencing replete with new technology (cameras, drones, ground sensors, facial recognition etc.) and supported by border guards is likely to be increasingly common in the future and become much more effective at preventing cross-border movement.

Acknowledgements

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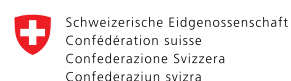
Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA
Directorate of Political Affairs DP
Human Security Division

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Foreword

When the Mixed Migration Centre (MMC) was established in 2018, it was an attempt by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) to create a global platform that, based on evidence and analysis, offers a voice of reason and reflection in the often emotional and politicized debate on migration and people on the move. It was about providing a nuanced and balanced perspective on mixed migration so as to inform and inspire policy choices and responses based on principles, values and decency.

This is essential in a world were migration is increasingly seen as a negative and something to prevent – with migration management becoming a matter of detention, containment, and border control – rather than a fundamental positive contribution to development and prosperity. With nationalism on the rise in many parts of the world, it is more important than ever to have voices that insist migration also has positives, and that migration management should be more than containment.

With this second Mixed Migration Review (MMR 2019), MMC does exactly that. The overarching theme for this year's report is migration futures, and while it does not claim to predict the future of migration, it offers a range of diverse and nuanced perspective on the future of migration as well as compelling stories from people on the move themselves. It demonstrates how the dominant policy responses have left large groups of people stranded without any solution in sight and without access to even the most basics of human rights. It makes us all ask whether this is what we want.

To the DRC, who witness the suffering on a daily basis across Africa, as well as in Europe, Latin America, and Asia, the answer is a strong and firm "No". Behind any migrant there is a person, a family, and a right to pursue a life in prosperity and dignity. This must be our starting point, and end point. Leaving people to the inevitable fate of smugglers, criminal gangs, and detention camps is not acceptable. MMR 2019 does not offer "a" solution, but it provides a range of perspectives, essays, and hard data from the ground that stimulate reflection and fundamentally challenge containment as a rational policy response now and in the future.

For anyone who cares, I strongly encourage you to read the report. Migration is a fundamental of human life and will continue to be so, and the way we perceive it and manage it marks us as human societies…

Enjoy reading!

Rikke Friis,
International Director,
Danish Refugee Council,
Copenhagen

Introduction

This 2019 edition of the Mixed Migration Review (MMR 2019) focuses on the future. What lies in store for migrants, refugees, mixed migration, and irregular mobility? What will happen to labour migration and asylum space, given the drift towards increased nationalism and away from multinationalism in a world facing global problems that need coherent and collaborative responses? How will the issues of displacement and forced migration be affected by inequality, poor governance, environmental stressors, and the international community's response to these challenges?

Can accurate forecasts be made about any of these questions? According to an old Danish proverb (most often, if erroneously, attributed to the Danish physicist-philosopher Niels Bohr) "it's difficult to make predictions, especially about the future." While the MMR 2019 has its eyes firmly set on the horizon and beyond, in the spirit of this aphorism it does not strive to make concrete predictions about the future of mixed migration.

It does however contemplate various possible scenarios and developments, and does so for two key reasons. First, in a field that is characterised by fast-changing dynamics, constant media, public and political attention, and considerable societal impact, it is particularly important to reflect soberly on possible future developments in order to better anticipate challenges. Second, exploring future developments and their potential impact on mixed migration enables us to take a step back, create a bit of distance from the "here and now", and reflect on the issue of mixed migration in a more balanced manner. We hope this helps to break the "dialogues of the deaf" that increasingly characterise migration debates.

The MMR speaks directly to MMC's vision that migration policies, responses, and public debate be *based on credible evidence and a nuanced understanding of mixed migration*. Through the MMR, we aim to offer a voice of reason and rational analysis in a highly politicised and polarised migration debate. This is still needed amid the radicalisation of migration policies and actions, actions such as prosecuting people for merely rescuing or helping migrants, or the continued support for the Libyan coast guard despite ample evidence that refugees and migrants intercepted at sea are brought back to detention centres rife with egregious human rights violations.

With regard to these politics around migration, the concept of the "Overton Window" provides a useful lens to analyse current events. The Overton Window describes the acceptable range of political discourse in a society and crops out ideas deemed so controversial that they will not be taken seriously. But the Overton Window can shift, allowing formerly fringe ideas and radical actions to fall within its frame as they become more and more acceptable. This is happening in Europe and elsewhere with migration policies and actions and is exemplified by the normalisation of extremes.

A crisis can be a moment of truth, a turning point when fundamental choices are made. Were any fundamental choices made in response to the so-called European migration crisis? Has it been a turning point? Things have changed: we are witnessing a creeping normalisation of rather extreme policies and actions, unimaginable only a short time ago. MMC witnesses – and documents, through the thousands of interviews we conduct with people on the move – violent and careless treatment of refugees and migrants in a wide range of countries around the world, examples of which are described throughout the MMR 2019.

Many of these policies and practices would have been unimaginable just five years ago. Clearly, the Overton Window has shifted to the right. But are the examples above the result of fundamental choices, part of a comprehensive approach to address migration challenges? Or are they rather the result of inaction, a lack of real leadership that can conceive, and mobilise support for, truly comprehensive and smarter approaches to migration. A crisis offers an opportunity to reinvigorate and reform the shortcomings of the current system, but so far few of the world's leaders have chosen to take it.

It is clear that far-right politicians capitalise on public concerns about migration for electoral advantage, and their extreme approaches become more and more mainstream. (*Section 4: Policy and politics* further explores how the dynamics between politics and migration might evolve in the future.)

MMR 2019 maintains a content structure similar to the 2018 edition.[1]

The *Keeping track* and *Managing flows* sections respectively set out the year's key mixed migration trends across the globe and summarise selected policy and legislative developments.

A series of **essays** explores the potential effects of change within a broad range of areas, such as:

- **Demography**. Will rapid population growth in Africa, coupled with the aging global North, inevitably lead – as some argue – to a sharp increase in migration? Or will we look back several decades from now trying to figure out why this in fact did not happen?

- **Climate.** What will be the impact of climate change, and which populations will be most affected? To what extent will it lead to cross-border movement and internal displacement? Will some populations be unable to move due to environmental factors? What will be the legal status of people displaced by climate change?

- **Securitisation.** To what extent is the increasing securitisation of migration at every step of the way legitimising some of the policies and practices that are implemented across the world? How might these trends evolve?

- **Multilateralism.** In 2018, a large majority of the world's states adopted two Global Compacts on refugees and migration, which included many objectives designed to improve the lives of refugees and migrants. Yet multilateralism is being increasingly contested as migration policies and actions become more radical. Will there be a significant retreat from multilateralism, and if so, how would this change the way mixed migration is managed?

- **Artificial intelligence (AI).** It is beyond doubt that AI will have a profound impact on the way people live, work, interact, and travel, but how will rapid advances in AI affect future mixed migration?

- **Economics and the labour market.** How will global and regional economic and labour market trends – both of which are critical to migrants and refugees – affect the volume and direction of future mixed migration flows?

Another section provides a **briefing on the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration** (GCM) a year after it was adopted in Marrakesh, assessing what progress, if any, has been made, and whether any standout GCM champions have emerged.

This MMR also continues to provide a platform for debate and different voices through **a series of interviews with migration experts, policy makers and academics**. This year, 13 interviewees offer expert opinion of today's context and what we might expect from the future.

Over the course of 2019, the MMC's Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism initiative (4Mi) interviewed almost 10,000 refugees and migrants on the move in 15 countries. A summary of key **4Mi findings** is presented graphically in this year's Review.

Finally, MMR 2019 also includes the voices of people on the move in mixed migration flows, people who comprise our ultimate constituency. **Individual migration stories** have been selected from thousands of 4Mi interviews conducted in many places around the globe, from Bogor to Benghazi, Hargeisa to Herat, and Dori to Djibouti. This is a new feature consisting of first-hand narratives that bring to life the real-world human experiences than tend to be overlooked in much of the dry, data-heavy and remote coverage of migration.

Bram Frouws
Head of the Mixed Migration Centre

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1   Horwood, C., Forin, R., & Frouws, B. (eds) (2018) *Mixed Migration Review 2018 - Highlights, Essays, Interviews, Data,* Mixed Migration Centre

Introduction to the Mixed Migration Centre

What is the MMC?

The MMC is a global network consisting of six regional hubs and a central unit in Geneva engaged in data collection, research, analysis, and policy development on mixed migration.

What is MMC's mission?

The MMC is a leading source of independent and high-quality data, research, analysis, and expertise on mixed migration. The MMC aims to increase understanding of mixed migration, positively impact global and regional migration policies, inform evidence-based protection responses for people on the move, and stimulate forward thinking in public and policy debates on mixed migration. The MMC's overarching focus is on human rights and protection for all people on the move.

What is MMC's vision?

Migration policies, responses and public debate are based on credible evidence and nuanced understanding of mixed migration, placing human rights and protection of all people on the move at the centre.

What are MMC's objectives?

- To contribute to a better, more nuanced and balanced understanding of mixed migration (knowledge)
- To contribute to evidence-based and better-informed migration policies and debates (policy)
- To contribute to effective evidence-based protection responses for people on the move (programming)

What is MMC's relationship with the Danish Refugee Council?

The MMC is part of and is governed by DRC. While its institutional link to DRC ensures MMC's work is grounded in operational reality, it acts as an independent source of data, research, analysis, and policy development on mixed migration for policy makers, practitioners, journalists, and the broader humanitarian sector. The position of the MMC does not necessarily reflect that of DRC.

Where does MMC work?

The MMC focuses on six core regions: Eastern Africa & Yemen, North Africa, West Africa, Middle East, Europe, and Asia and is expanding into South America. The 35 staff members of MMC are based in Geneva and in its regional hubs in Amman, Bogotá, Copenhagen, Dakar, Nairobi, Tunis, and Yangon, where it works in close cooperation with regional partners, stakeholders and donors. Through the Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative (4Mi) 100 monitors collect data on mixed migration in over 15 countries across different migration routes globally, conducting approximately 10,000 in-depth interviews with refugees and migrants on the move annually.

For more information on MMC visit our website:
www.mixedmigration.org
follow us on: @Mixed_Migration
or write to us at: info@mixedmigration.org

Who supports MMC and the Mixed Migration Review?

The Mixed Migration Review 2019 (MMR 2019) builds upon the work by the various MMC regional hubs and 4Mi data collection projects, supported by a wide range of donors, including (between mid-2018 and November 2019): DANIDA, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Commission, GIZ, IGAD, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UNFPA, UNHCR, and UNICEF.

Photo credit: Rocksweeper / Shutterstock
Drone technology and the use of mobile cameras and AI in applications such as facial recognition programmes are likely to characterise the future of border management and remote status-determination of those on the move in mixed migration flows. Already, drones are being used widely in surveillance because of their agility, versatility, cost-saving potential and ability to patrol remote and geographically hazardous terrain. "Irregular migration is likely to increase, which means we'll continue to securitise our approach and understanding of it." (See the full interview with violent extremism and migration expert Khalid Koser on page 194 of this publication.)

Photo credit: Rastislav Sedlak SK / Shutterstock
Construction workers take a break at the Dubai Financial Center in 2016. What will the future demand for migrant labour be in many of the advanced and high-income countries, where the population is in decline and the proportion of non-working aged population is growing? What impact will automation and robotics have on millions of migrant jobs, and what will be the future of migrant labour demand in emerging economies such as India, China, Brazil, Turkey and Indonesia?

Section 1

Keeping track

A detailed roundup of regional and national mixed migration trends around the world in 2019

This section offers an overview of mixed migration across the world, broken down by region — Africa, the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, the Americas, and Europe — and by sub-region. Where appropriate, trends in specific countries are explored individually. While not an exhaustive account of all current global mixed migration flows, this section provides a representative picture of the major current trends. While mainly focusing on 2019, this section occasionally draws upon data from late 2018 and earlier. This is done either where more recent data was unavailable, or to give further depth to the analysis. For more details on laws and policies mentioned in this section, see the report *Managing flow* in Section 4.

Africa
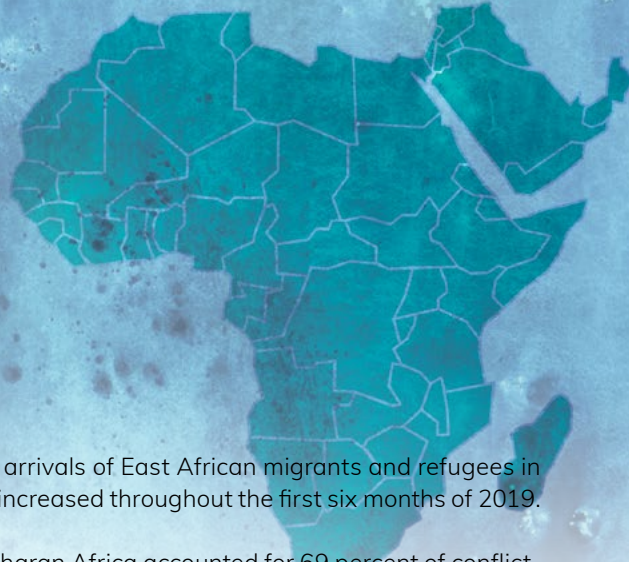
Overview

In 2019, those on the move in North Africa felt the consequences of a harsh policy environment. Escalating fighting in Libya exposed thousands of refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers in detention centres and in urban areas to conflict. Algeria continued to arrest, detain and expel refugees and migrants without due process in dangerous conditions at its southern border. Increasing departures towards Spain were met with a crackdown on smuggling operations by Moroccan authorities and with reports of the arrest and transportation of sub-Saharan migrants and refugees to southern Morocco.

The mixed migration dynamics along the North African Mediterranean coast shifted throughout 2018 and into 2019, as countries of transit and departure for mixed migration movements developed into the main countries of origin of arrivals to Europe by sea. The number of migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees successfully departing from Libya to reach Europe further decreased throughout the first six months of 2019; however, there was an increase in those departing from Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia towards Italy and Spain, suggesting a possible shift in routes.

In West Africa, 2019 saw a major deterioration of the security situation in the Sahel region. Although overall movements between West and North Africa appear to be decreasing, among those interviewed in northern Mali by the UN's International Organization for Migration (IOM) in late 2018 and 2019, an increasing proportion reported their intention to travel to Morocco, some with the intention of traveling on to Spain.

In East Africa, despite the significant number of deportations from Saudi Arabia in 2018 and 2019, and continuing conflict and reports of detention and abuse in Yemen, arrivals of East African migrants and refugees in Yemen increased throughout the first six months of 2019.

Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 69 percent of conflict-related internal displacement worldwide in 2018, with UNHCR reporting over 1.5 million people newly displaced in Ethiopia alone, the majority within their country.[1]

Increased departures from the Maghreb

The number of migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees from Maghreb countries attempting to travel irregularly to Europe has increased significantly since 2016, with Maghrebi nationals increasingly departing directly from their own countries.[2] European states recorded 38,968 Maghrebi nationals crossing into Europe irregularly in 2018, a significant increase from the 15,961 recorded in 2016.[3] In particular, the number Tunisians arriving in Italy has increased in recent years, from 1,200 in 2016[4] to over 6,000 in 2017,[5] and 5,250 in 2018, when Tunisians departing from Tunisia represented the largest nationality arriving in Italy by sea (22% of arrivals).[6] The number of Moroccans arriving in Spain by sea has also increased significantly, from 674 in 2016[7] to 5,500 in 2017,[8] and to 13,000 in 2018, when Moroccans represented the second largest national group arriving by sea in Spain (20% of arrivals).[9]

Given the decrease in the numbers of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants of other nationalities arriving in Italy by sea, Maghrebi nationals account for an increasingly large percentage of sea arrivals to Europe.[10] In 2018, Maghrebi nationals accounted for nearly 20 percent of irregular arrivals to Europe, an increase from

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1   Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (2019) *Global Report on Internal Displacement: GRID 2019*; UNHCR (2019) *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018*
2   Herbert, M. (2019a) *Political challenges and deep inequalities fuel the sharp rise in irregular migration from North Africa* Institute for Security Studies
3   Ibid.
4   MHub (2018) *Country Brief: Tunisia*
5   Ibid.
6   UNHCR (2019) *Refugees & Migrants Arrivals to Europe in 2018 (Mediterranean): Jan to Dec 2018*
7   UNHCR (2016) *Refugee and Migrants Sea Arrivals in Europe: Monthly Data Update December 2016*
8   UNHCR (2017) *Refugees and Migrants Arrivals to Europe in 2017*
9   UNHCR (2019) *Refugees & Migrants Arrivals to Europe in 2018 (Mediterranean): Jan to Dec 2018*
10   Herbert, M (2019) op. cit.

Top 10 African countries by total refugees and asylum seekers, Mid-year 2018 UNHCR data
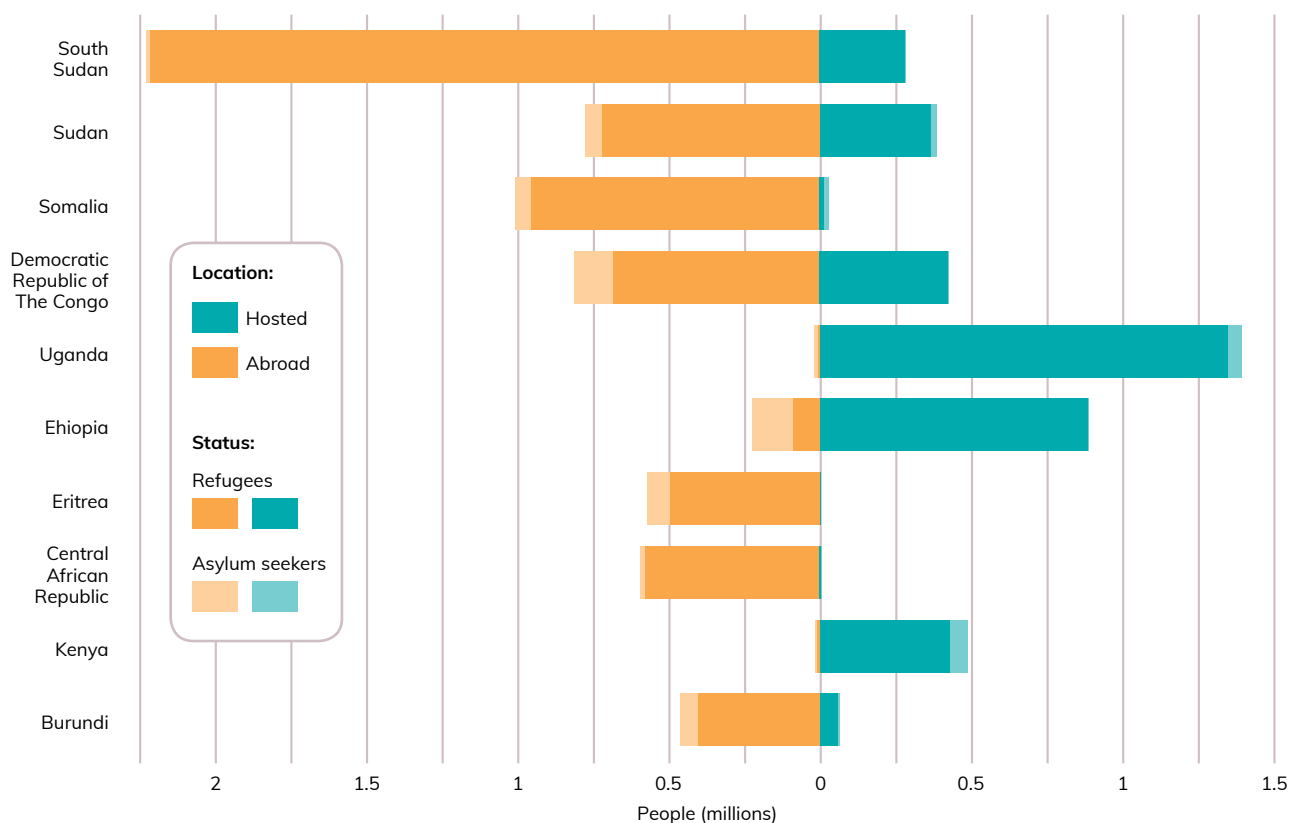
Source: UNHCR Mid-Year 2018 figures (latest available) design updated from IOM graphics from IOM World Migration Report 2018

"Hosted" refers to those refugees and asylum seekers from other countries who are residing in the receiving country (right-hand side of the figure); "abroad" refers to refugees and asylum seekers originating from that country who are outside of their origin country. The top 10 countries are based on 2016 data and are calculated by combining refugees and asylum seekers in and from countries.

three percent in 2016.[11] In the first six months of 2019, arrivals from Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia represented 41 percent of arrivals to Spain and Italy.[12]

Push factors

These departures come in the context of high youth unemployment, entrenched structural inequalities and economic and political discontent in countries across the Maghreb region.[13] Although the scale of arrivals from countries in North Africa is unlikely to rival that seen across mixed migration routes into Europe between 2015 and 2017, the shift towards arrivals from countries in North Africa presents challenges for European governments concerned with limiting migration.[14] Irregular migrant departures from North Africa have often been treated with unofficial tolerance by North Africa governments concerned with stability, youth unemployment, and dissatisfaction with the political and economic status

quo amongst their populations.[15]

Tunisia's tough stance

In June 2019, some 75 migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees were stranded for three weeks aboard a Egyptian vessel off the coast of Tunisia after the Tunisian authorities refused to allow their disembarkation, citing overcrowded reception facilities.[16] The migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees, the majority of whom were from Bangladesh, had departed from Libya before being rescued by an Egyptian vessel in Tunisian waters.[17] After three weeks at sea, Tunisian authorities finally allowed those on board to disembark, with the majority agreeing to return home with the assistance of IOM.[18]

In May 2019, 65 migrants, asylum seekers and refugees drowned when the boat they were traveling on capsized off the coast of Tunisia.[19] The boat encountered adverse

11 Herbert, M (2019) op. cit.
12 UNHCR (2019) Refugees & Migrants Arrivals to Europe in 2019 (Mediterranean): January to June 2019
13 Herbert, M. (2019a) op. cit. See also Herbert, M. (2019b) Changing migration horizon from North Africa to Europe Institute for Security Studies
14 Herbert, M (2019b) op. cit.; Herbert, M. & Gallien, M. (2019) Tunisia isn't a migrant transit country – yet Institute for Security Studies
15 Ibid.
16 European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2019) Tunisia: Controversy over Return of Stranded Bangladeshi Nationals
17 Amara, T. (2019) After three weeks stranded off Tunisia, migrants group to be repatriated Reuters
18 Ibid.
19 UNHCR (2019) 65 reported drowned after shipwreck off the coast of Tunisia

weather conditions after departing from the coast of Libya and sank 40 miles off the Tunisian coast.[20] Fishing boats managed to rescue 16 survivors.[21]

Crackdown in Morocco
In response to the increased number of departures of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants from the Moroccan coast to Spain, in 2019 Moroccan authorities reported that they had mounted a crackdown on smuggling and trafficking networks and had prevented some 25,000 departures between January and May 2019.[22] In September 2018, Amnesty International reported a large-scale "cruel and unlawful" crackdown on sub-Saharan migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in northern areas of Morocco.[23]

Dumped in the desert
According to Amnesty, Moroccan authorities carried out raids in several cities, reportedly arbitrarily arresting sub-Saharan migrants and refugees and transporting them to remote areas close to the Algerian border, or areas in the south of country.[24]

The UN-appointed Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, while highlighting the positive approach of the Moroccan government towards migration management overall, also raised concerns about reports of harassment, racial profiling, arbitrary arrest and detention, excessive use of force and forced relocation of sub-Saharan migrants and refugees.[25] The Special Rapporteur stressed that the government of Morocco is responsible for the actions of local government representatives and also called on European states to take responsibility for the role they play in ensuring migrants' human rights in Morocco.[26]

The EU has mobilised 140 million euros to assist Morocco in strengthening its border management capacities.[27] In particular, the Spanish state cooperation agency FIIAPP is implementing a 40 million euro border and migration management programme, funded by the EU Trust Fund.[28]

Impact of violence in Libya

The situation in Libya deteriorated further in late 2018 and into 2019, with clashes between rival administrations in and around Tripoli and in the south of Libya affecting migrants and refugees across the country.[29]

Risks rise as smugglers driven underground
Throughout 2018, armed groups retreated further from their protection of the smuggling industry, forcing smugglers to avoid law enforcement and driving their operations further underground.[30] This has resulted in a rise in the cost of smuggling services and has left migrants at a higher risk of abuse, as smugglers attempt to make up profits through ransom and extortion.[31]

The precarity of the smuggling industry in Libya has severely affected refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants from East Africa transiting through Libya with the intention of traveling to Europe.[32] In December 2018, refugees and migrants from East Africa reported having spent between one to two years in Libya, longer than in previous assessments, and reported facing escalating and diversifying risks including torture and being sold by smugglers.[33]

Dire detention conditions
Refugees and asylum seekers from East Africa are over-represented in official detention centres in Libya, representing 98 percent of the 3,930 registered refugees and asylum seekers in detention in June 2019.[34] Overall, East African nationals accounted for 17 percent of the 641,398 refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants recorded by IOM in Libya in May 2019.[35] Over half of the refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers in detention are held in close proximity to frontlines of the conflict and are either at risk or have been directly affected by the fighting.[36] Conditions in detention facilities remain dire, with overcrowding, a lack of food, water, and medical

20 UNHCR (2019) *65 reported drowned after shipwreck off the coast of Tunisia*
21 Amara, T. (2019) *Dozens of migrants drown off Tunisia Coast after leaving Libya* Reuters
22 Eljechtimi, A. (2019) *Morocco claims success in reducing illegal migration to Spain* Reuters
23 Amnesty International (2018) *Morocco: Relentless crackdown on thousands of sub-Saharan migrants and refugees is unlawful*
24 Ibid.
25 United Nations (2019) *End of Mission Statement of the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance at the Conclusion of Her Mission to the Kingdom of Morocco* Human Rights Council Forty-First Session
26 Ibid.
27 European Union (2019) *EU Actions along the Western Mediterranean Route*
28 European Union (2019) Ibid.
29 United Nations Support Mission in Libya (2019) *Remarks of SRSG Ghassan Salame to the United Nations Security Council on the Situation in Libya 29 July 2019*; Molenaar, F. & Ezzedinne, N. (2018) *Southbound Mixed Movement to Niger: An analysis of changing dynamics and policy responses* Clingendael and Mixed Migration Centre CRU Report
30 Micallef, M. (2019) *The Human Conveyor Belt Broken: Assessing the collapse of the human-smuggling industry in Libya and the central Sahel* Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime
31 Ibid.
32 UNHCR (2019) *Mixed Migration Routes and Dynamics in Libya in 2018*
33 Ibid.
34 Most of the registered refugees and asylum seekers in detention are from Eritrea, Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia. See UNHCR (2019) *Libya: Profile of registered refugees and asylum-seekers in Detention June 2019*
35 IOM (2019) *Displacement Tracking Matrix Libya's Migrant Report: Round 25 – March to May 2019;* Mixed Migration Centre (2019) *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: North Africa – Quarter 2 2019*
36 Mixed Migration Centre (2019) *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: North Africa – Quarter 2 2019*

care and reports of extensive abuse and human rights violations perpetrated by armed guards and security personnel.[37] In July 2019, over 40 refugees, asylum seekers and migrants were killed by an airstrike on the Tajoura detention centre outside of Tripoli in which at least 600 people were trapped.[38] UN Secretary-General António Guterres expressed outrage at the attack and the UN has called for an independent investigation to bring those responsible to justice, arguing the airstrike may amount to a war crime.[39]

Assisted departures

According to UNHCR, 4,418 vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers were assisted to depart Libya between November 2017 and August 2019.[40] Between January and early September 2019, UNHCR assisted 1,474 refugees to leave Libya, including 710 who went to Niger, 393 to Italy and 371 resettled to European countries and Canada.[41] According to UNHCR, in early September 2019, 1,096 of the evacuees from Libya to Niger were remaining in Niger, out of a total of 2,913 that had been evacuated from Libya to Niger since late 2017.[42]Between January and mid-July 2019, IOM assisted 5,643 migrants to return home from Libya to 26 countries in Africa and Asia through the Voluntary Humanitarian Return program.[43]

In September 2019, UNHCR, the Government of Rwanda and the African Union announced a new agreement for the evacuation of refugees and asylum seekers from Libya.[44] Under the agreement, refugees and asylum seekers currently held in detention centres in Libya can be transferred on a voluntary basis to Rwanda.[45] In late September 2019, UNHCR evacuated 66 East African refugees from Libya to Rwanda, including 26 refugee children, almost all of them unaccompanied.[46]

Migrant workers

Although the number of migrant workers has declined significantly since the beginning of the 2011 crisis, Libya is still host to a significant number of migrant workers from West and North Africa, most originating from neighbouring countries including Niger, Egypt and Chad as of May 2019.[47] Although since 2015 Egypt has officially banned travel to Libya due to security concern, in 2019, Egyptian and Libyan authorities reportedly signed an agreement to coordinate the entry of Egyptian workers into Libya, in anticipation of the labour needs for reconstruction.[48]

Departures to Italy plummet

The numbers of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants departing Libya to arrive in Italy continued to fall throughout 2018 and the first half of 2019. Between January and June 2019, 32 percent of the 2,779 refugees, migrants and asylum seekers who arrived in Italy by sea departed from Libya (894).[49] The number of arrivals in Italy from Libya decreased by 92 percent in the first six months of 2019 compared to the same period in 2018 (from 11,401 to 894), while the number of arrivals from Tunisia decreased by 78 percent (3,491 to 775).[50] According to the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime, following the withdrawal of European search and rescue operations, there has been a shift among some Libyan smugglers towards pre-revolution tactics, including the use of larger more sea worthy boats and towing migrants behind fishing vessels.[51] In the first six months of 2019, the Libyan coast guard intercepted 4,023 refugees and migrants.[52]

Riskier crossings

In the first eight months of 2019, 913 people drowned or went missing whilst attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea to Europe, including 644 on the central Mediterranean route.[53] This represents a 58 percent decrease in the number of people drowning in the Mediterranean compared with the same time in 2018.[54] The fatality rate on the crossing from Libya to Europe rose from one in every 38 arrivals in 2017 to one in 14 in 2018.[55] The

37 UNSMIL & OHCHR (2018) *Desperate and Dangerous: Report on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees in Libya*
38 Amnesty International (2019) *Libya: Abhorrent attack on migrants detention centre must be investigated as a war crime*
39 UN News (2019) *Libya detention centre airstrike could amount to a war crimes says UN, as Guterres calls for independent investigation*
40 UNHCR (2019) *UNHCR Update: Libya August 2019*
41 UNHCR (2019) *New UNHCR evacuation of refugees from Libya to Italy, as Tripoli fighting continues*
42 UNHCR (2019) *Resettlement Update #78 Libya-Niger Situation September 2019*
43 IOM (2019) *IOM Libya Update: 1-15 July 2019*
44 UNHCR (2019) *Joint Statement: Government of Rwanda, UNHCR and African Union agree to evacuate refugees out of Libya*
45 Claes, J. & Botti, D. (2019) *A new normal: Evacuations from Libya to Niger and Rwanda* Mixed Migration Centre
46 UNHCR (2019) *First Group of vulnerable refugees evacuated from Libya to Rwanda*
47 IOM (2019) *Displacement Tracking Matrix Libya's Migrant Report: Round 25 – March to May 2019*
48 Aleem, A. (2019) *New pact will open flow of Egyptian workers to Libya*
49 UNHCR (2019) *Italy: Sea arrivals dashboard June 2019*
50 Ibid.
51 Micallef, M. (2019) op. cit.
52 IOM (2019) *IOM Libya Update: 1-15 July 2019*
53 IOM (2019) *Mediterranean Migrant Arrivals Reach 46,521 in 2019: Deaths Reach 909*
54 Ibid.
55 UNHCR (2019) *Desperate Journeys: Refugees and migrants arriving in Europe and at Europe's borders – January to December 2018*

number of deaths as a percentage of attempted crossings from North Africa to Europe increased from 1.9 percent in 2018 to 2.4 percent in the first nine months of 2019.[56]

Expulsions from Algeria

Following an intensification of the crackdown on sub-Saharan refugees and migrants in Algeria in 2018, there was a significant increase in the number of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers expelled from Algeria to Niger. Amnesty International estimated that at least 19,500 Nigerien nations and 750 other sub-Saharan African nationals were transported to the Niger city of Agadez in organised convoys between August 2017 and December 2018.[57] While the return of Nigerien nationals falls under a 2014 return agreement between Algeria and Niger, according to Amnesty these expulsions were conducted without any individual risk assessment or due process.[58]

Throughout 2018, the number of migrants assisted to return from Niger to their countries of origin through IOM's Assisted Voluntary Return programme rose by 8,510 migrants, a 132 percent increase.[59] IOM assisted migrants to return to Guinea, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire and Cameroon.[60]

Abandoned at the Niger border

In 2018, in addition to the organised convoys of mainly Nigerien nationals, Algerian authorities abandoned at least 11,238 sub-Saharan migrants from West and Central Africa and 386 Nigerien nationals on the Algerian-Niger border.[61] According to the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, these migrants were rounded up by Algerian police in their workplaces and homes, detained, deprived of personal belongings and savings, and transported to "point zero", 15 kilometres from the border with Niger, from where they were forced to cross the border and walk 25 kilometres or over six hours through the desert to reach Assamaka, the first Nigerien village.[62]

Between January and April 2019, Algeria deported some 8,000 people to Mali and Niger,[63] including, in January, some 120 Syrian, Palestinian and Yemeni individuals detained and then abandoned in the desert on the Algerian-Niger border, some of whom were registered by UNHCR as refugees.[64] According to UNHCR, 20 individuals from this group were stranded in the desert three kilometres from the Guezzam border post in January, while 100 individuals were unaccounted for.[65]

According to local NGOs, between May 1 and 10, 2019, at least 1,316 people made their way into Niger after having been left at the Algerian border and a further 178 migrants, including 58 children, arrived in Assamaka in June.[66] This group included Bangladeshi nationals, who, as non-ECOWAS citizens, risk being sent back to the Algerian border by Nigerien authorities.[67]

Accusations of illegality

The Special Rapporteur emphasised that these collective expulsions from Algeria are "in flagrant violation of international law", and called on Algeria to abide by its international obligations.[68] According to Amnesty International these expulsions contravene both domestic Algerian law and international law.[69] Concerns have also been raised about the ill-treatment of migrants and refugees expelled from Algeria into Mali.[70]

Security worsens in the Sahel

In West Africa, displacement patterns have become increasingly complex as the security situation in Mali and Burkina Faso deteriorated throughout the first half of 2019. Inter-communal conflict, brutal attacks by opposition armed groups, and repressive responses by state authorities have driven forced displacement and a humanitarian emergency in the region to unprecedented levels.[71]

In **Burkina Faso**, the country most affected by the increase in violence in 2019, security forces are struggling to cope with violence by non-state armed groups, which has seen widespread attacks on civilians, and state authorities

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56   IOM *Missing Migrants* accessed September 2019
57   Amnesty International (2018) *Forced to Leave: stories of injustice against migrants in Algeria*
58   Ibid.
59   IOM (2019) *2018 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights*
60   Ibid.
61   Ibid.
62   Ibid.; United Nations (2019) *Visit to Niger: Report of the Special Rapporteur on human rights of migrants* Human Rights Council Forty First Session
63   UNHCR (2019) *Mixed Movement in West Africa: March April 2019*
64   UNHCR (2019) *News Comment – UNHCR Appeals for access to refugees on Algeria-Niger border*
65   Ibid.
66   Alarme Phone Sahara (2019) *Assamakka, border Algeria-Niger: At least 1,316 people refouled since 1st May 2019*
67   Ibid.
68   United Nations (2019) *Visit to Niger: Report of the Special Rapporteur on human rights of migrants* Human Rights Council Forty First Session
69   Amnesty International (2018) *Forced to Leave: stories of injustice against migrants in Algeria*
70   United Nations (2019) *Situation of human rights in Mali: Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Mali*
71   UN OHCHR *Humanitarian Emergency at Unprecedented Level in the Sahel*; see also ACAPS (2019) *Conflict and displacement in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso* Briefing Note

lost control of parts of the country.[72] The government has declared a state of emergency and reports have emerged of a brutal retaliatory crackdown by military forces in affected areas, including allegations of large-scale summary executions.[73] This conflict has caused the internal displacement of some 220,000 people between January and June 2019, and forced an estimated 15,000 more to cross into neighbouring countries including Mali (11,500), Niger (1,500) and Ghana (1,911).[74]

In **Mali**, the security situation continues to worsen.[75] Between January and July 2019, the intensification of violence and conflict in the north and central regions displaced 202,000 people, six times the 36,000 people newly displaced in the first half of 2018.[76]

In **Niger**, insecurity originating in neighbouring countries has increasingly affected the populations around the south-east and west borders in 2019.[77] In 2019, there was an increase in the frequency and complexity of attacks by opposition armed groups across the border from Mali[78] and increased deadly attacks and kidnappings of women and girls by Boko Haram across the border from Nigeria.[79] In addition, between April and June 2019, an estimated 2,190 Burkinabe nationals arrived in Niger, displaced by increasing instability in Burkina Faso.[80] An intensification of violence in north-western Nigeria caused approximately 35,000 Nigerians to cross into Niger in the first eight months of 2019.[81] According to UNHCR, the violence is not related to Boko Haram but rather stems from tensions between farmers and pastoralists and generalised criminality and banditry.[82]

Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali are key transit countries for mixed migration both within West Africa and between North and West Africa.

Fewer transit Burkina Faso

Amid the increased insecurity in Burkina Faso, the number of people IOM recorded moving through key transit points in the country remained fairly constant between October 2018 and April 2019.[83] While IOM data mainly captures short-term and seasonal migration by Burkinabe nationals and Nigeriens, a recent study by the Mixed Migration Centre found that increasingly restrictive migration policies and increased violence along Burkina Faso borders have reduced long-distance transit migration through the country.[84] According to data collected through the Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative (4Mi) in Burkina Faso, security considerations are not an overriding factor in decision-making processes around migration; those on the move rather cited enhanced border controls and a lack of funds as the main obstacles to movement.[85]

Destination shift

In 2019, in Mali there has been a noticeable shift in the intended destinations of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers interviewed by IOM in the north of the country.[86] Between November 2017 and November 2018, an average of 78 percent of those interviewed by IOM in Timbuktu indicated they were intending to travel to Algeria.[87] However, between November 2018 and June 2019, the majority of those interviewed transiting through Timbuktu indicated they were intending to travel towards Morocco (average 39%) or Spain (average 21%), with just 30 percent aiming for Algeria.[88] Most of those identified by IOM on this route are from Guinea and Mali.[89]

Similarly, between December 2018 and January 2019, Morocco was increasingly cited as an intended destination by those traveling through Gao in central Mali and in June 2019 represented 23 percent of intended destinations.[90] However, since June 2017 in the context of the ongoing crackdown on migrants in Algeria and the arrests of smugglers in January 2018, the numbers of those transiting outwards through Gao has fallen significantly from 2,284 in June 2017 to 590 June 2019.[91]

72 International Crisis Group (2019) *Tackling Burkina Faso's Insurgencies and Unrest*
73 ACLED (2019) *Regional Overview – Africa 1 July 2019*; see also Human Rights Watch (2019) *"We found their bodies later that day" Atrocities by Armed Islamists and Security Forced in Burkina Faso's Sahel Region*
74 UNOCHA (2019) *West and Central Africa: Weekly Regional Humanitarian Snapshot: 23 – 29 July 2019*; UNHCR (2019) *Country Operation Update: Burkina Faso May 2019*
75 ACAPS (2019) *Mali Overview*; International Crisis Group (2019) Crisis Watch *Mali July 2019*
76 Norwegian Refugee Council (2019) *On-the-Record Update: Crisis in Central and Northern Mali*
77 ACAPS (2019) *Niger Overview* July 2019
78 ACLED (2019) *Heeding the Call: Sahelian Militants Answer Islamic State Leader Al-Baghdadi's Call to Arms with a Series of Attacks in Niger*; see also: International Crisis Group (2019) *The Niger-Mali Border: Subordinating Military Action to a Political Strategy*
79 International Crisis Group (2019) Crisis Watch Niger July 2019
80 UNHCR (2019) *Regional Situation Update: Mali Situation April to June 2019*
81 UNHCR (2019) *Flash note Maradi situation Niger August 2019*
82 Ibid.
83 IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix *Flow Monitoring Reports Burkina Faso*
84 Mixed Migration Centre (2019) *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: West Africa Quarter 2 2019*
85 Ibid.
86 Note that "intended destinations" only reflect reported intentions of migrants at this stage in the journey.
87 See IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix *Monthly Flow Monitoring Reports* Mali
88 Ibid.
89 Ibid.
90 Ibid.
91 Ibid.

Dashed hopes in East Africa

False dawn in Eritrea

June 2019 marked a year since the signing of a peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The reopening of the border points between the two countries, until a renewed closure in April 2019, resulted in lively cross-border trade and passage, and an increase in the number of Eritreans crossing into Ethiopia to claim asylum. A month after the borders opened in September 2018, some 15,000 people crossed into Ethiopia, many to reunite with family members on the other side of the border.[92]

However, despite initial optimism, according to Human Rights Watch little has changed in Eritrea since the signing of the peace agreement and the policy of indefinite national service, the major driver of displacement/forced migration from Eritrea, has not eased.[93] In April 2019, media reports suggested that Eritrea had again closed its borders with Ethiopia.[94]

IDP numbers soar in Ethiopia

In 2018, against a backdrop of significant political reform in Ethiopia, inter-communal violence caused the displacement of 1,560,800 people, 98 percent within the borders of the country, signalling the challenges of ongoing inter-ethnic rivalries fuelled by the federal system of government in the country.[95] Humanitarian actors have called on Ethiopia to ratify the Kampala Convention in order to address the situation of the internally displaced in the country.[96]

Ethiopia – alarming and chronic displacement in 2018 and 2019

"The confluence of rapid urban expansion, ongoing conflict over land and resources and high levels of vulnerability to ongoing drought and seasonal floods continue to generate numerous new displacements every year." (IDMC)

About 2.9 million new displacements associated with conflict were recorded in 2018, the highest figure recorded worldwide. Natural disasters also triggered 296,000 new displacements, most of them associated with flooding and drought in the Somali region. In the first half of 2019, about 755,000 new displacements were recorded, 522,000 associated with conflict and 233,000 associated with disasters.

Conflict & violence
new displacements

2018
2,900,000 people

2019 (mid-year)
522,000 people

Natural disasters
new displacements

2018
296,000 people

2019 (mid-year)
233,000 people

Source: International Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)

92 Norwegian Refugee Council (2019) *Thousands of families reunited one month after Ethiopia – Eritrea border reopens*
93 Horne, F. (2019) *One Year After Peace Deal, Little has Changed in Eritrea: Thousands still fleeing indefinite conscription* Human Rights Watch
94 Shaban, A. (2019) *Eritrea shuts all borders with Ethiopia - unilaterally* Africa News
95 Human Rights Watch (2019) *Ethiopia: Events of 2018*; D'Orsi, C. (2019) *Ethiopia needs to act fast to solve its internal displacement problem* The Conversation; UNHCR (2019) *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018*
96 IDMC (2019) *Global Report on Internal Displacement: GRID 2019*

Turmoil in Sudan

Harmful role of the RSF

In Sudan, police and security forces have violently cracked down on protesters following the ousting of Omar al-Bashir as president, including in an incident in which the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) raided peaceful sit-ins outside military headquarters in June, reportedly killing more than 100 people and injuring over 700.[97] The RSF have also been linked to numerous incidents of sexual violence against protestors in the capital.[98] The leader of the RSF, Mohamed Hamdan Dagolo, is an increasingly influential figure in post-Bashir Sudan.[99]

From 2016, the RSF were central to Sudan's efforts to suppress irregular migration through the country. In 2016 the Sudanese government deployed them to patrol the Libyan and Egyptian borders, and in mid-2018, the RSF reportedly had some 23,000 personnel spread across north and west Sudan.[100] The RSF have been accused of large-scale human rights abuses in Darfur[101] and, since 2016, have been linked to serious abuses against migrants, as well as to the migrant-smuggling and trafficking industry.[102]

Maligned Europe backs off

Although mixed movements from Libya to Europe have reduced, refugees and migrants from East Africa continue to use Sudan as a transit country en route to North Africa. The EU has suspended projects aimed at migration management in Sudan "because they require the involvement of government counterparts to be carried out" and has reiterated that all EU funding in Sudan is implemented through EU member states' development agencies, UN agencies and NGOs.[103] Academics and policy researchers have consistently critiqued the EU's engagements with the Sudanese government on border control and migration management under the auspices of the Khartoum Process.[104]

In July 2019, the UN estimated that the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance in Sudan had increased nearly 50 percent from 5.7 million people in late 2018 to 8.5 million in the second half of 2019.[105]

In addition to its role as a transit country, Sudan is a source country for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. More than 11 percent of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants recorded by IOM in Libya in May 2019 were from Sudan,[106] and five percent of total sea arrivals in Italy between January and September 2019 were Sudanese.[107]

Movement to and from Saudi Arabia

In early 2018 Ethiopia lifted its ban on Ethiopian migrant workers traveling to the Middle East.[108] However, the movement of regular migrant workers has been slow to resume. In April 2019 media reported that Saudi Arabia had revoked visas issued for Saudi families to employ Ethiopian migrant workers due to delays in their recruitment as the two governments had failed to reach an agreement around employment contracts.[109]

Mass deportations

Between May 2017 and August 2019, Saudi Arabia deported an estimated 300,000 Ethiopians, following a crackdown on migrants in an irregular situation in Saudi Arabia that commenced in April 2017.[110] Despite the repeated deportation orders and the documented abuse of many migrants in an irregular situation and refugees in Saudi Arabia the number of Ethiopians aiming to travel overland to Saudi Arabia increased in the first six months of 2019.[111] IOM recorded 76,060 Ethiopian migrants and refugees arriving in Yemen between January and June 2019, compared with 80,679 for the whole of 2018.[112] The announcement of a ceasefire agreement in Yemen at the start of the year may have influenced movements towards Yemen as migrants in Djibouti and Somalia await a chance to cross.

97 ACAPS (2019) *Briefing note on the escalation of violence in Sudan*; ACLED (2019) *The Rapid Support Forced and the Escalation of Violence in Sudan*
98 ACLED (2019) *The Rapid Support Forced and the Escalation of Violence in Sudan*
99 Burke, J. (2019) *Hemediti: the feared commander pulling the strings in Sudan* The Guardian
100 Tubiana, J et al. (2018) *Multilateral Damage: The Impact of EU Migration Policies on Central Saharan Routes* Clingendael
101 Human Rights Watch (2015) *'Men with no mercy': Rapid Support Forces Attacks against Civilians in Dafur, Sudan*; Henry, J. (2019) *Sudan's Transition Hasn't Ended Abused in Dafur: Leaders should hold abusive officials, forces to account* Human Rights Watch; Amnesty International (2019) *Sudan: fresh evidence of government-sponsored crimes in Dafur shows drawdown of peacekeepers premature and reckless*
102 Tubiana, J. et al. (2018) op. cit.
103 DW (2019) *EU suspends migration control projects in Sudan amid repression fears*
104 Tubina, J et al. (2018) op. cit.
105 USAID (2019) *Sudan – Complex Emergency: Fact Sheet 3 August 2019*
106 IOM (2019) *Libya – Migrant Report 25 (March – May 2019)*
107 UNHCR (2019) *Italy Sea arrivals dashboard July 2019*
108 AFP (2019) *Ethiopia lifts ban on domestic workers moving overseas*
109 Saudi Gazette (2019) *Saudi Arabia revoke visas for Ethiopian housemaids after differences over recruitment conditions*
110 IOM (2019) *Return of Ethiopian Migrants From the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia – May 2017 to August 2019*
111 Human Rights Watch (2019) *Ethiopians abused on the Gulf migration route: Trafficking, Exploitation, Torture, Abusive Prison Conditions*
112 IOM DTM (2018) *Flow Monitoring Points: 2018 Migrant Arrivals and Yemeni Returns from Saudi Arabia*; IOM DTM (2019) *Flow Monitoring Points: Migrant Arrivals and Yemeni Returns from Saudi – January to June 2019*

In addition to Ethiopians, the number of Somalis traveling to Yemen remained fairly constant in 2018 and 2019, and in 2019 a small number of Nigerians were also recorded arriving in Yemen.[113]

Arrivals to Yemen soar

Despite the ongoing war and escalating humanitarian crisis in Yemen, the first half of 2019 saw sharp increases in the number of arrivals of East African refugees and migrants, particularly in the months of April and May.[114] Lack of access to basic services, high levels of violence and abuse, trafficking and other protection risks are increasingly prevalent for migrants and refugees arriving in Yemen.[115] There are growing concerns for children along this route, who made up 10 percent of arrivals in Yemen recorded by IOM between January and June 2019, and who may be more vulnerable to abuse.[116] There are also reports of migrants being forcibly recruited by armed groups to fight in the conflict.[117]

Arbitrary and abusive detention also remains a serious concern for East African refugees and migrants in Yemen.[118] In April 2019, over 5,000 migrants were arrested by security forces in Aden and detained in harsh conditions across three sites, including 2,457 held in a soccer stadium.[119] Although restrictions on movement out of the stadium were lifted in May, migrants continued to arrive at the stadium to seek assistance, and at the end of May IOM estimated that the number of migrants there had increased to 3,000.[120] IOM assisted those who wished to be evacuated through its Voluntary Humanitarian Returns program.[121]

Migrants targeted in South Africa

In 2018, IOM recorded 4,268 migrants and refugees moving through Ethiopia and Somalia toward South Africa.[122] Ethiopian nationals made up 85 percent of those recorded traveling this route in 2018, the vast majority of whom were men (94%).[123] Those recorded en route likely represents a small proportion of the actual number traveling between East Africa and South Africa, with recent estimates suggesting that between 14,750 and 16,850 head south along this route every year.[124]

According to media reports, in March, April and May 2019, Kenyan police arrested a number of migrants and smugglers across Kenya en route to South Africa, seizing fake travel documents and identification papers purportedly from Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia.[125] According to detectives, the smugglers were part of a wider network involved in smuggling migrants to South Africa.[126]

In March 2019, the South African government unveiled a plan to enforce tough measures against those who had crossed the country's borders illegally and said it may consider using drones to patrol the borders.[127] However, evidence from interviews with smugglers suggests that many migrants are smuggled across the borders of South Africa with the complicity of border guards.[128]

113 MMC (2019) *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: East Africa and Yemen Quarter 1 2019*

114 Council on Foreign Relations (2019) *Global Conflict Tracker*; IOM (2019) *Flow Monitoring Points: Yemen, April 2019*; IOM (2019) *Flow Monitoring Points: Yemen, May 2019.*

115 Botti, D. & Phillips, M. (2019) *Record numbers of refugees and migrants arrive in Yemen amidst intensifying and complicated war* Mixed Migration Centre

116 IOM (2019) *Flow Monitoring Points: Migrant Arrivals and Yemeni Returns from Saudi Arabia, Jan to June 2019*

117 Binwaber, M. (2019) *African Migrants in Yemen between Abuse and Recruitment* International Policy Digest

118 Human Rights Watch (2018) *Yemen: Detained African Migrants Tortured, Raped*

119 MMC (2019) *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: East Africa and Yemen Quarter 2, 2019*

120 IOM (2019) *IOM Yemen Migrant Situation in Aden: Flash Report – 10 June 2019*

121 Ibid.

122 IOM DTM (2019) *A regional on the move: 2018 mobility overview in the Horn of Africa and Arab Peninsula*

123 Ibid.

124 MMC (2017) *Smuggled South: An updated overview of mixed migration from the Horn of Africa to Southern Africa*

125 Daghar, M. (2019) *Kenya now a key transit point for south bound migrants* ENACT Observer

126 MMC (2019) *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: East Africa and Yemen Quarter 1 2019*

127 MMC (2019) *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: East Africa and Yemen Quarter 2 2019*

128 MMC (2018) *Mixed Migration Review 2018*

Xenophobia boils over into violence

A widespread outbreak of anti-immigrant violence led to the deaths of at least 12 people in South Africa in September 2019.[129]   The violence targeted 1,000 foreign-owned businesses and caused more than 700 migrants from countries across Africa to seek refuge in community centres.[130] In Nigeria, reports of the violence led to reprisals against South African business and the temporary closure of the South Africa's diplomatic missions in Lagos and Abuja.[131] In response to the violence, the Nigerian government announced that it would repatriate 600 of its citizens from South Africa.[132]

According to recent research from the Human Sciences Research Council, despite a lack of evidence linking the presence of migrants to problems such as crime or unemployment, a significant share of the general population in South Africa holds anti-immigrant views.[133] According to a 2018 survey, more than one in ten South African adults reported that, while they had not taken part in violent action against foreign nationals, they would be prepared to do so in the future.[134]

129 Al Jazeera (2019) *South Africa offers 'profuse' apologies to Nigeria after attacks*
130 Al Jazeera (2019) *Nigerians repatriated from South Africa after attacks*
131 Al Jazeera (2019) *South Africa offers 'profuse' apologies to Nigeria after attacks*
132 Al Jazeera (2019) *Nigerians repatriated from South Africa after attacks*
133 Gordon, S. (2019) *What research reveals about the drivers of anti-immigrant hate crime in South Africa* The Conversation
134 Ibid.

The Middle East

Overview

In 2019, conflict-related displacement continued to dominate population movements in the Middle East. Conflicts in Syria and Yemen escalated as ceasefires broke down, leading to further large-scale displacement.

As the Syrian conflict entered its ninth year, countries around the region continued to resist the transition from temporary protection to local integration for Syrian refugees, and resettlement places remained inadequate and large-scale voluntary returns impossible.

Despite continuing large-scale deportations of irregular workers from Saudi Arabia to East Africa, Ethiopian migrants continued to arrive in Yemen in large numbers, intending to transit overland to work in Saudi Arabia.

Syria's displaced

As the Syrian conflict entered into its ninth year in 2019, over 11 million Syrian's were living in displacement – 5.6 million as refugees and 5.9 million as internally displaced persons (IDPs) – the largest forcibly displaced population in the world.[135] In 2018, Syrians also continued to be among the largest newly-displaced population, with 889,400 people displaced during the year, including 632,700 newly displaced/registered outside Syria.[136]

Worsening conflict

Since the start of 2019, conflict between opposition groups and the Syrian government and its allies in the north of Syria dramatically escalated, causing a high number of civilian fatalities and a deterioration in the humanitarian situation.[137] In April 2019, Syrian government forces and their allies launched an offensive in the north of Syria that has caused over 400 civilian causalities and the displacement of 450,000 people

to areas near the Turkish border between April and August, raising diplomatic tensions.[138] In response to these offensives, in August 2019 the (UN) Secretary-General announced an inquiry into the destruction of and damage to facilities on the deconfliction list, after reports of widespread airstrikes on civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, schools and water stations, as well as the killing of humanitarian workers.[139] Humanitarian needs in Syria remain acute, with 11.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, as of July 2019.

Despite the protracted nature of their displacement in the region, Syrian refugees hosted by neighbouring countries face persistent challenges.

Lebanon turns up the pressure

Lebanon has been increasing pressure on the 944,200[140] Syrian refugees in the country in 2019 to return to Syria, with reports of arrests, deportations, the closing of shops and the demolition of semi-permanent informal settlements.[141]

In March 2019, Lebanon's Directorate of General Security announced that 172,046 refugees had returned to Syria from Lebanon since December 2017, facilitated in part by an agreement with the Syrian government signed in July 2018.[142] Given the conditions for Syrian refugees in Lebanon and the restrictive policies of the Lebanese government towards Syrian refugees, human rights groups have questioned the voluntary nature of these returns.[143] According to UNHCR, only five percent of Syrian refugees in Lebanon intend to return to Syria in the next 12 months.[144]

135 Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan (2019) *2019 Progress Report: Regional Refugees and Resilience Plan in Response to the Syria Crisis*; UNHCR (2019) *Operational Update Syria: January to June 2019*
136 UNHCR (2019) *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018*
137 ACAPS (2019) *Syria: Displacement in the northwest*
138 UNOCHA (2019) *Humanitarian Update: Syrian Arab Republic, Issue 4 July 2019*; UNICEF (2019) *Whole of Syria July 2019 Humanitarian Results*; MSF (2019) *Escalating Conflict in Idlib Leaves Increasing Numbers Dead, Wounded or Displaced*; Reuters (2019) *Erdogan tells Putin that Syrian offensive is causing humanitarian crisis*
139 UNICEF (2019) *Whole of Syria July 2019 Humanitarian Results*; UNOCHA (2019) *Syrian Arab Republic: Cross Border Humanitarian Reach and Activities from Turkey – June 2019*
140 Number of registered refugees according to UNHCR (2019) *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018,* Lebanon's government says it hosts 1.5 million Syrians: United Nations/Government of Lebanon (2019) *Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2019 (2019 Update)*
141 Human Rights Watch (2019) *Lebanon: Syrian Refugee Shelters Demolished: Coercive Measure Intensify Pressure to Return to Syria*
142 Amnesty International (2019) *Why are returns of refugee from Lebanon to Syria premature?* Public Statement
143 Ibid.
144 UNHCR (2019) *Fifth regional survey on Syrian refugees' perceptions and intentions on return to Syria: Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan – March 2019*

Closed doors and deportations

In April 2019, Lebanon's Higher Defence Council reportedly requested security and military forces to prevent the unauthorised entry of Syrian nationals.[145] In May, the General Director of General Security issued a decision to deport all Syrians who entered Lebanon irregularly after April 24, 2019.[146] According to a group of Lebanese NGOs, this stipulates that deported Syrian nationals would be returned directly to the Syrian authorities.[147] According to Amnesty International, between the April 24 and August 9, Lebanon deported 2,447 Syrians "in clear violation of Lebanon's non-refoulement obligations."[148] Amnesty has urged Lebanese authorities to stop deportations and called on the international community to share responsibility for refugees with current host countries, by reactivating their resettlement programs and calling for access to independent monitors in Syria.[149]

In June 2019, Higher Defence Council ordered the demolition of all "semi-permanent structures" built with materials other than timber and plastic in eastern Lebanon, raising the risk of homelessness for 15,000 Syrian children living in the area, as no alternative solutions were proposed.[150] In 2018, almost 19 percent of Syrian refugee households were living in non-permanent structures, an increase from 17 percent in 2016 and 2017, as part of an observed shift towards non-residential and non-permanent structures among the Syrian refugee population in Lebanon in 2018, particularly among female headed households.[151] Those in non-permanent structures are more likely to identify World Food Programme food assistance and debt or credit as their primary source of income and to be living under the poverty line.[152]

Global Distribution of Syrian refugees
as of early 2019 (since 2011)

Top 10 European countries for Syrian asylum applications*

Syrian refugees registered in neighbouring countries**

Sweden 120,855
Denmark 21,400
Netherlands 39,510
Germany 593,025
Belgium 23,995
France 21,660
Hungary 78,245
Austria 55,550
Bulgaria 21,385
Greece 61,365
Turkey 3,644,342
Lebanon 948,849
Iraq 252,451
Jordan 671,551
Egypt 133,028
North Africa 35,713

Source: The BBC https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-48682783

145 Lebanese Center for Human Rights, et al. (2019) '*Position Paper: On the Decision to Summarily Deport Syrian Nationals who Entered Lebanon Irregularly*'

146 Vohra, A. (July 2019) '*Syrian refugees panic as threat of deportation rises in Lebanon*' Al Jazeera

147 Lebanese Center for Human Rights, et al. (2019) *Position Paper on the Decision to Summarily Deport Syrian Nationals who Entered Lebanon Irregularly*

148 Amnesty International (2019) *Lebanon: Authorities must immediately halt deportation of Syrian refugees*

149 Ibid.

150 Save the Children (2019) *Demolition of Syrian Homes in Arsal, Lebanon: At least 15,00 Children will be made homeless*

151 UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, Inter-Agency Coordination Lebanon (2019) *2018 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon*

152 Ibid.

Given the intractability of the Syrian conflict, the ever-hardening political rhetoric and actions towards Syrian refugees in Lebanon, and the delicate sectarian equilibrium of Lebanese politics, humanitarian and development funding remains crucial.[153] However, the mid-year funding gap for the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan[154] for 2019 was $2 billion, amounting to 76 percent of needs.[155]

Growing strain in Turkey

Turkey has been the country hosting the largest number of refugees in the world in since 2014. As of June 2019, it hosted four million refugees and asylum seekers, including over 3.6 million Syrian refugees.[156] In 2018, Turkey's Syrian refugee population increased by over half a million, with 387,600 new registrations[157] and 113,100 births.[158] In September 2018, UNHCR announced the termination of its registration activities in Turkey, as the country's Directorate of General Migration Management took over responsibility for registering and processing of international protection applications.[159]

Turkey has made considerable efforts to support Syrians' access to health, housing, education and social assistance, supported by the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey and humanitarian and development partners. In July, the EU announced a new set of assistance measures totalling 1.4 billion euros, bringing the total allocated amount to 5.6 billion of the 6 billion euros pledged under the EU Turkey Agreement.[160]

Nowhere else to go
Despite Interior Ministry figures indicating that 347,000 Syrian refugees had returned voluntarily to Syria as of August 2019,[161] return is not an imminently viable option for many Syrians in Turkey. Resettlement is impossible for the vast majority of Syrians in Turkey. According to UNHCR, 16,042 refugees were submitted for resettlement in 2018, and 6,403 Syrians were submitted

for resettlement between January and June 2019, with needs far outweighing available resettlement places.[162]

However, the contracting Turkish economy, high unemployment[163] and the Istanbul mayoral election campaigns' capitalisation on growing animosity towards Syrians refugees,[164] have highlighted the challenges associated with a transition from temporary sanctuary to sustainable integration.[165]

Work hard to come by
Across Turkey, Syrian refugees have struggled to access formal employment, with just 32,111 work permits issued to Syrians with residence permits as of February 2019.[166] The overwhelming majority of Syrian refugees work in the informal sector, with a recent study finding that of 84 percent of households surveyed in which one person worked, only three percent had a work permit.[167]

Unemployment of Syrians in Turkey varies greatly between the provinces, with an average rate of eight percent in the west of the country, compared with 22 percent in central regions and 19 percent in the south.[168] A World Bank study found that many of the provinces with a large population of Syrians (relative to both the refugee population in Turkey and the local population) are among the most disadvantaged, with lower labour force participation and higher unemployment than the national average, creating increased competition for informal work.[169]

Arrests and restrictions
In 2019, Turkey introduced new strategies to combat irregular migration, including in relation to Syrian refugees outside the province in which they were registered. The governor of Istanbul set an initial deadline of August 20 for Syrians registered outside Istanbul to leave the city and return to the provinces in which they are registered, or face arrest and transportation.[170] The announcement was preceded by a significant increase in the number of police spot-checks and raids on businesses in Istanbul,

153 Vohra, A. (2019) *Lebanon is Sick and Tired of Syrian Refugees* Foreign Policy
154 The *Lebanon Crisis Response Plan* brings together more than 133 specialised partners and aims to assist 1.5 million vulnerable Lebanese, 1.5 million Syrian refugees and more than 208,000 Palestinian refugees.
155 Interagency Coordination Lebanon (20019) *LCRP 2019 Mid-Year Funding Update: 31 June 2019*; see also: Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan (2019) *2019 Progress Report: Regional Refugees and Resilience Plan in Response to the Syrian Crisis – January to June 2019*
156 UNHCR (2019) *Operational Update Turkey: June 2019*
157 Including 70,000 new arrivals from Syria
158 UNHCR (2019) *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018*
159 Asylum Information Database (2019) *Overview of the main changes since the previous update: Turkey April 2019*; see also: UNHCR *Registration and RSD with UNHCR Turkey*
160 European Commission (2019) *EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey: 5.6 billion out of 6 billion allocated in support of refugees* Press Release
161 Reuters (2019) *Syrians facing forced removal for Istanbul given temporary reprieve*
162 UNHCR (2019) *Update: Durable Solutions for Syrian Refugees – July/August 2019*
163 BETAM (2019) *Labour Market Outlook: August 2019*
164 Aydin, M. et al. (2019) *Research on Public Perception of Turkish Foreign Policy* Centre for Turkish Studies – Kadir Has University
165 Reuters (2019) *Turkish unemployment jumps to highest in nearly a decade*; see also; Thompson, P. & Widdink, H. (2019) *Syrian refugees may hold the key to Turkey's economic development and geo-political ambitions* Turkish Policy Quarterly; Kirişci, K. Kolasin, G. (2019) *Syrian refugees in Turkey need better access to formal jobs* Brookings
166 Turkish Red Crescent & World Food Programme (2019) *Refugees In Turkey: Livelihoods Survey Findings*
167 Ibid.
168 Ibid.
169 Del Carpio, X. et al. (2019) *Integrating Refugees into the Turkish Labor Market* Forced Migration Review
170 Governor of Istanbul (2019) *Combating irregular migration: Press Release (2019-44)*

with over 6,000 people arrested in the middle two weeks of July.[171] In August, the deadline to leave Istanbul was extended for two months and the interior minister stated that Syrians would be able to relocate and register in any other province still accepting registrations.[172] According to media reports, a similar process will begin in other major Turkish cities.[173] The Istanbul governor's office stipulated that Syrians not registered in the city would be referred to provinces designated by the Ministry of the Interior, while irregular migrants would be deported.[174]

Although Turkish authorities have repeatedly denied that deportations to Syria are taking place in the context of the crackdown, in July 2019 Human Rights Watch raised concerns that authorities had detained and coerced Syrians refugees into signing voluntary return forms before forcibly deporting them.[175]

Afghan nationals arrive in greater numbers

As well being a country of asylum, Turkey is also an important country of transit for refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants travelling from the Middle East. Between January and June 2019, the Turkish government recorded 137,035 arrivals in the country, the majority from Afghanistan (39%) and Pakistan (16%).[176] In the first half of 2019, Turkish authorities arrested 3,776 smugglers, including in one incident in May where they arrested 20 members of an international smuggling operation.[177]

The increased arrivals of Afghan nationals continues the trend of 2018, when arrivals of Afghan nationals from Iran made up the largest group of new arrivals in Turkey (39% of total arrivals).[178] Afghans reportedly face increasing obstacles in registering for asylum in Turkey and thus accessing services, such as health and education, and increasing risks,

of detention and deportation.[179] Turkey deported 5,560 Afghans in the first six months of 2019.[180]

Many Afghans consequently attempt to move onwards towards Europe. Since 2018, Afghans have overtaken Syrians as the largest national group arriving in Greece from Turkey.[181] In the first six months of 2019, 4,525 Afghan asylum seekers arrived in Greece, compared with 1,236 during the same period in 2017 and 388 in 2017.[182]

More opportunities in Jordan

Jordan hosts some 1.3 million refugees and has a native population of 6.6 million, making it the second highest per capita host of refugees in the world after Lebanon.[183] The majority of Syrian refugees in Jordan live in urban areas, alongside refugees and migrants from Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, Sudan, Somalia, and Yemen.[184] In April 2019, Jordanian authorities rolled back restrictions on access to public health services for Syrian refugees, reinstating their access to public hospitals and primary health care centres at uninsured Jordanian rates.[185]

Three years since the signing of the 2016 Jordan Compact, Jordan has made progress towards achieving livelihood opportunities for Syrian refugees and their Jordanian hosts.[186] As of the end of June 2019, the Jordanian government reported having issued 146,178 work permits to Syrian refugees, including 17,024 in the first six months of 2019.[187] However, these figures include many renewals of existing permits. For instance, in June 2019, of the 1,332 permits issued, 1,216 were renewals of existing permits and only 49 were first-time issuances.[188]

In November 2018, Jordanian authorities introduced reforms enabling Syrian refugees to register and operate home businesses, although concerns have been raised

171 Al Jazeera (July 2019) *Turkey: 6,000 refugees arrested in Istanbul crackdown*
172 Reuters (2019) *Syrians facing forced removal for Istanbul given temporary reprieve*
173 Yinanç, B. (2019) *Turkey extends deadline for unregistered refugees in Istanbul* Hurriyet Daily News
174 Demirören News Agency (2019) *Governor's office orders Syrians to leave Istanbul for their registered cities* Hurriyet Daily News
175 Human Rights Watch (2019) *Turkey Forcibly Returning Syrians to Danger: Authorities Detain, Coerce Syrians to Sign 'Voluntary Return' Forms*; Altun, F. (2019) *Turkey Is Helping, Not Deporting, Syrian Refugees* Foreign Policy. See also *Yemen – Conflict ECHO Daily Flash 27 August 2019*
176 Mixed Migration Centre (2019) *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean Quarter One*; Mixed Migration Centre (2019) *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean Quarter Two*
177 Mixed Migration Centre (2019) *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: Middle East Quarter 2*
178 Mixed Migration Centre (2019) *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: Middle East Quarter 2*
179 Leghtas, I. Thea, J. (2019) *'You Cannot Exist in this Place' Lack of Registration Denies Afghan Refugees Protection in Turkey* Refugees International.
180 UNOCHA (2019) *Afghanistan Snapshot of Population Movements (January to July 2019)*
181 Mixed Migration Centre (2019) *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: Middle East Quarter 2*
182 UNHCR Data available at: *https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/58460*
183 Wahba, J. (2019) *Why Syrian refugees have no negative effects on Jordan's labour market* The Conversation; UNHCR (2019) *Jordan Fact Sheet May 2019*
184 UNHCR (2019) *Jordan Fact Sheet May 2019*; De Bel-Air, Francoise (2016) *Migration Profile: Jordan* Migration Policy Centre
185 Ibid.
186 Huang, C. Gough, K. (2019) *The Jordan Compact: Three Years on, Where Do We Stand?* Centre for Global Development
187 UNHCR (2019) Jordan: *Livelihood Opportunities for Refugees July 2019*
188 Ministry of Labour Syrian Refugee Unit (2019) *Syrian Refugee Unit Work Permit Progress Report June 2019*

about the restrictive nature of these reforms.[189] While some complain about refugees' impact on local job markets, a 2019 study found that providing legal work opportunities to Syrian refugees did not have a detrimental effect on the native job market.[190] Contributing factors to this low impact include the inflow of aid into Jordan and the conditions of Jordan Compact, including aid and trade concessions, and employment support for Jordanians.[191]

Yemen's conflict worsens

In Yemen, after four years violence, the UN's top humanitarian aid official reported in June 2019 that the conflict there was becoming worse and increasingly complex with over 330,000 people displaced by conflict in the first six months of the year.[192] More than 3.3 million people remain displaced across the country and more than 24 million people, 80 percent of the population, are in need of assistance and protection.[193] According to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), the Saudi-led coalition is the actor responsible for the largest number of civilian deaths in Yemen; 67 percent of civilian fatalities in Yemen since 2015 resulting from direct targeting have been caused by Saudi-led coalition airstrikes.[194]

Lifeline remittances under threat
In the context of ongoing conflict, a collapsed economy and a deepening humanitarian crisis, remittances from semi- and low-skilled work in the Gulf countries are a crucial source of income and a primary source of foreign currency in Yemen. The World Bank estimates that $3.5 billion was received in personal remittance in Yemen in 2018, a likely under-estimate.[195] However, the "nationalisation plan" underway in Saudi Arabia under Vision 2030 has made it increasingly difficult for Yemeni workers in the country, with rising residence levies and living costs, and restrictions to permissible areas of work.[196] The latest decree barring foreigners from an additional twelve types of private-sector business, which came into effect in September 2018, could affect most Yemeni workers in Saudi Arabia.[197] In the first six months of 2019, IOM recorded the return of 29,419 Yemeni

citizens from Saudi Arabia,[198] largely consistent with the 73,190 arrivals recorded throughout 2018.[199]

Movements to and from Saudi Arabia
As noted in the Africa section above, despite Saudi Arabia's large-scale deportations of East Africans over recent years, many East Africans still try to reach Saudi and do so via Yemen. In the first six months of 2019, IOM recorded 84,378 East Africans, the majority young men from Ethiopia, arriving in Yemen on their way to Saudi Arabia.[200] The abuses suffered by migrants on this route have been well-documented for years, and in August 2019, Human Rights Watch released a new report detailing the serious abuses that migrants face throughout their journey across the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, through Yemen and within Saudi Arabia.[201]

189 UNHCR et al. (2019) *Vulnerability Assessment Framework: Population Study 2019* Jordan; Jordan INGO Forum (2019) *Public Briefing Paper* Brussels Conference III for Syrian and the Region
190 Wahba, J. (2019) *Why Syrian refugees have no negative effects on Jordan's labour market* The Conversation; Fallah, B. et al. (2019) *The impact of refugees on employment and wages in Jordan* Journal of Development Economics
191 Ibid.
192 UNOHA (2019) *Briefing to the Security Council on the humanitarian situation in Yemen*
193 Ibid.
194 ACLED (2019) *Yemen Snapshots: 2015 – 2019*
195 World Bank Data *Personal remittances, received (Current US$) – Yemen, Rep.*
196 Al-Awlaui, W et al. (2019) *Yemen's Expatriate Workforce Under Threat: The Essential Role of Remittances in Mitigating the Economic Collapse* Sana'a Center for Strategy Studies
197 Ibid.
198 IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (2019) *Flow Monitoring Points: Migrant arrivals and Yemeni returns from Saudi Arabia in June 2019*
199 IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (2019) *Flow Monitoring Points: 2018 Migrant arrivals and Yemeni returns from Saudi Arabia*
200 Botti, D. & Phillips, M. (2019) *Record number of refugees and migrants arriving in Yemen amidst intensifying and complicated war* Mixed Migration Centre; IOM (2019) *Yemen – Flow Monitoring Registry – January to June 2019*
201 Human Rights Watch (2019) *Ethiopians Abused on Gulf Migration Route: Trafficking, Exploitation, Torture, Abusive Prison Conditions*

The Americas

Overview

Mobility patterns throughout the Americas increased in scale and complexity in 2018 and 2019. In Latin America, the Venezuelan crisis deepened, causing an unprecedented number of Venezuelans to seek protection outside their country, while in North America, there was a significant increase in the number of families from Central America reaching the US-Mexico border.

The contrast between the policy responses to these mixed movements also grew starker throughout 2019,[202] as Latin American countries largely continued to support Venezuelans seeking protection, while the US administration focused on enforcement, limiting opportunities for asylum and garnering the cooperation of third countries through reactive punitive measures.

Venezuela's deepening crisis

Swelling exodus

As Venezuela's economic, political and social crisis deteriorated further in 2018 and 2019, forced migration from the country continued to dominate mobility patterns within Latin America. By mid-2019, four million Venezuelans had been forced to leave their country due to the crisis, the majority living in Colombia (1.3 million), Peru (768,00), Chile (288,000), Ecuador (263,00), Brazil (168,000) and Argentina (130,000).[203] Between November 2018 and June 2019, the number of Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the region increased by one million, with the UN estimating that the total number of Venezuelans outside the country by the end of 2019 will exceed five million.[204]

One in four in need of aid

The collapse in Venezuela is the world's worst economic and political collapse outside of war in the last 45 years and has precipitated a serious humanitarian crisis within the country.[205] Although the government does not publish socio-economic statistics, the UN reports that the humanitarian situation worsened throughout 2019, with severe inflation,[206] a serious health care crisis[207] and 25 percent of the population in need of humanitarian assistance as of April 2019.[208] A series of unilateral sanctions imposed by the US in January and August 2019 prompted concerns from the High Commissioner of Human Rights that these had the potential to "significantly exacerbate the crisis for millions of Venezuelans."[209]

In the first six months of 2019, the borders of Venezuela emerged as a flashpoint for internal political contests over humanitarian aid and foreign influence.[210] In February 2019, President Nicolás Maduro closed Venezuela's borders to prevent humanitarian aid from the US, Brazil and Colombia reaching the country.[211] The closures forced migrants to take alternative routes in and out of Brazil and Colombia, increasing the risks of extortion by Venezuelan border officials on both borders, as well as violence, theft and forced recruitment by armed actors in the Colombia border areas.[212] In May and June 2019, Venezuela reopened its borders with Brazil and Colombia, allowing formal cross-border traffic to resume.[213] Following the re-opening of the borders, significant numbers of Venezuelans crossed into neighbouring countries through the official border points to buy food and medical supplies that are unavailable in Venezuela.[214]

202 Selee, A. (2019) *Latin America's Migration Lesson for the World* Americas Quarterly
203 UNHCR (2019) *Refugees and migrants from Venezuela top 4 million; UNHCR and IOM*
204 UN News (2019) *Venezuela's needs 'significant and growing' UN humanitarian chief warns Security Council, as 'unparalleled' exodus continues*
205 Kurmanaev, A (2019) *Venezuela's Collapse Is the Worst Outside of War in Decades, Economics Say* New York Times; See Human Rights Watch and John Hopkins Centre for Humanitarian Health (2019) *Venezuela's Humanitarian Emergency: Large-Scale UN Response Needed to Address Health and Food Crisis*
206 Piven, B. (2019) *IMF denies pressuring Venezuela to release data, reports Reuters* Reuters
207 See Human Rights Watch and John Hopkins Centre for Humanitarian Health (2019) *Venezuela's Humanitarian Emergency: Large-Scale UN Response Needed to Address Health and Food Crisis*
208 Nichols, M (2019) *Venezuelans facing 'unprecedented challenges,' many need aid – internal U.N report* Reuters
209 OHCHR (2019) *Statement by Michelle Bachelet on the recent sanctions imposed on Venezuela* Geneva
210 Muggah, R. Abdenur, A. (2019) *Brazil and Venezuela clash over migrants, humanitarian aid and closed borders* The Conversation
211 Casey, N. et al. (2019) *At Venezuela's Border, a Strange and Deadly Showdown over Aid* The New York Times
212 Boadle, A. (2019) *Venezuela reopens border where migrants used trails to reach Brazil* Reuters; UNHCR (2019) *Protection Monitoring: Venezuela Situation, Update 1 January to June 2019*
213 Al Jazeera (2019) *Venezuela reopens border with Colombia after four months*
214 Ibid.

Top 10 Latin America and Caribbean countries by total refugees and asylum seekers, Mid-year 2018 UNHCR data

Location:
- Hosted
- Abroad

Status:

Refugees

Asylum seekers
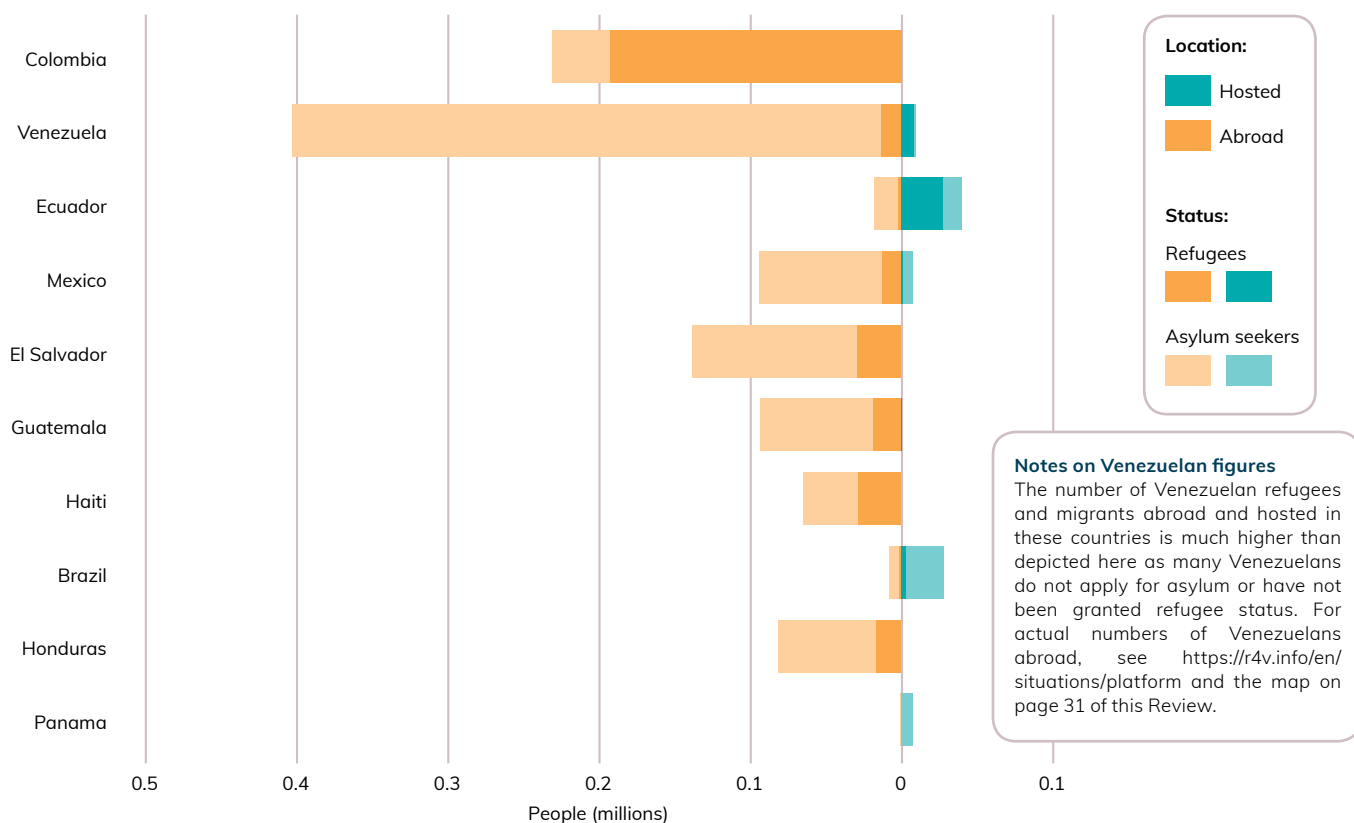
Notes on Venezuelan figures
The number of Venezuelan refugees and migrants abroad and hosted in these countries is much higher than depicted here as many Venezuelans do not apply for asylum or have not been granted refugee status. For actual numbers of Venezuelans abroad, see https://r4v.info/en/situations/platform and the map on page 31 of this Review.

Source: UNHCR Mid-Year 2018 figures (latest available) design updated from IOM graphics from IOM World Migration Report 2018

"Hosted" refers to those refugees and asylum seekers from other countries who are residing in the receiving country (right-hand side of the figure); "abroad" refers to refugees and asylum seekers originating from that country who are outside of their origin country. The top 10 countries are based on 2016 data and are calculated by combining refugees and asylum seekers in and from countries.

Regional responses

The Venezuelan crisis has had a deep impact upon the region, polarising domestic politics, leading to a breakdown in regional diplomatic coordination mechanisms, and putting significant pressure on the public services of neighbouring countries hosting Venezuelan migrants and refugees.[215] In response, several countries in the region introduced new visa requirements for nationals of Venezuela in 2019, causing significant movements across borders in anticipation of the changes.[216]

In June 2019, the government of Peru introduced new requirements for Venezuelan nationals seeking to enter the country.[217] From June 2019, Venezuelans must have obtained a free "humanitarian visa" at consulates in Venezuela or exceptionally in Colombia or Ecuador, before arriving in Peru.[218] Venezuelans are able to seek asylum at the border of Peru and there are a number of humanitarian exceptions for Venezuelans arriving without the required documents.[219]

In June 2019, the government of Chile introduced a tourist visa for short stays in the country for Venezuelan nationals, and announced that the "democratic responsibility visa", which allows for a stay of one year in Chile, would be available at all Chilean consulates worldwide.[220] In late July 2019, the government of Ecuador also introduced visa requirements for nationals of Venezuela seeking to enter the country, and announced that a regularisation plan for Venezuelans already present in the country would begin in October.[221]

215 International Crisis Group (2019) *A way out of Latin America's Impasse over Venezuela*
216 MMC (2019) *Waning Welcome: the growing challenges facing mixed migration flows from Venezuela*
217 Response for Venezuelans (2019) *Population Movements in the Andean Region: Flash Update 18 June 2019*
218 Ibid.
219 Ibid.
220 Reuters (2019) *Chile offers 'democratic responsibility visa' to Venezuelan migrants*
221 Response for Venezuelans (2019) *Current situation of refugees and migrants coming from Venezuela to Colombia, Ecuador and Peru*

Latin America and the Caribbean
Venezuelan refugees & migrants in the region

3.5M
Approx. Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean

4.3M
Total approx. Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the world

46.1K
Mexico

28.5K
Dominican Republic

16K
Aruba

26K
Curacao

25.7K
Costa Rica

40K
Trinidad and Tobago

94.6K
Panama

36.4K
Guyana

1.4M
Colombia

330.4K
Ecuador

178.6K
Brazil*

853.4K
Peru

288.2K
Chile

0.5K
Paraguay

8.6K
Uruguay

145K
Argentina
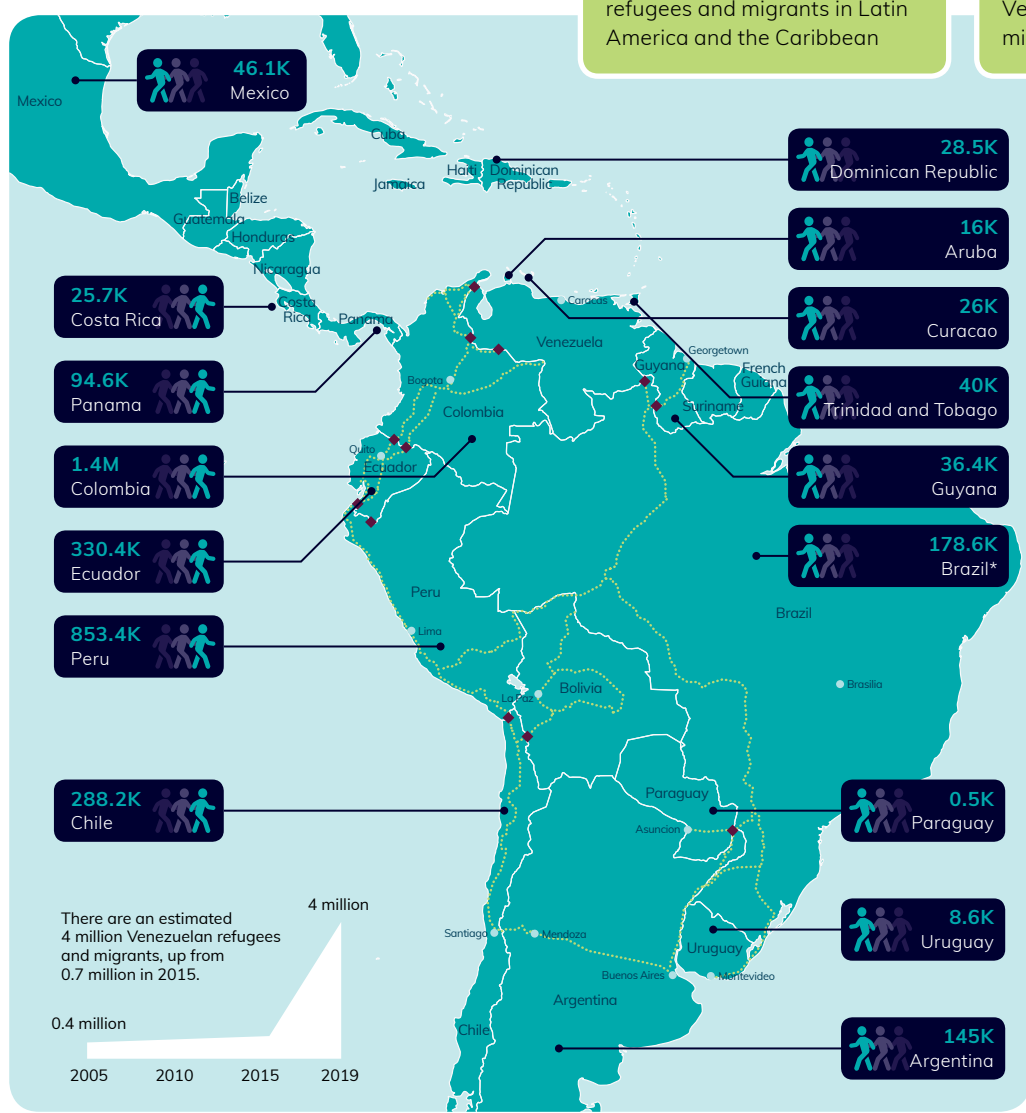
Legend:
● Cities
◆ Land border crossing
••••• Displacement route

Source: Governments. Displacement flow data come from public information, official websites and secondary sources.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used in this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
Creation date: August 2019.
*Source: SISMAGRA+STI

There are an estimated 4 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants, up from 0.7 million in 2015.

4 million

0.4 million

2005　2010　2015　2019

Venezuelan migrants and refugees in Latin America at August 2019. Image source: R4V, R4V Latin America and the Caribbean, Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the region - August 2019, available at: https://r4v.info/es/documents/download/70780

Rushing to beat new deadlines

These changes precipitated a significant movement of Venezuelans attempting to enter Peru and Ecuador before the entry requirements came into effect. The number of Venezuelans arriving in Peru from Ecuador steadily increased from 2,300 on June 8 to 8,000 on June 14, the day before the visa changes became operational.[222] After June 15, arrivals in Peru slowed to an average of 400 persons a day.[223] Similar increases were observed at the border between Ecuador and Colombia as Venezuelans attempted to move from Colombia through Ecuador to Peru before the changes took effect.[224]

In August 2019, in anticipation of the changes to the visa requirements in Ecuador, daily average arrivals into the country from Columbia increased to 3,000 a day, peaking on August 24 at 6,000 arrivals, before dramatically decreasing to 30 arrivals on August 27, as those not holding a visa were refused entry to the territory.[225] In total some 70,000 Venezuelans crossed the Rumichaca border into Ecuador between 1 and 25 August.[226]

UNHCR raised concerns that restrictions on regular entry imposed by Peru, Ecuador and Chile could expose people to additional risks of extortion and more dangerous routes, as well as promote practices such as smuggling.[227]

222 Response for Venezuelans (2019) *Population Movements in the Andean Region: Flash Update 18 June 2019*
223 Response for Venezuelans (2019) *Current situation of refugees and migrants coming from Venezuela to Colombia, Ecuador and Peru*
224 Response for Venezuelans (2019) *Population Movements in the Andean Region: Flash Update 18 June 2019*
225 Response for Venezuelans (2019) *Current situation of refugees and migrants coming from Venezuela to Colombia, Ecuador and Peru*
226 Ibid.
227 UNHCR (2019) *Protection Monitoring: Venezuela Situation, Update 1 January to June 2019*

Venezuelans abroad
by region

	Latin America
	North America

2005 91,420
155,140

2010 103,129
196,910

2015 141,103
273,418

2018 1,690,228
310,999

2019 2,917,000
311,000

0 — 500,000 — 1,000,000 — 1,500,000 — 2,000,000 — 2,500,000 — 3,000,000
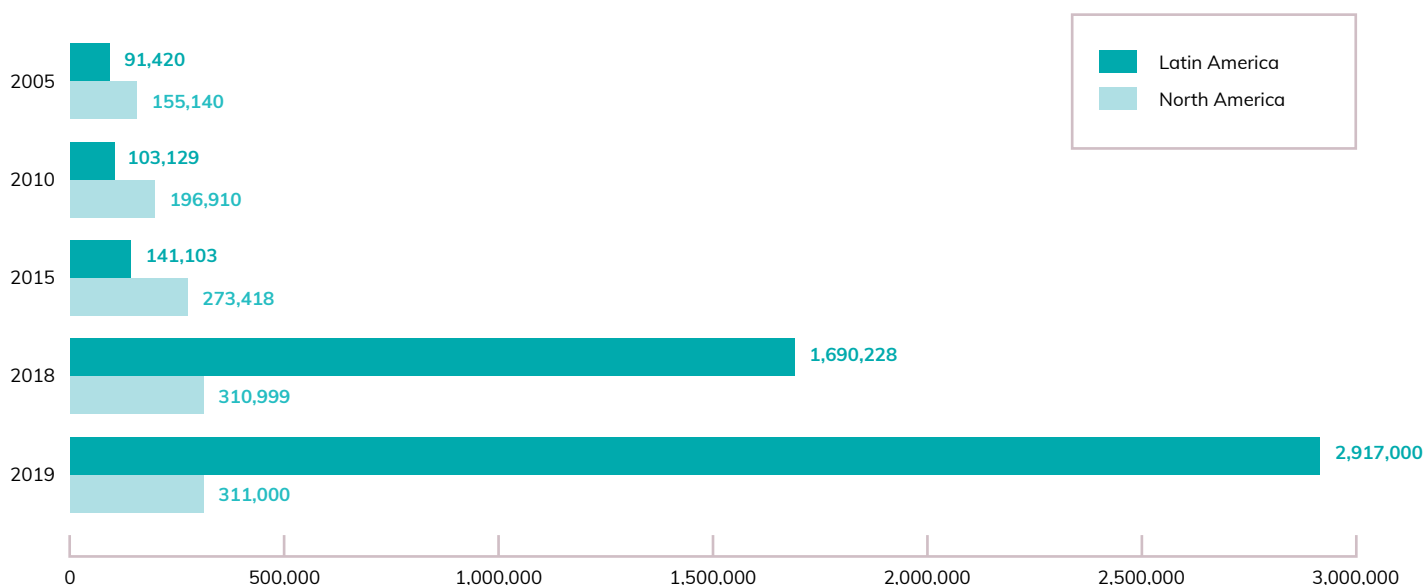
Data Source: adapted from UN (2017). "Venezuelans Abroad by Region." and UNHCR and IOM statistics for June 2019

Challenges in Colombia

Colombia has remained welcoming of Venezuelan nationals, with the government passing a decree in May 2019 granting citizenship to children born to Venezuelan parents in Colombia after August 2015, affecting some 24,000 children.[228] However, given the scale of movement, the vulnerability of many of those on the move, and the capacity of stretched public services, Venezuelans face significant challenges in Colombia. Human Rights Watch reported in August 2019 that significant numbers of Venezuelans living in northern border areas of Colombia were vulnerable to abuse due to armed conflict and a weak state presence, with reports of extortion, trafficking, displacement, killings, and sexual abuse against Venezuelan migrants.[229] Data from these regions also indicates increases in infectious diseases, and adverse maternal and neonatal health outcomes amongst Venezuelans.[230]

Northward overland migration

The scale of overland migration between South and Central America has declined since 2015/16, when the arrival of a significant number of migrants and refugees prompted countries in Central America to close their borders.[231] However, in the first five months of 2019, the number of migrants and refugees crossing into the Darien region of Panama increased significantly, with 10,541 arrivals recorded between January and mid-May 2019, a significant increase compared with the 9,678 recorded arriving throughout 2018.[232]

The majority of arrivals in 2019 were from Haiti or Cuba, with smaller numbers from African countries (including Cameroon, Congo, Ghana, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Somalia) and South Asian countries (including India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka).[233] The passage between Colombia and Panama through the Darien Gap is a particularly hazardous multi-day journey through difficult jungle terrain, often made with the assistance of

228 Broner, T. & Pappier, J. (2019) *The war at the Colombia-Venezuela Border: Venezuelans feeling crisis at home have now become victims of armed conflict in Colombia*

229 Ibid.

230 Baddour, D (2019) *Colombia's Radical Plan to Welcome Millions of Venezuelan Migrants* The Atlantic; Doocy, S. *et al.* (2019) *Venezuelan Migration and the Border Health Crisis in Colombia and Brazil* Journal on Migration and Human Security

231 Morales, L. (2016) *Border Closures Strand Migrants in Colombia* The New Humanitarian

232 IFRC (2019) *Information bulletin No. 1 – Americas Population Movement August 2019*; Zamorano, J (2019) *Panama sees surge in migration crossing perilous Darien Gap* Associated Press

233 Ibid. See also Panama Today (2019) *Panama and Costa Rica agree on plan to face irregular flow of immigrants*

smugglers.[234] Migrants and refugees face significant risks of attack by armed groups during the journey, with media reports of extortion, robberies, sexual abuse, rape, and killings.[235] UNHCR reported in May 2019 that 100 people had applied for asylum in Panama after making the crossing from Colombia; however, most of those traveling this route intend to move onwards from Panama towards North America.[236]

The United States clamps down

In the first nine months of the 2019 fiscal year (FY 2019)[237] the number of primarily family groups and unaccompanied children from Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras arriving at the United States through Mexico increased significantly. In response, the US administration continued to focus heavily on enforcement, deterrence and prosecution, including through limiting opportunities for asylum and pressuring neighbouring countries to cooperate on border enforcement.[238] Immigration has become a particularly divisive issue in US politics, fuelled by reactive and hastily conceived enforcement measures that have regularly been challenged and overturned by courts, and rhetoric and policy measures that have brought local, state and federal governments into conflict along partisan lines around the treatment of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

Southern border apprehensions soar

The number of apprehensions at the US southern border increased significantly throughout 2019. In May 2019, the US Border Patrol apprehended 133,000 people, the highest number in a decade and more than triple the number recorded in May 2018.[239] The increase in arrivals is driven almost entirely by families and unaccompanied children from Northern Triangle countries (Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras) with nationals of these countries accounting for 74 percent of arrivals in FY 2019 through July.[240]

In FY 2019 until July, the number of families arriving at the southwest border of the US increased by 450 percent (from 77,794 to 432,838) over same period of FY 2018.[241] Families from Guatemala and Honduras accounted for most of this increase, representing 82 percent of families apprehended and 46 percent of the total number of adults, families and unaccompanied children apprehended in 2019.[242] The number of apprehended families from Honduras alone increased from 39,439 in the whole of FY 2018 to 171,256 in FY 2019 until July.[243] The number of unaccompanied children apprehended at the US border also increased significantly, from 41,283 in FY 2018 through July to 69,157 in FY 2019 until July.[244]

Numbers of refugees and asylum seekers in and from Northern American countries, Mid-year 2018 UNHCR data
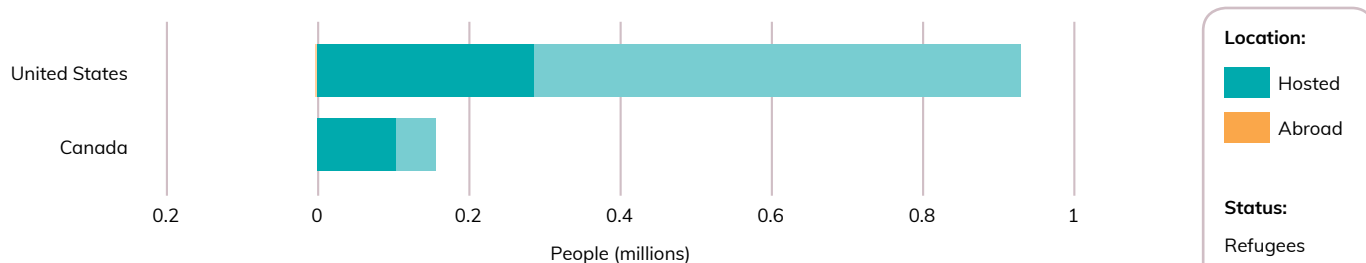
Source: UNHCR Mid-Year 2018 figures (latest available) design updated from IOM graphics from IOM World Migration Report 2018

"Hosted" refers to those refugees and asylum seekers from other countries who are residing in the receiving country (right-hand side of the figure); "abroad" refers to refugees and asylum seekers originating from that country who are outside of their origin country. The top 10 countries are based on 2016 data and are calculated by combining refugees and asylum seekers in and from countries.

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234 Zamorana, J. (2019) op. cit. See also: Zamorana, J. (2019) *Migrants traverse the deadly last stretch of Darien Jungle* Associated Press
235 Ibid.
236 Ibid. UNHCR (2019) *Americas Monthly Report – May 2019*
237 Data from the US Department of Homeland Security and the US State Department are presented by fiscal year (FY), which runs from October 1 to September 30. See Zong, J. *et al.* (2019) *Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigration and Immigration in the United States* Migration Policy Institute
238 Capps, R. et al. (2019) *From Control to Crisis: Changing Trends and Policies Reshaping U.S – Mexico Border Enforcement* Migration Policy Institute
239 Ibid.
240 Capps. R. et al. (2019) op. cit.; Gramlich, J. & Noe-Bustomente, L. (2019) *What's happening at the U.S. – Mexico border in 6 charts* Pew Research Centre; Passel, J. & Cohin D. (2019) *Mexicans decline to less than half the U.S. unauthorised immigrant population for the first time* Pew Research Centre
241 U.S. Customs and Border Protection (2019) *U.S. Border Patrol Southwest Border Apprehension by Sector Fiscal Year 2019* accessed August 2019
242 Ibid.
243 Ibid.
244 Ibid.

Apprehensions on US-Mexico border in 2019 (January-June)

Legend:
- Total apprehensions (dark blue)
- Family units* (teal)
- Unaccompanied alien children (light blue)
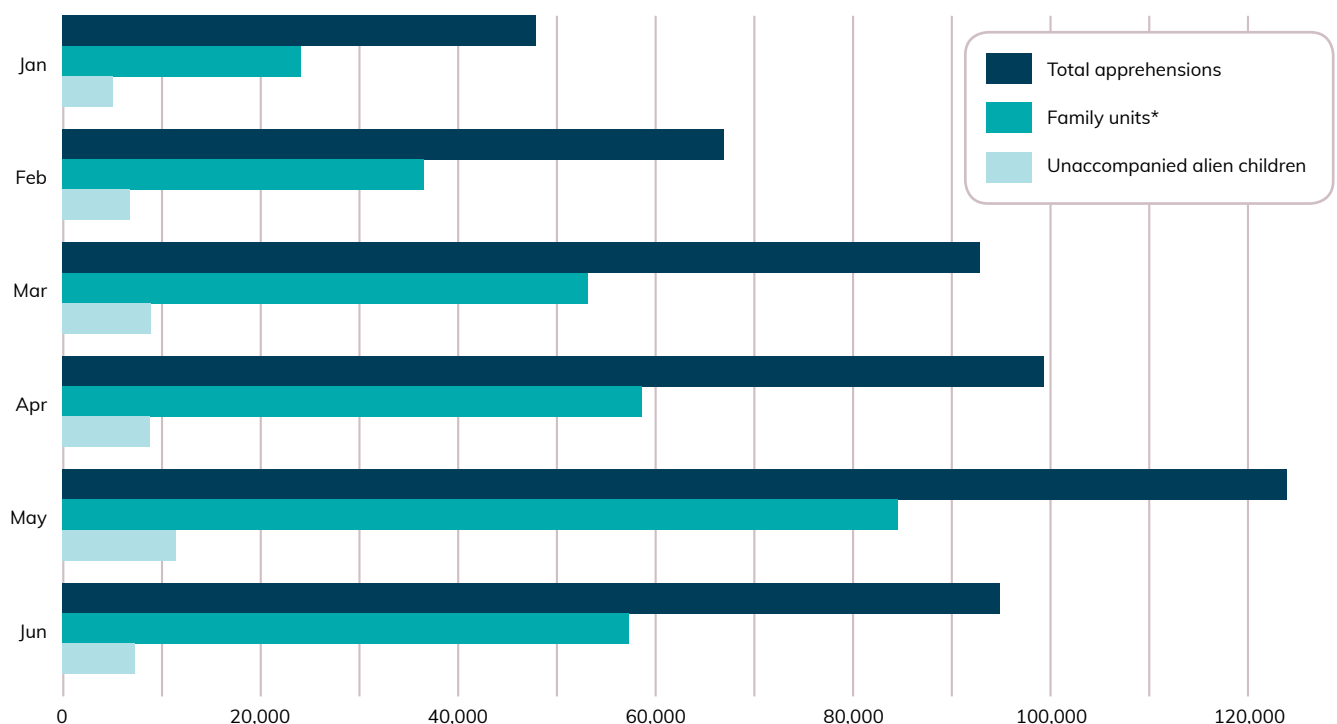
*Family unit represents the number of individuals (either a child under 18 years old, parent or legal guardian) apprehended with a family member by the US Border Patrol.
Source: US Customs and Border Protection

In FY 2018 a total of 396,579 individuals were apprehended between ports of entry on the US Southwest Border.

Between January and August 2019 (inclusive) 811,016 individuals were apprehended.

Many reasons for increase in flows

These movements are being driven by a complex mix of factors in countries of origin, transit and destination. In countries of origin, aspirations to migrate are formed in the context of wider demographic, economic, and political dynamics, including high population growth rates, comparatively high rates of poverty and significantly lower wages than those in Mexico or the US.[245]

Worsening drought and insecurity in Northern Triangle

In 2018, and into 2019, the severe drought prevailing in Northern Triangle countries since 2014 worsened, affecting crops and food security across the region.[246] Central American governments reported in April 2019 that 2.2 million people had suffered crop losses mainly due to drought in the Central American Dry Corridor (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua).[247]

Although the relationship between adverse climate events and mobility is complex, and while migration may be only one of a number of coping strategies employed by those affected, eight percent of families surveyed in the corridor by the UN's World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization in late 2018 (for the most part subsistence farmers) indicated they intended to migrate in response to the hardships brought about by drought.[248]

Northern Triangle states also continue to experience widespread insecurity, violence and political instability, with high homicide rates and high levels of organised crime and gang violence, as well as widespread domestic and societal abuse of women and children causing significant forced displacement.[249]

245 Capps, R et al. (2019) op. cit.
246 Ibid.
247 FAO (2019) Adverse climate events in the Central American Dry Corridor leave 1.4 million people in need of urgent food assistance
248 Ibid.
249 See for instance: UNHCR (2015) Women on the Run: First-Hand Accounts of Refugees Fleeing El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico; UNHCR (2014) Children on the Run: Unaccompanied Children Leaving Central America and Mexico and the Need for International Protection; UNHCR Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Asylum-Seekers from El Salvador (2016), Honduras (2016) and Guatemala (2018)

US cuts aid

In response to the increased numbers of arrivals of asylum seekers and migrants from Central America, in March 2019, the US administration slashed aid towards Central America nations, pending a reduction in movements.[250] The US has put pressure on its immediate neighbour Mexico to act to stem the flows. Commentators argue that cutting aid is likely to be counter-productive as US aid to the Northern Triangle assists in addressing the adverse drivers that contribute to forced displacement from the region.[251] US aid to the Northern Triangle countries was initially increased by the Obama administration but has recently been in a steady decline.[252]

New ways of moving

Throughout 2018 and during the first six months of 2019, the modalities of movement from Central America have also shifted as asylum seekers and migrants increasingly travel in larger groups and smugglers adapt their models to reflect the new dynamics.

High-profile "caravans"

Since mid-2018, asylum seekers and migrants have increasingly been traveling together in large groups from places of origin, through Mexico to arrive at the US border.[253] Given their relative visibility, these "caravans" have attracted significant public and political attention globally, despite representing a small number of the overall arrivals.[254]

The trend towards asylum seekers and migrants traveling in larger groups has produced a new form of competition for smuggling networks, as migrants can travel more cheaply along safer routes in large groups, finding safety in numbers and widespread media coverage.[255] According to the Migration Policy Institute, smugglers have therefore adjusted their prices and services, offering cut-price inclusive packages for larger groups.[256] This is reflected in arrivals to the US border, where the number of larger groups (with 100 or more people) arriving at the southern border in 2019 has increased considerably compared with 2018.[257]

Given that families usually present themselves to border officials in order to apply for asylum in the US, the services provided by smugglers are significantly less complex and carry a much lower risk for both smugglers and those on the move than attempting to cross the border clandestinely.[258] This has resulted in greater options and a reduced cost for those traveling in family groups from Central America.[259]

Mexico bows to US pressure

Throughout 2019, Mexico's response to the increase in movements through its territory has evolved from tolerance and protection towards enforcement as the government attempts to strengthen its fledgling migration policy framework and respond to significant pressure exerted by a capricious US administration.

Troops deployed at borders

In June 2019, following US threats to hike tariffs on Mexican goods, Mexico signed an agreement with the US in which it committed to "address the shared challenges of irregular migration" and "take unprecedented steps to increase enforcement".[260] Following Mexico's deployment of 6,500 security force personnel to its southern border with Guatemala and 15,000 to its northern border with the US,[261] apprehensions at the US-Mexico border fell by 29 percent in June.[262] Mexico has also steadily stepped up deportations of irregular migrants to Central America, after numbers declined at the start of the year, with 14,940 deported in April 2019 and 21,912 deported in June 2019.[263]

Controversial returns

The two governments also agreed to step up actions under the Migration Protection Protocols, which allow for the return of some asylum seekers and migrants to Mexico while their asylum or other cases are pending in the US.[264] Between January and August 2019, the US returned some 35,000 people to Mexico, including a number of children.[265] Human Rights Watch has raised concerns about the safety of those returned to Mexico, their access to due process given the logistical challenges

250 The Economist (2019) *Go home, and don't come back: Donald Trump cuts off aid to Central America.*
251 Ibid. See also: Monico, C (2019) *Is cutting Central American aid going to help stop the flow of migrants* The Conversation; Wroughton, L. Zengerle, P. (2019) *As promised, Trump slashed aid to Central America over migrants* Reuters
252 Ibid.
253 IFRC (2019) *Information Bulletin no.2: Central America Migrant Caravan*
254 BBC News (2018) *Migrants caravan: What is it and why does it matter?*; Brenner, Y. et al. (2019) *The closing door: mixed flows from Central America facing restricted access to protection* Mixed Migration Centre
255 Capps, R. et al. (2019) op. cit.
256 Ibid.
257 Ibid.
258 Ibid.
259 Ibid.
260 Stack, L. (2019) *U.S. and Mexico Issue a Joint Declaration on Migration and Tariffs* New York Times
261 Graham, D. (2019) *Mexico says it has deployed 15,000 forces in the north to halt U.S – bound migration* Reuters
262 Selle, A. et al. (2019) *Strategic Solutions for the United States and Mexico to Manage the Migration Crisis* Migration Policy Institute
263 AFP (2019) *Mexico deports 33% more migrants after deal with the US*
264 US Department of Homeland Security (2019) *Migrant Protection Protocols*
265 Marelle, S. (2019) *Opinion: The evidence is in: Trump's 'Remain in Mexico' policy puts asylum seekers lives at risk*

of running an asylum case across borders, and family separations occurring under the program.[266]

The agreement with the US comes in the context of a strained asylum system in Mexico, with a 196 percent increase of those seeking asylum in the first half of 2019 compared with the same time in 2018, and declining funding.[267]

Commentators have questioned the sustainability of measures adopted under the US-Mexico agreement and have called on the neighbours to move away from short-term solutions to address the structural problems in their immigration and asylum polices that prevent them from effectively managing the contemporary mixed movements in the region.[268]

Changing profile of asylum seekers

According to UNHCR in October 2019, Mexican asylum seekers outnumbered Central Americans crossing the US border. Mexico resumed its position in August 2019 as the top country of origin for people crossing the US southern border, surpassing Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, according to US Customs and Border Protection figures.

Total applications for refugee status received in Mexico
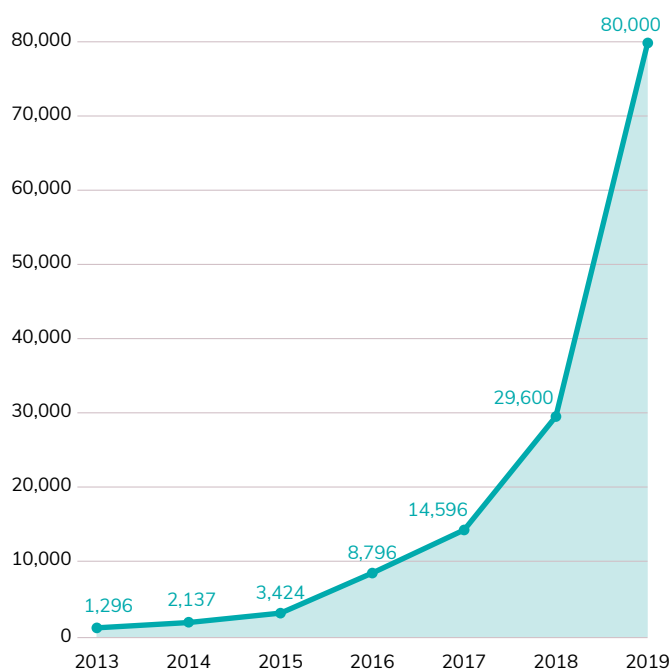
Source: Niskanen Center: _Recent Events in Mexican Migration Policy_

266 Human Rights Watch (2019) '_We Can't Help You Here': US Returns of Asylum Seekers to Mexico_
267 UNHCR (2019) _UNHCR appeals for regional talks on Central American displacement_; Diaz, L. Schrank, D. (2019) _Mexico's refugee agency turns to U.N amid asylum surge, funding cuts_
268 Selee, A. (2019) _Trump's Deal with Mexico May Slow Migration, But Not for Long_ Americas Quarterly

Europe

Overview

In 2018 the number of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers arriving irregularly to the **European Union** via mixed migration routes[269] was the lowest in the last five years, and 90 percent below the numbers of arrivals in 2015. This trend continued in 2019.[270] Since the adoption of the EU Agenda on Migration in 2015, the EU and its member states have found consensus on securing the borders of the EU against irregular migrants and asylum seekers, and with the end of the 2014-2019 parliamentary term the EU has hailed the reduction in numbers under the Agenda a success.[271]

However, the EU has largely not achieved the transition from ad-hoc crisis management policies aimed at limiting arrivals to a more sustainable approach addressing the structural policy issues that precipitated the EU's crisis of migration management in the years preceding 2015. Key areas, such as the reform of the asylum system and returns, both within and outside the EU, remain unresolved, reflecting an ongoing broader lack of consensus among EU member states on responsibility sharing.[272]

In 2018 and throughout the first half of 2019, the lack of progress on these key policy issues were manifested in the ongoing crowding and poor conditions in camp sites in Greece, the onward movement of asylum seekers throughout Europe, and disagreements on disembarkation and follow-up of measures for rescue ships in the Mediterranean, resulting in an increasing death rate on the central Mediterranean route.

The deterioration in the conflict in Libya has exposed the deflection of human suffering inherent in the EU and its member states' migration strategies, with migrants and refugees in official Libyan detention centres facing severe human rights abuses.[273] Moreover, worsening security in Mali, Burkina Faso, Sudan, and Ethiopia has shown the limits of prioritising hurried funding to "address the root causes of migration to the EU" in complex settings.

Greece and Turkey

In Greece, the number of arrivals to the islands from Turkey has remained quite consistent since the signing of the EU-Turkey deal and the subsequent dramatic fall in the number of arrivals. Between April 2016 and December 2018, 84,210 migrants, refugees and asylum seekers arrived in Greece by sea, around 30,000 each year.[274]

However, in July and August 2019 there was an increase in the number of arrivals from Turkey in the context of heightened political rhetoric from the Turkish government around returns to Syria and increasingly difficult conditions for refugees in Turkey.[275] In August 2019, 7,712 asylum seekers, refugees and migrants arrived in Greece, more than double the number in August 2018.[276]

Erdoğan's threats

In September 2019, Turkish President Tayyip Erdoğan threatened to open borders and allow more refugees, asylum seekers and migrants into the EU unless Turkey received more international support for the establishment of an expanded "safe zone" in Syria.[277]

Although Syrians have consistently made up around half of the sea arrivals to the Greek islands since 2015 (55% in 2015, 47% in 2016, 42% in 2017) the last six months of 2018 saw a shift in the demography of arrivals as most arrivals were from Afghanistan (39%), with Syrians accounting for 14 percent of arrivals during this time.[278]

269 European countries are primarily countries of destination for overland mixed migration flows from Africa and the Middle East, although some are mostly used for transit. Amongst the latter, a few have become de facto destination countries, particularly along the Eastern Mediterranean route and in the Balkans since 2015, as borders are closed preventing onward movement.

270 European Commission (2019) *Progress Report on the Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration* Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council

271 Ibid.

272 Ibid.

273 Human Rights Watch (2018) *No Escape from Hell: EU Policies Contribute to Abuse of Migrants in Libya*

274 UNHCR (2018) Greece *Sea Arrivals Dashboard: December 2018*

275 UNHCR (2019) *Greece Sea Arrivals Dashboard: August 2019*

276 Ibid.

277 Bird, G. (2019) *More refugees arrive on Greek islands amid overcrowding and water shortages* The Conversation; Wintour, P. (2019) *Recap Tyyip Erdoğan proposes 'safe zone' for refugees in Syria* The Guardian

278 Save the Children (2018) *'Refugees and migration at the Western Balkans Route: Regional Overview October – December 2018'* Balkans Migration and Displacement Hub

Top 10 European countries by total refugees and asylum seekers, Mid-year 2018 UNHCR data
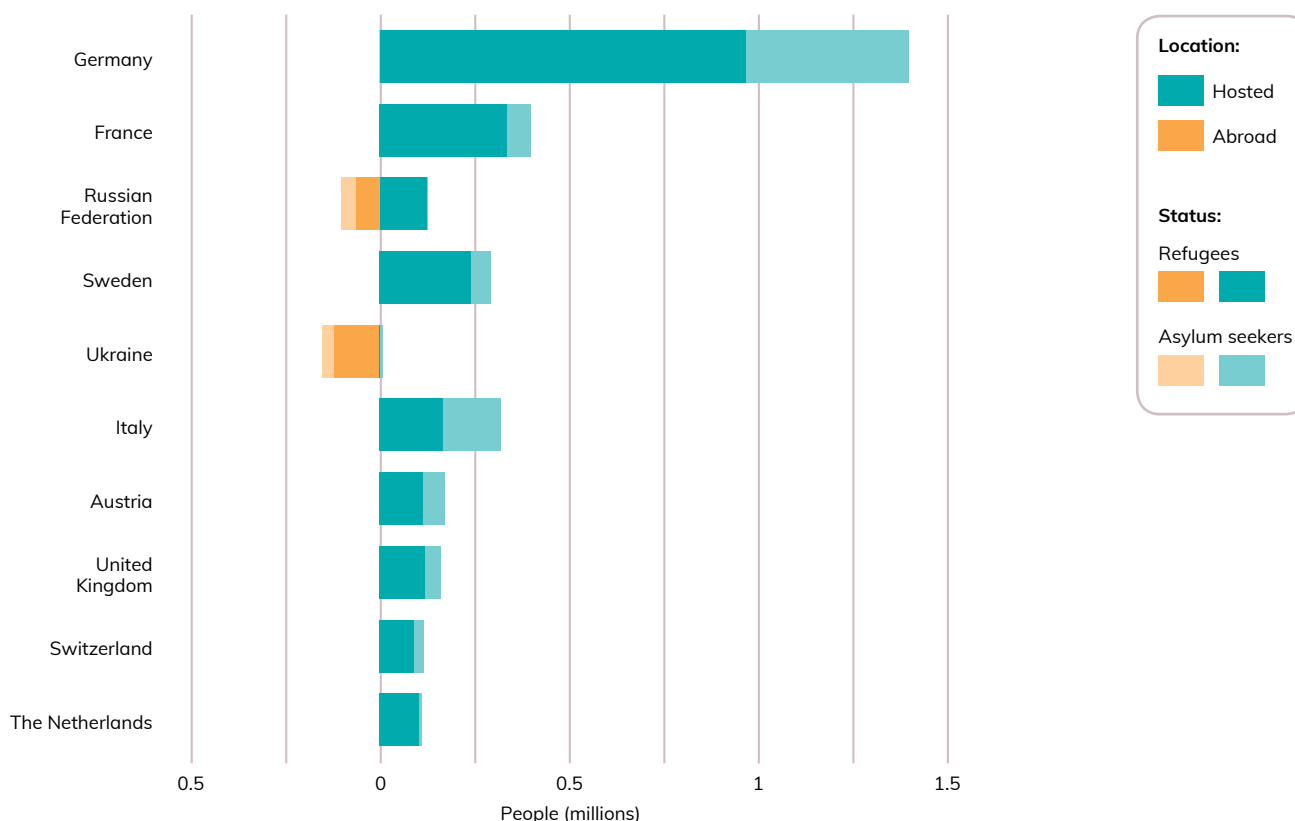
Source: UNHCR Mid-Year 2018 figures (latest available) design updated from IOM graphics from IOM World Migration Report 2018

"Hosted" refers to those refugees and asylum seekers from other countries who are residing in the receiving country (right-hand side of the figure); "abroad" refers to refugees and asylum seekers originating from that country who are outside of their origin country. The top 10 countries are based on 2016 data and are calculated by combining refugees and asylum seekers in and from countries.

Asylum claims soar

The number of asylum applications in Greece has increased significantly since 2016, more than tripling from 5,000 in 2016 to 17,270 in 2018, despite an overall reduction in the number of asylum applications in Europe during this time.[279] Returns envisaged under the EU-Turkey deal have not been fully realised, with just 2,441 migrants returned between April 2016 and March 2019.[280] Between January and June 2019, returns were less than one percent of arrivals.[281]

Overcrowded hotspots

This has resulted in a situation of persistent overcrowding in the Greek reception and identification centres, with 12,000 people living in centres built for half this number in March 2019.[282] The European Union Fundamental

Rights Agency found that in 2019 "serious fundamental rights gaps persist in Greek hotspots, where reception conditions remain sub-standard".[283] Oxfam reported that while Greece has repeatedly moved people to the mainland, these efforts have not kept pace with new arrivals, resulting in vulnerable people living in unsuitable and deteriorating conditions that put their safety, mental and physical health and integrity at serious risk.[284] The European Parliamentary Research Service concluded in its evaluation of the detection of victims of trafficking in hotspots that, despite recent improvements, there is a "high probability that many victims [of trafficking] remain undetected."[285]

279 DRC et al. (2019) NGOs calling on European leaders to urgently take action to end the humanitarian and human rights crisis at Europe's borders
280 European Commission (2019) EU-Turkey Statement: Three Years On
281 UNHCR (2019) Returns from Greece to Turkey: June 2019
282 DRC et al. (2019) op. cit.
283 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2019) Update of the 2016 Opinion of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights on fundamental rights in the 'hotspots' set up in Greece and Italy
284 Oxfam (2019) Vulnerable and abandoned: How the Greek reception system is failing to protect the most vulnerable people seeking asylum
285 Scherrer, A. (2019) Detecting and protection victims of trafficking hotspots: ex-post evaluation European Parliamentary Research Service; See also Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe (2019) Report of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe Dunja Mijativic following her visit to Greece June 2018

Sent back to Turkey

In December 2018, Human Rights Watch reported that Greek law enforcement officers and militia groups at the land border with Turkey were routinely summarily returning asylum seekers and migrants.[286] The reports follow an increase in the number of those attempting to cross the land border between Turkey and Greece in 2018, from 6,592 in 2017 to 18,014 in 2018.[287] IOM reports indicate that a large number of those arriving by land in the Evros region of Greece from Turkey are Turkish, with the number of Turkish migrants more than tripling in 2018.[288]

Balkans route gets busier

Increased returns from Greece came in the context of an increase in the number of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants moving onwards overland towards Europe along the Balkans route in 2018, which continued in the first quarter of 2019.[289] In particular, the number of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants recorded traveling through **Bosnia and Herzegovina** from **Montenegro** and **Serbia** has increased significantly since late 2017.[290] The authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina detected the arrival of 24,067 asylums seekers, refugees and migrants in 2018, compared with just 755 in 2017.[291] The majority of those transiting through Bosnia and Herzegovina between January 2018 and April 2019 were from Pakistan (33%), Iran (13%) and Syria (12%).[292] In April 2019, Bangladeshis accounted for 12 percent of arrivals.[293]

While 92 percent of those recorded arriving in Bosnia and Herzegovina between January 2018 and April 2019 indicated their intention to apply for asylum, allowing them to remain in the country for 14 days, asylum applications were lodged by only six percent of arrivals during this time.[294] Save the Children estimated in September 2018, that 75 percent of arrivals in 2018 had already left the country towards Croatia.[295] As of April 2019, the estimated refugee, asylum seeker and migrant population of Bosnia and Herzegovina was between 6,000 and 6,500.[296]

Despite the high rate of onward movement, the large number of arrivals is proving challenging for local authorities and populations, particularly in towns on the Croatian border. In the first six months of 2019, the number of arrivals increased threefold compared with the first six months of 2018, precipitating concerns of increased tensions amongst arrivals and around health and security.[297] The International Federation of the Red Cross published an Emergency Appeal for Population Movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina in December 2018.[298]

Border pushbacks and other abuses

At the border between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, human rights organisations, UNHCR and Council of Europe have regularly raised concerns about pushbacks and violence by Croatian border officials.[299] In 2019 the Croatian president readily admitted such practices were occurring, commenting that "a little bit of force is needed when doing push-backs".[300] Rights groups have highlighted that such practices are in contravention of EU asylum law, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the 1951 Refugee Convention.[301]

In 2018 and 2019, Slovenia also increased the number of returns to Croatia under a readmission agreement between the two countries.[302] In 2019, Amnesty International reported on abuses carried out by Croatian police against migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, including those returned from Slovenia. Among the cited abuses were frequent and often severe beatings, confiscation and destruction of property, detention and transportation in overcrowded police vans across the Bosnian border.[303]

286 Human Rights Watch (2018) *Greece: Violent Push Backs at Turkey Border: End Summary Returns, Unchecked Violence*; see also: Council of Europe *Preliminary observations made by the delegation of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) which visited Greece from 10 to 19 April 2018*
287 UNHCR (2018) *Greece Fact Sheet: December 2018*
288 IOM (2019) *Mixed Migration Flows in the Mediterranean: Compilation of Available Data and Information May 2019*; See also: FRONTEX (2019) *Risk Analysis for 2019*
289 Save the Children (2019) *Refugees and Migrants at the Western Balkans Route: Regional Overview – January to March 2019*
290 Inter-Agency Operation Update (2018) *Bosnia and Herzegovina 01 – 30 December 2018*
291 Ibid.
292 Inter-Agency Operation Update (2019) *Bosnia and Herzegovina 01 – 30 April 2019*
293 Ibid.
294 Ibid.
295 Save the Children (2019) *Refugees and Migrants at the Western Balkans Route: Regional Overview – July to September 2018*
296 Inter-Agency Operation Update (2019) *Bosnia and Herzegovina 01 – 30 April 2019*
297 International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2019) *Emergency Appeal Operations Update no. 2, Bosnia and Herzegovina: Population Movement*
298 Ibid.
299 Amnesty International (2019) *Pushed to the edge: violence and abuse against refugees and migrants along the Balkans route*
300 UNHCR (2019) *The Refuge Brief - 15 July 2019*
301 Human Rights Watch (2019) *Croatia: President Admits Unlawful Migrant Pushbacks: Halt Abusive Operations; Justice Needed*
302 Amnesty International (2019) *Pushed to the edge: violence and abuse against refugees and migrants along the Balkans route;* European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2019) *Report on Illegal Pushback an Border Violence;*
303 Amnesty International (2019) *Pushed to the edge: violence and abuse against refugees and migrants along the Balkans route;* see also: Regvar, U. (2018) *Report on findings and observations on the implementation of return procedures in accordance with the principle of non-refoulement* Legal information centre for NGOs - PIC

Uptick in arrivals to Italy and beyond

Despite this, many of those pushed back into Croatia or Bosnia and Herzegovina subsequently attempt to cross back into Croatia and Slovenia. In the first six months of 2019 there was a steady increase in the number of asylum seekers, migrants and refugees arriving in Italy via the northern land border with Slovenia. The number of arrivals in the first six months of 2019 doubled the total number of arrivals in 2018.[304] In response, the Italian government began joint patrols with Slovenia in June 2019.[305]

In addition to those who have arrived in Italy as part of onward migration movements through the Western Balkans, many refugees, asylum seekers and migrants have also moved onwards across Italy's northern borders. In 2018, the EU reported that persons moving to the territory of another member state triggered 400,000 hits against the fingerprint records stored in the Eurodac database throughout the year, the majority in France and Germany.[306] Italy and Greece, as the main countries of origin for secondary movements, had the largest number of existing records.[307]

Invoking Dublin

Onward movement from Italy has resulted in a high number of transfer requests under the Dublin regulation for the return of asylum seekers to Italy. In 2018, France and Germany requested to return more than 50,000 asylum seekers back to Italy.[308] However, the number of transfers that are implemented are a small percentage of those requested, with Italy accepting just 6,300 transfers in 2018.[309] According to researchers from the Italian Institute for International Policies Studies, of those found to be in a different country from the one responsible for processing their asylum request between 2013 and 2018, only 15 percent were returned.[310]

Neighbours get tough

In response to onward movement, in 2018, Italy's neighbouring states introduced border controls, joint patrols and stricter implementation of bilateral readmission agreements.[311] Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) reported in June 2018 that French authorities

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304 UNHCR (2019) *Italy Fact Sheet: March 2019*; ANSA (2019) *Migrant arrivals double on the Balkan Route*
305 The Economist (2019) *Migrant arrivals in Italy have tumbled: but that does not stop Matteo Salvini exploiting them*
306 European Commission (2019) *Progress Report on the Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration* Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council.
307 Ibid
308 Villa, M. (25 July 2019) *Italy receives more asylum seekers from Germany than from Libya* Politico
309 Ibid
310 Ibid
311 UNHCR (2019) *Desperate Journeys: Refugees and migrants arriving in Europe and at Europe's borders – January to December 2018*

Total refugee/migrant arrivals in Europe (land and sea)

from 2014 to mid-October 2019
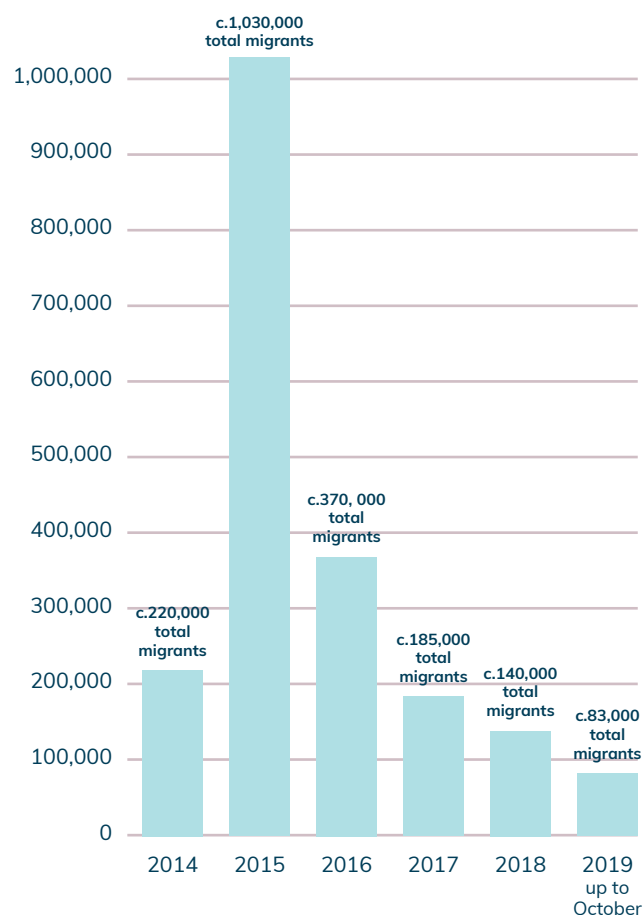
Total deaths/missing in Mediterranean

from 2014 to mid-October 2019

Data Source: IOM Missing Migrants Project
https://missingmigrants.iom.int/region/mediterranean

2019 update: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean

were summarily returning refugees, asylum seekers and migrants at the Italian/French border at the time.[312]

Beneath the waves: the politics of life and death at sea

The number of refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers arriving in Italy by sea decreased by 79 percent over the first seven months of 2019 compared to the same time in 2018.[313] The numbers have fallen from a peak of 95,213 arrivals between January and July 2017 to 3,867 in 2019.[314] Those arriving in Italy by sea during the same period, were mainly from Tunisia (33%), Pakistan and Cote d'Ivoire.[315]

Med fatality rate soars

Despite this significant drop in the number of those arriving in Europe by sea over the past two years, and a corresponding drop in the overall number of deaths at sea, the proportion of deaths as a percentage of crossings on the Central Mediterranean route almost doubled in the first eight months of 2019.[316] Driving this is EU states' withdrawal of their rescue efforts in the Central Mediterranean and their support to the Libyan coast guard in the context of an increasing politicisation of rescue. At the same time, frontline countries are increasingly restricting access to ports and attempting to bring criminal and administrative prosecutions against civilian rescue ships.[317]

Sophia quits the seas, takes flight

In March 2019, the EU Council extended the mandate of EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia for six months, but suspended the deployment of its naval assets "for operational reasons".[318] The Council indicated that EU member states will "continue to work in the appropriate fora on a solution on disembarkation as part of the follow-up to the June 2018 European Council conclusions",[319] and that it would continue to strengthen surveillance by air assets and reinforce support to the Libyan Coastguard and Navy.[320] According to search and rescue organisations, European aircraft have been increasingly present patrolling the Mediterranean.[321]

Italy blocks rescue ships

Throughout 2018 and 2019 the Italian government increasingly attempted to intimidate and prosecute rescue ships operating the Mediterranean. In June 2019, a decree came into force which authorized the Minister of the Interior to prohibit the entry of vessels into Italian waters for reasons of public order and security and introduced potentially severe administrative sanctions on those who contravene the minister's orders.[322] The decree has precipitated a number of standoffs at sea as rescue ships were prevented from docking in Italy.[323] In August 2019, the rescue ship Open Arms was stranded at sea for 19 days after Italy refused to allow it to dock in its ports.[324] Over 100 migrants, asylum seekers and refugees were trapped in difficult conditions on the ship until Spain, France, Germany, Luxembourg, and Portugal agreed to take them in and Italy allowed the ship to disembark.[325]

Court battles

In June 2019, Italian authorities arrested the captain of Sea-Watch 3 after the vessel landed in the Italian port of Lampedusa to disembark 40 rescued migrants in contravention of the Interior Minister's orders. A judge subsequently cleared the captain of wrongdoing, arguing that the Italian security decree was "not applicable in the case of rescues".[326] However, the captain remains under investigation for charges relating to aiding irregular migration, one of a number of rescue ship crewmembers facing similar charges in Italy.[327] In response to the court ruling, the Italian government reportedly introduced an amendment to the decree, increasing sanctions and financial penalties.[328] Italy has consistently called upon other EU member states to resettle those who disembark in Italian ports.

With very few rescue vessels able to operate in the Central Mediterranean, in July 2019, MSF and SOS Méditerranée

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312 MSF (2019) *Violations of migrants' rights at the France – Italy border*
313 UNHCR (2019) *Italy Sea Arrivals Dashboard July 2019*
314 Ibid.
315 Ibid.
316 IOM *Missing Migrants* accessed August 2019
317 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2019) *2019 update – NGO ships involved in search and rescue in the Mediterranean and criminal investigations*
318 Council of the EU (2019) *EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia mandate extended until 20 September 2019*
319 Ibid.
320 Ibid.
321 Stierl, M. (2019) *EU sued at the International Criminal Court over Mediterranean migration policy – as more die at sea* The Conversation
322 UNHCR (2019) *Italy Fact Sheet: June 2019*
323 See for instance; Bathke, B. (2019) *Two NGO boats with over 160 rescued migrants stuck in Mediterranean, looking for safe harbor* InfoMigrants
324 Baczynska, G. & Faus, J. (2019) *Five EU states to take in Open Arms migrants, ending standoff* Reuters
325 Ibid.
326 Algazeera (2019) *Sea-Watch hails Italian court's decision to free Carola Rackete*
327 Demony, C. (2019) *Italy under fire over charges against migrant rescue volunteer* Reuters; Schumacher, E. (2019) *German boat captain Pia Klemp faces prison in Italy for migrant rescues* Deutsche Welle; Human Rights Watch (2019) *Italy: Migrant Rescue Ship Impounded - Don't criminalise saving lives*
328 ANSA (2019) *Migrants rescue ships to be fined 1 million for defying ban*

launched the Ocean Viking ship to conduct rescues, with MSF justifying the launch by stating that the needs in the Central Mediterranean were increasingly urgent.[329]

Protection concerns voiced

UNHCR has expressed concern at the Italian decree and called on the Italian government to amend it with a focus on refugee protection and saving lives.[330] UN human rights experts have expressed grave concerns over the criminalisation of humanitarian help to migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in the Mediterranean.[331] The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights called on member states to "cease any acts of harassment" and "ensure that disembarkation only happens in places of safety and without unnecessary delays".[332]

There are some indications that Italy's stance on immigration is moving towards a more cooperative approach, following the formation of a new government in September 2019, and the replacement of Interior Minister Matteo Salvini by Luciana Lamorgese.[333] On September 15, 82 refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants disembarked in Italy from the rescue boat Ocean Viking after EU states agreed to relocate most of those on board.[334] Later the same month interior ministers from Italy, Malta, France, Germany, and Finland announced that they had formed an agreement on a new scheme to relocate migrants saved in the Mediterranean between member states.[335] The scheme was scheduled to be presented to the interior ministers of the remaining EU member states in October 2019.[336]

Legality of EU actions challenged

According to media reports in June, the International Criminal Court (ICC) has received a legal submission brought by international lawyers calling for the EU to face prosecution for its post-2014 migration policy and the shift towards policies focusing on deterrence.[337] The submission calls for the ICC to open an investigation into EU migration policies, which the submission argues have resulted in deaths by drowning, the refoulement of tens of thousands of people attempting to flee Libya, and "complicity in the subsequent crimes of deportation, murder, imprisonment, enslavement, torture, rape, persecution and other inhuman acts, taking place in Libyan detention camps and torture houses".[338]

NGOs and human rights organisations have consistently raised concerns about the EU's cooperation with Libya, and in particular the Libyan coast guard, and the "devastating protection implications they [they EU] are causing and the responsibility that they bear".[339] In July 2019, UNHCR and IOM released a joint statement calling for a change in the international approach to refugees and migrants in Libya, including ending detention after interception at sea, freeing those held in detention, and resettlement for those who need it.[340] As of August 2019, 1,345 refugees had been assisted to depart from Libya, including 1,005 through evacuation and 340 via resettlement.[341]

Arrivals to Spain

In 2018, arrivals to Spain represented the highest number of arrivals to Europe, with 58,600 migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees arriving in Spain by sea between January and December 2018.[342] The increase in arrivals was particularly marked in September and October 2018, with more than 10,200 in October 2018.[343] Moroccans (20%), Guineans (20%) and Malians (16%) represented the majority of arrivals throughout the year.[344] Correspondingly, the number of deaths almost quadrupled in the Alboran Sea in 2018, from 202 in 2017 to 777 in 2018.[345]

In the first six months of 2019, the numbers of arrivals decreased compared with January-June 2018, from 17,899 to 13,263, with particularly marked reductions in arrivals from Guinea and Mali compared to the same time in 2018, perhaps partly in response to a reported

329 MSF (2019) *MSF resume search and rescue operations with Ocean Viking*
330 UNHCR (June 2019) *UNHCR Urges Italy to reconsider proposed decree affecting rescue at sea in the Central Mediterranean*
331 OHCHR (July 2019) *Italy: UN experts condemn criminalization of migrants rescues and threats to the independence of the judiciary*
332 EU Commissioner for Human Rights (2019) *'Council of Europe member states must assume more responsibility for rescuing migrants at sea and protecting their rights'*
333 Pietromarchi, V. (2019) *With Salvini gone, what's next for Italy's migration policy?* Al Jazeera
334 Tondo, L. (2019) *First migrants land in Italy under post-Salvini coalition deal with EU*
335 Scicluna, C. (2019) *Five EU States agree migration deal, look for broader backing* Reuters
336 Ibid.
337 Stierl, M. (2019) *EU sued at the International Criminal Court over Mediterranean migration policy – as more die at sea* The Conversation
338 Ibid.
339 DRC (2018) *EU-Libya Migration Cooperation: Shipwrecked Values of Humanity*; *Human Rights Watch (2019) No Escape from hell: EU policies contribute to the abuse of migrants in Libya*
340 UNHCR and IOM (2019) *Joint Statement: International approach to refugees and migrants in Libya must change*
341 UNHCR (2019) *Libya Update: 2 August 2019*
342 UNHCR (2018) *Spain Sea and Land Arrivals: 31 December 2018*
343 UNHCR (2019) *Desperate Journeys: Refugees and migrants arriving in Europe and at Europe's borders – January to December 2018*
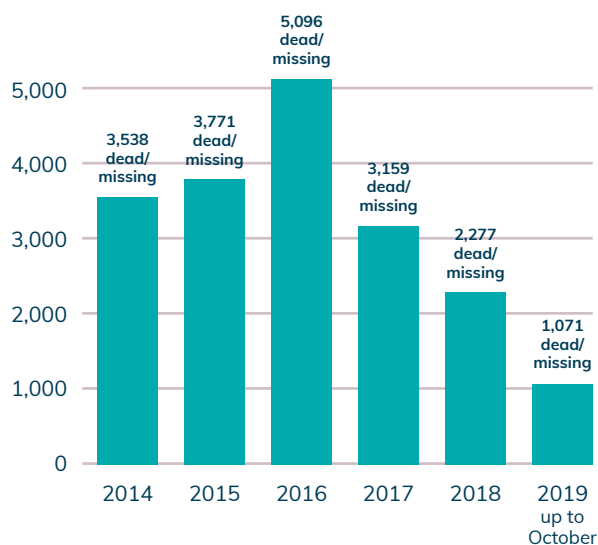344 UNHCR (2018) *Refugees and migrants arrivals to Europe in 2018 (Mediterranean)*
345 UNHCR (2019) *Desperate Journeys: Refugees and migrants arriving in Europe and at Europe's borders – January to December 2018*

crackdown on sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco.[346] However, the number of Moroccan arrivals increased in the first six months of 2019, from 2,760 to 3,990.[347] The dramatic increase in the number of arrivals in Spain after September 2018 means those trends are difficult to compare at the time of writing this report.

EU strengthens ties with Morocco

In response to these arrivals the EU has stated that "measures to address migration along the Western Mediterranean route must be a top priority for the EU" and the EU has stepped up its engagement with Morocco to build "a closer, deeper and more ambitious partnership".[348] In late 2018, following advocacy by the Spanish government, the EU approved 140 million euros in support of border management and budget support for Morocco, bringing the total amount of programme support to 232 million euros.[349]

The EU is arguably taking a more subtle approach in its engagement with Morocco on migration management compared with previous migration "partnerships" with other countries. In a joint statement for the 14th meeting of the Association Council, the EU and Morocco declared their desire to develop a "Euro-Moroccan partnership for shared prosperity" of which cooperation in the field of mobility and migration would be one of two "horizontal fields" in which specific operation actions will be carried out, along with protection of the environment and the fight against climate change.[350]

Morocco has emphasised that countries of transit should not be solely responsible for addressing mixed migration, and that countries of origin, transit and destination should be involved in finding solutions, and has claimed that the EU response has only been able to find coherence in applying pressure to transit countries.[351]

In July 2019, the EU and Egyptian authorities attended the second meeting of the EU Egypt Migration Dialogue in Cairo.[352] The Dialogue aims to embed the issue of migration within the overall bilateral relationship between Egypt and the EU, and the second meeting focused on regular pathways for Egyptian nationals and the efforts deployed by Egypt to enhance the prevention of illegal migration, among other issues.[353] The EU is funding a 60 million euro programme in Egypt through the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa aiming to enhance the response to migration challenges in Egypt.[354]

346 UNHCR (2018) *Spain Sea and Land Arrivals: January to June 2019*
347 Ibid.
348 European Commission (2019) *Progress Report on the Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration* Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council.
349 Teevan, C. (2019) *Morocco, the EU, and the migration dilemma* Commentary: European Council on Foreign Relations
350 Council of the EU (2019) *Joint declaration by the European Union and Morocco for the fourteenth meeting of the Association Council*
351 Le Monde Afrique (2 November 2018) *Maroc : « La seule politique migratoire cohérente de l'Europe, c'est mettre la pression sur les pays de transit »*
352 European Commission (2019) *Second meeting of the Migration Dialogue between the European Union and Egypt*
353 Ibid.
354 EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (2017) *Enhancing the Response to Migration Challenges in Egypt*

Asia

Overview

Asia is characterized by fast evolving and complex population movements, including large-scale movements of migrants and refugees, prompted by a broad range of drivers including conflicts, violence, discrimination, poverty and economic inequalities, and natural disasters. While labour migration of high-skilled workers is facilitated under sub-regional and bilateral agreements, including in the context of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), migration within the region remains largely irregular, thus rendering the concerned persons vulnerable to exploitation.

Although the region is host to significant numbers of forcibly displaced people, recognition and formal protection for asylum seekers and refugees, as well as for other persons in need of protection, such as victims of trafficking, is limited. Due to the lack of a legal framework pertaining to the protection of human rights and refugees in many countries across Asia, migrants and refugees are often treated as "irregular migrants" and as such may be subjected to measures such as arrest, detention and deportation.

Conflict fuels continued movement from Afghanistan

Despite the – now defunct – peace negotiations between the US and the Taliban since January, insecurity and violence escalated in Afghanistan in 2019, including increasing violence against civilians.[355] Political instability and corruption discouraged many Afghans from voting in the presidential election held on September 28. More than half of one survey's respondents said they had no interest in the ballot and would not vote for any of the candidates.[356] According to a recent in-depth analysis, 18 years into the Afghanistan conflict, the US

has not yet developed an approach that can defeat the various factions operating against the government in the country.[357] In June 2019 the Institute for Peace and Economics designated Afghanistan as the world's least peaceful country.[358] There is no clear prospect of improvement in the political and security situation, leading many Afghans to consider future migration plans. Some studies have already shown that the failure of peace talks will have an impact on the migration decision-making process of Afghans.[359]

In the first six months of 2019, 217,000 people were newly displaced by conflict in Afghanistan, 58 percent of them children under 18 years old.[360] In 2018, 370,000 people were newly displaced by conflict, and 234,000 were displaced by ongoing drought.[361] According to UN estimates, a million internally displaced persons (IDPs) will need humanitarian assistance in the county by the end of 2019.[362]

Large-scale returns

These internal movements are complicated by ongoing returns from neighbouring countries. More than 305,000 undocumented Afghans returned from **Iran** and **Pakistan** between January and mid-August 2019, with 290,881 people returning from Iran, driven by increasingly difficult economic prospects there, and 14,189 from Pakistan.[363] However, considering the high number of returnees, insecurity, and an increase in the number of IDPs due to conflict and drought across Afghanistan, the country lacks the capacity to integrate new arrivals, leading many returnees and IDPs to consider other coping mechanisms, such as secondary and onward movement.[364]

Afghan refugees returning from Pakistan face widespread socio-economic hardships upon return to Afghanistan.[365] Most returnees face diminished employment opportunities, wages, and job stability

355 ACLED (2019) *Regional Overview – Asia September 2019*; ACAPS (2019) *Afghanistan Overview – May 2019*; Cordesman, A. (2019) *Afghanistan: A War in Crisis!* Centre for Strategic and International Studies
356 Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan (2019) *Survey on the 2019 Presidential Election*
357 Cordesman, A. (2019) op. cit.
358 Institute for Economic & Peace (2019) *Global Peace Index 2019: Measuring Peace in a Complex World*
359 Seefar (2019) *How the Afghan peace process and emotional well-being impact migration decision-making*
360 UNOCHA (2019) *Afghanistan: Snapshot of Population Movement (January to July 2019)*
361 UNHCR-IOM (2019) *Returns to Afghanistan 2018 - Joint IOM-UNHCR Summary Report*
362 UNOCHA (2019) *Afghanistan: Snapshot of Population Movement (January to July 2019)*
363 IOM (2019) *Return of Undocumented Afghans, Weekly Situational Report, 24 August 2019*
364 NRC, IDMC, & Samuel Hall (2018) *Escaping War: Where to next? Challenges to IDPs' Protection in Afghanistan*
365 World Bank & UNHCR (2019) *Living conditions and settlement decision of recent afghan returnees: Finding from a 2018 Phone Survey of Afghan Returnees and UNHCR data*

Top 10 Asian countries by total refugees and asylum seekers, Mid-year 2018 UNHCR data
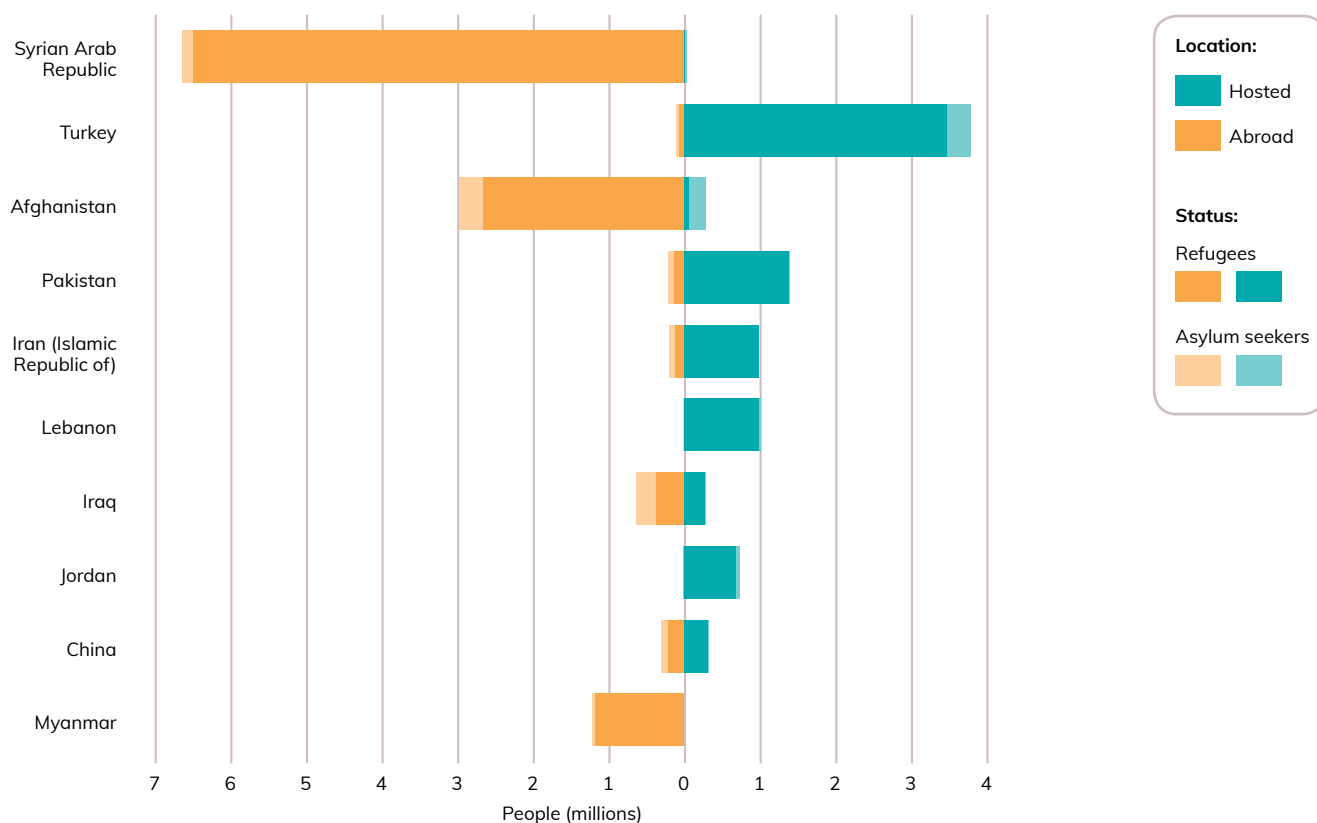
Source: UNHCR Mid-Year 2018 figures (latest available) design updated from IOM graphics from IOM World Migration Report 2018

"Hosted" refers to those refugees and asylum seekers from other countries who are residing in the receiving country (right-hand side of the figure); "abroad" refers to refugees and asylum seekers originating from that country who are outside of their origin country. The top 10 countries are based on 2016 data and are calculated by combining refugees and asylum seekers in and from countries.

upon return.[366] A recent study of Afghan returnees from Iran, Pakistan, and Europe found that returnees often experience poor psychosocial wellbeing upon return due to traumatic experiences during migration and upon reintegration in Afghanistan.[367]

Flows rise to Turkey and Europe

In 2018 and continuing into 2019, an increasing number of Afghans arrived in Turkey and Europe. In 2018, arrivals of Afghan nationals from Iran made up the largest group of new arrivals in Turkey, accounting for 39 percent (100,841) of total arrivals.[368] This trend continued for the first six months of 2019, with 52,934 (39%) arrivals from Afghanistan in Turkey.[369] According to Refugees International, since Turkey's Directorate General of Migration Management took over processing of asylum claims in September 2018, Afghans face significant obstacles in registering for asylum in Turkey, preventing them from accessing services, such as health and education.[370] Turkey has also increased deportations of Afghan nationals, deporting 5,560 Afghans in the first six months of 2019.[371]

Given these difficulties, many Afghans attempt to move onward towards Europe, and, since 2018, Afghans have overtaken Syrians as the largest national group arriving in Greece from Turkey.[372] In the first six months

366 World Bank & UNHCR (2019) *Living conditions and settlement decision of recent afghan returnees; Finding from a 2018 Phone Survey of Afghan Returnees and UNHCR data*
367 MMC (2019) *Distant Dreams: Understanding the Aspirations of Afghan Returnees*
368 MMC (2019) *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: Middle East Quarter 2*
369 Ibid.
370 Leghtas, I. & Thea, J. (2019) *'You Cannot Exist in this Place' Lack of Registration Denies Afghan Refugees Protection in Turkey* Refugees International
371 UNOCHA (2019) *Afghanistan Snapshot of Population Movements (January to July 2019)*
372 MMC (2019) *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: Middle East Quarter 2*

of 2019, 4,525 Afghan asylum seekers arrived in Greece, compared with 1,236 during the same period in 2017 and 388 in 2017.[373]

Although Afghan nationals were the second largest group seeking international protection in Europe in 2018, the recognition rate for Afghan nationals remains low, at 43 percent at first instance (an 11 percent increase on 2017).[374] There is a wide variation in recognition rates for Afghan nationals in Europe, varying from six to 98 percent, with no clear reason as to the divergence between jurisdictions. The European Council on Refugees and Exiles has called for returns of Afghan nationals from Europe to be halted until there are significant changes in the situation in Afghanistan.[375]

Little clarity over Rohingya's future

The large number of Rohingya refugees seeking refuge in **Bangladesh** remains by far the main humanitarian challenge in the Asia-Pacific region. The movement between Myanmar and Bangladesh continued throughout the first half of 2019, albeit at a slow pace. UNHCR recorded 1,094 new arrivals in Bangladesh between January and August 2019.[376] As of August 2019, there were 913,080 Rohingya from Myanmar in Bangladesh.[377]

Tough conditions in camps

Although the Bangladeshi government and the international community have made great efforts towards providing for the basic needs of the Rohingya in Bangladesh,[378] conditions in camps remain challenging. As the Rohingya have been accepted on a temporary basis in Bangladesh and are officially expected to return to Myanmar, there is no formal access to education and limited access to livelihoods.[379] In August 2019, NGOs released a statement expressing concern about conditions in camps and reiterating the need for an enabling environment where the Rohingya have access to livelihoods, education and protection on both sides of the Bangladesh/Myanmar border.[380]

Talk of returns and relocation

Discussions about the possible repatriation of the Rohingya to Myanmar remain high on the agenda of the government of Bangladesh, although the international community considers that the conditions in Myanmar are not yet conducive to safe and dignified returns.[381] There have been several attempts to begin repatriation, first in November 2018 and then in August 2019, but they have failed as not a single refugee seems to have agreed to return to Myanmar's Rakhine State amidst fears that their safety would not be guaranteed.[382]

The government of Bangladesh has confirmed that it would not return the Rohingya to Myanmar against their will.[383] There have been continuous rumours that the government will move forward with a plan to relocate 100,000 refugees to an island in the Bay of Bengal – known as Bhasan Char, or the "floating island" as locals named the silt island that only recently emerged from the sea – where it has built facilities for this purpose.[384] Yet, discussions regarding the planned relocation to the island have been going on for two years and there is no evidence that it will take place. International organisations and NGOs have expressed significant reservations regarding living conditions on the island, including severe limitations to freedom of movement, and the fact that it seems to be particularly prone to cyclones.[385]

Due to the difficult conditions and lack of economic opportunities in the camps in Bangladesh, an increasing number of Rohingya have chosen to move onwards in wider mixed movements towards other countries in the region in search of better opportunities and access to protection.

Unwelcome in India, too

Given its proximity, India is often the first destination for overland movements of Rohingya.[386] UNHCR reported in January 2019 that 18,000 Rohingya were registered with its office in India, out of some 40,000 Rohingya thought to be present in the country.[387] However, the restrictive regulatory environment in India means that Rohingya often live in difficult and insecure circumstance

373 UNHCR Data available at: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/58460
374 European Council on Refugees and Exiles (2019) *No Reason for Returns to Afghanistan*
375 Ibid.
376 UNHCR (2019) *Rohingya Refugee Response – Bangladesh: Population factsheet 31 August 2019*
377 UNHCR (2019)
378 Norwegian Refugee Council (2019) *NGOs warn of worsening crisis in Myanmar, call for refugees' engagement on safe, voluntary returns*
379 International Crisis Group (2019) *Building a better further for Rohingya refuges in Bangladesh* Briefing No. 155 Asia; Asian Dialogue on Forced Migration *Avoiding Crisis Within a Crisis: The risk of human trafficking, smuggling and elated exploitation arising from the displacement in Cox's Bazar - Assessment Report*
380 Norwegian Refugee Council (2019) *NGOs warn of worsening crisis in Myanmar, call for refugees' engagement on safe, voluntary returns*
381 Catrambone, C. (2019) *Safety Not Guaranteed: Time Not Right for Rohingya Returns*, The Diplomat; Human Right Watch (2019) *Myanmar/Bangladesh: Halt Rohingya Returns: Ensure Refugees' Security, Basic Rights, Equal Access to Citizenship*
382 Ellis-Petersen, H. & Rahman, S. (2019) *Myanmar and Bangladesh to start sending back thousands of Rohingya* The Guardian
383 Harmer, J. & Alam, J. (2019) *Myanmar, Bangladesh schedule Rohingya repatriation* AP
384 ABC.net (2019) *The "floating island that has refugees terrified*
385 AFP (2019) *UN expert urges caution on Bangladesh's Rohingya island "relocation plan"*
386 Asian Dialogue on Forced Migration (2019) *Avoiding Crisis Within a Crisis: The risk of human trafficking, smuggling and elated exploitation arising from the displacement in Cox's Bazar - Assessment Report*
387 UNHCR (2019) *The Refugee Brief, 4 January 2019*

Rohingya Refugee Response - Bangladesh
Refugee population density, as of 15th September 2019

913,981[1]
Total population

Registered camps

Other camps

18,200[2]
Kutupalong RC

613,272
Camp 1E, 1W, 2E, 2W, 3, 4, 4 Ext, 5, 6, 7, 8E, 8W, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 20 Ext

103,150
Camp 14 , 15 , and 16

13,172
Camp 21

10,210
Camp 23

22,215
Camp 22

33,540
Camp 24

9,497
Camp 25

41,007
Camp 26

27,222[2]
Nayapara RC

14,269
Camp 27

Raja Palong
Ghandung
Palong Khali
Choukali
Jalia Palong
Whykong
Baharchhara
MYANMAR
BANGLADESH
Nhilla
Teknaf

1 This figure includes 8,227 refugees residing outside formal camp / site boundaries.
2 Kutupalong RC includes 14,277 registered refugees of 2,617 families & Nayapara RC includes 19,895 registered refugees of 3,704 families.
Credit: data and design based on original map by UNHCR.
Original creation date: 15 September 2019. Sources: UNHCR, ISCG, RRRC

in the country, with reports of police harassment and difficulty accessing health, education, housing and decent work.[388] Like other countries in the region that are not Refugee Convention signatories, the government of India has repeatedly referred to Rohingya as "illegal immigrants" and threatened to deport them back to Myanmar for several years. Since October 2018, there have been a number of instances of Rohingya being deported to Myanmar, including people registered as asylum seekers by UNHCR.[389] The deportations have been condemned by human rights experts as contravening international law and have caused a large number of Rohingya to leave India and return to Bangladesh for fear of deportation to Myanmar.[390] The plan to deport the Rohingya to Myanmar has been challenged in the Indian Supreme Court on the basis that the 40,000 Rohingya were registered and recognized by UNHCR as refugees under its own mandate.[391]

In August 2019, the Indian government published the updated National Register of Citizens (NRC) for the state of Assam, which does not contain names of many persons who had come to India from Bangladesh before Bangladesh declared independence in 1971.[392] Concerns have been expressed that on the basis of these developments some 1.9 million residents of Assam will be considered as "foreigners" and as such potentially subject to deportation. According to some reports, India started to build large immigration detention centres in Assam shortly after the release of the NRC.[393] With Bangladesh being unlikely to accept them, many are at risk of statelessness.[394]

388 Mixed Migration Centre, 2019, _Rohingya migration to India : patterns, drivers and experiences_. Briefing Paper.
389 UNHCR (2019) _The Refugee Brief, 4 January 2019_; OHCHR (2019) _India: UN human rights experts condemn Rohingya deportations_
390 Al Jazeera (2019) _Over 1,000 Rohingya flee India for Bangladesh fearing crackdown_
391 IANS (2019) _Refugee status or deportation for Rohingyas? SC may rule before CJI retires_ Business Standard.
392 Press Trust of India (2019) _Final NRC leaves out Bangladesh refugees in India prior to 1971 : Himanta_ Business Standard
393 Perper, R. (2019) _India is building a mass detention centre for illegal immigrnats, less than a month after it effectively stripped 1.9 million people of their citizenship_ Business Insider
394 Al Jazeera (2019) _India excludes nearly 2 million people from Assam citizen list_

Movements in the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea

Although mixed maritime movements between Myanmar and Bangladesh towards **Thailand**, **Malaysia** and **Indonesia** have reduced significantly since the 2015 crisis that saw 5,000 migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers stranded on the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea,[395] new movements have taken place over the past two years, allegedly spurred by the conditions and the lack of opportunities in the refugee camps in Bangladesh.

Maritime interceptions

There have been several cases where Bangladesh and Myanmar authorities have intercepted people trying to leave their territory by boat. Several boats carrying Rohingya were intercepted by Myanmar authorities at the end of 2018, prompting concerns that movements would resume at a higher pace with the beginning of the monsoon.[396] Between November 2018 and February 2019, Bangladeshi authorities intercepted at least four boats attempting to transport migrants and refugees towards Southeast Asia.[397] According to media reports, Bangladeshi authorities intercepted over 400 Rohingya in fishing villages along the coast between January and May 2019, and 58 at sea in late May 2019.[398]

Arrivals of new boats carrying Rohingya have been reported in Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia. For instance, in March and April 2019, Malaysian authorities reported that several Rohingyas made it to Malaysia by boat, while others were still believed to be at sea.[399] In June 2019, Thai authorities discovered and detained a boat carrying 65 Rohingya and five other refugees and migrants from Myanmar on an island in Thailand after the boat was forced to land due to fuel and engine trouble.[400] A number of boats also arrived on the shores of the Indonesian island of Aceh.[401]

Protection in Southeast Asia

Upon arrival in **Malaysia** and **Thailand**, refugees and migrants in an irregular situation face challenges, as neither country is signatory to the 1951 Convention and there is limited formal protection for migrant workers in an irregular situation. At the end of August 2019, there were 177,690 refugees and asylum seekers registered by UNHCR in Malaysia, a large majority of them coming from Myanmar.[402] The government in Malaysia, elected in 2018, committed to ratify the convention and to ensure refugees' legal right to work, but has not yet taken steps to put these commitments into practice.[403] For its part, the Thai government committed to ending the detention of migrant and refugee children, signing an MoU acknowledging that children should only be detained as a measure of last resort and that any detention period should be a brief as possible.[404] The signing of the MoU comes after the Thai prime minister made a speech at the New York Summit in 2016 publicly committing to end child detention.[405]

Concerns have also been expressed regarding the situation of asylum seekers and refugees in **Indonesia**, despite the existence of a 2016 Presidential Regulation Concerning the Handling of Foreign Refugees. With Australia cutting funding provided to IOM to support new arrivals in Indonesia, allegedly amidst allegations that this support was creating a "magnet effect", many asylum seekers find themselves in a state of destitution in Indonesia.[406] In August 2019, there were an estimated 14,000 asylum seekers and refugees in Indonesia.[407]

Australian policy on sea arrivals shows cracks

Over the past several years the Australian government has been criticised for its treatment of asylum seeker and refugee children in its offshore detention centres, with MSF reporting in late 2018 that asylum seeker children as young as nine on Nauru were found to have had suicidal thoughts, committed acts of self-harm

395 UNHCR (2016) *Mixed Maritime Movement in South-East Asia in 2015*
396 Ye Lin, K. & Kyaw Thu, M. (2018) *Authorities stop boat with more than 100 Rohingya near Yangon* Frontier Myanmar; AFP (2018) *93 Rohingya fleeing by boat sent back to Myanmar camps: police*
397 AFP (2019) *Bangladesh stops more Rohingya taking risky trip to Malaysia*
398 AFP (2019) *Bangladesh Coast Guard picks up 58 Malaysia-bound Rohingya at sea*
399 AP (2019) *Malaysia Says 41 Rohingya Land on Northern Shorts, 200 Still at Sea*; Latiff, R. (2019) *Malaysia says 200 Rohingya migrants still at sea after latest arrival* Reuters
400 Thepgumpanat, P. & Wongcha-um, P. (2019) *Stranded Rohingya linked human trafficking: Thai police,* Reuters; The Nation (2019) *Thai boat captain says he was paid 100,000 baht to ferry Rohingya to Malaysia*
401 Ellis-Petersen, H. (2018) *Rohingya: end of monsoon prompts fresh wave of boats fleeing Myanmar* The Guardian; Reuters (2018) *Officials say boat carrying Rohingya Muslims lands in Indonesia*
402 UNHCR *Figures at a Glance in Malaysia* (accessed 23 September 2019)
403 Malay Mail (2019) *Malaysia should implement holistic measures to improve treatment of refugees and asylum seekers – Malaysian Bar*
404 Human Rights Watch (2019) *Thailand: Joint Statement on MoU to End Immigration Detention of Children*; Chew, V. (2019) *How change happened in Thailand* International Detention Coalition
405 Ibid.
406 Lamb, K. & Doherty, B. (2018) *On the streets with the desperate refugees who dream of being detained* The Guardian; Lamb, K. (2019) *"It's impossible to do anything": Indonesia's refugees in limbo as money runs out* The Guardian
407 Siregar, K. *Ordered to leave shelter by Aug 31, refugees in Jakarta face uncertain future* CNA

or attempted suicide.[408] There have been discussions between Australia and **Papua New Guinea** (PNG) regarding the closure of the Regional Processing Centre on Manus Island. As of August 2019, there were still a total of 460 migrants and refugees in PNG, of which 343 were refugees and 117 had been found not to be in need of international protection.[409] Most of them have been moved from Manus Island to Port Moresby, PNG's capital. Both governments have been working to secure third countries for resettlement for the refugees from Manus, with a majority of people going to the US under the its resettlement program; those who are not in need of international protection are most likely going to be returned to their countries of origin.

Despite Australian policies aimed at dissuading people from trying to reach Australia by boat, movements have not totally ceased, with at least 13 boats from **Sri Lanka** having been intercepted by the Australian authorities while attempting to travel to Australia to seek asylum between the beginning of 2018 and August 2019.[410] At the same time, official figures reveal that more asylum seekers are coming to Australia by plane than by boat, raising questions regarding the legitimacy and effectiveness of border control.[411]

Numbers of refugees and asylum seekers in and from Oceania countries, Mid-year 2018 UNHCR data
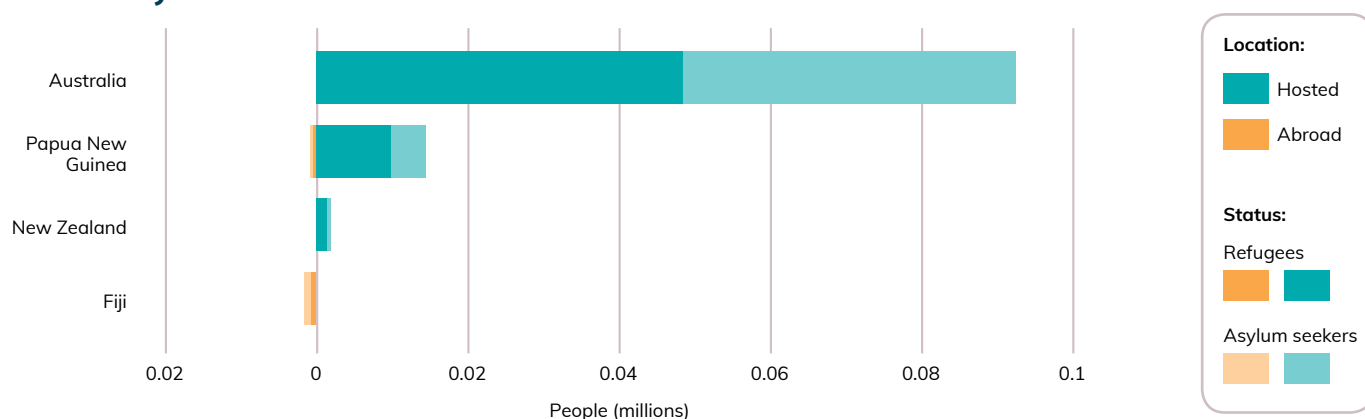
Source: UNHCR Mid-Year 2018 figures (latest available) design updated from IOM graphics from IOM World Migration Report 2018

"Hosted" refers to those refugees and asylum seekers from other countries who are residing in the receiving country (right-hand side of the figure); "abroad" refers to refugees and asylum seekers originating from that country who are outside of their origin country. The top 10 countries are based on 2016 data and are calculated by combining refugees and asylum seekers in and from countries.

408 MSF (2018) *Indefinite Despair: The tragic mental health consequences of offshore processing on Nauru*
409 Papua New Guinea Post-Courier (2019) *Closure of Manus Regional Processing Centre Still On The Table For Aust Govt*
410 Reuters (2019) *Australia intercepts Sri Lankan boat with 13 asylum seekers: government*
411 Hutchens, G. & Martin, S. (2019) *More asylum seekers come to Australia by plane than boat* The West Australian; Pascoe, M. (2019) *Irony: Record number of asylum seekers arrive on Dutton's watch* The New Daily

Photo credit: Chris Stowers / Panos

Workers from the Philippines on the production line at an ACER computer factory in Hsin Chu, Taiwan, almost 20 years ago. Analysts predict that in the coming decades millions of jobs will be lost to advances in automation and artificial intelligence-driven robotics. High losses are expected, particularly in the medium-skilled sector initially, and many factories and workplaces in Asia, the US and Europe are already advancing fast in automation transformation. If automation also spreads into Africa and other migrant-producing countries, there are fears that not only will these countries fail to meet the job demands of their own citizens, but also that those who want to migrate will find the jobs in destination countries also increasingly taken over by machines.

Section 2

The migrants' world

A quantitative and qualitative depiction of mixed migration in the real world

This section explores the experiences and environments of those using irregular pathways in mixed migration flows. It consists of both qualitative narratives (expert interviews, and six "views from the ground" of migrants and refugees) and quantitative graphics drawn from MMC's unique 4Mi (Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Inititative) primary data-gathering programme. This mix of the experiences of migrants and refugees, expert commentary, and statistical findings aims to situate those in mixed flows at the heart of this year's review.

Maimuna:[1]
"I'm much closer to Europe now…"

9 If I ever get to Germany, I hope to find a better standard of living, but I do not plan to stay there forever and don't want my children or other relatives to join me there. I'm much closer to Europe now and I'm very hopeful. I would even tell others it was worth it.

8 In Libya I also witnessed and actually experienced myself sexual assault and verbal abuse. I can't really say who was responsible, but it was very common.By this time, I had spent half of the $2,800 I had budgeted for the whole trip, including $1,000 in smuggling fees and $75 in bribes I paid in Dosso and in the Libyan desert.

7 Finally got to Libya. After one year, eight months, and 12 days on the road, I finally reached Tripoli in January 2019. At the time, we kept hearing about more and more fighting in the country. It was like a civil war. People trying to leave Libya for Europe were being stopped at sea by the Libyan coast guard and brought back to detention centres. Those they didn't catch ran the risk of drowning at sea and we heard the stories but we still wanted to go because life in Libya was very bad.

5 Later on, soldiers detained our group, including some children, for a whole day without giving us food or water. They wouldn't even allow us to relieve ourselves. They abused us a lot verbally and in other ways too.

4 What we went through in the desert there was not easy and much worse than I had expected. We really suffered at the hands of the soldiers. We paid bribes at two military checkpoints, but when our drivers saw another checkpoint in front, they decided to evade soldiers by taking a dangerous short cut. They didn't know that some soldiers had seen us already. The soldiers began to pursue us in high-speed vehicles. There was some shooting, and our drivers had to stop. The soldiers punished the two drivers seriously and took a lot of money from them. They ordered the passengers to get out of our vehicle and sleep on the sand. They made us suffer a lot before allowing us to go.

3 In Niger, we stopped in the towns of Dosso and Agadez to meet new smugglers for the next legs of the trip and to earn some money to add to my savings. Sometimes the stopovers were short, as we were passed from one group of smugglers to another, sometimes I stayed for many weeks to earn enough money to continue. All this time I stayed in touch with friends and family using Facebook and WhatsApp on my smartphone. I also got useful information from my smugglers and fellow travelers.

6 During the course of my journey I saw three people being sexually assaulted by security forces. In Sabha, a town in southern Libya, I saw two women die as a result of their injuries after being abused physically and sexually. It was terrible to watch, really terrible, and I blame the smugglers for their deaths. When I saw what happened to them, I was very frightened because I realised exactly the same could easily happen to me.

2 Friends and relatives told me the best way to get to Germany, and some even helped me pay for the trip and put me in touch with smugglers who could organise the journey. Soon after discussing my plans with one smuggler on the phone, it was time to go. I set off from Lagos and travelled by bus and car with smugglers through Benin to Niger.

1 I come from Ogun State in southwest Nigeria. After finishing high school, I worked for a while as a house cleaner in a town near my home. It wasn't paid well, and it was hard to make ends meet. I am divorced and had three children to take care of on my own. I felt trapped. Had life been easier financially, I would have been happy to stay in Nigeria, but I had a strong feeling things would be better in Europe and that I might meet a new partner there. I chose Germany because I have friends there, and we are often in touch via social media.

Map labels: Tripoli, LIBYA, Sabhā, Qatrun, NIGER, Agadez, Dosso, BENIN, NIGERIA, Ogun State, Lagos

1 'Views from the ground' presents six stories from migrants and refugees on the move, drawn directly from their responses to the 4Mi survey. As the surveys consist almost entirely of multiple-choice questions, these narratives, while presented in the first person, are not verbatim quotations, but they do faithfully reflect respondents' answers and the geopolitical context of their journeys. 4Mi does not record names or other personally identifiable information and so all names are aliases.

4Mi survey conducted in Tripoli, January 2019.

Arezo:
"I wish I had never left."

Wardak Province

AFGHANISTAN

Islamabad

PAKISTAN

Balochistan

1 I am a 35-year-old widow with three children. I was unable to work in Afghanistan, and there was no sign of the security situation there improving. Over the years, many people from my home area left. Friends and family abroad, including my siblings, encouraged me to leave. I longed for better education and healthcare as well as more personal freedom. I set my sights on Australia.

2 My family and friends helped pay for my journey and gave me lots of information. We kept in touch through apps like Facebook and Viber. They also put me in touch with my first smuggler, who organized the first leg, to Islamabad.

3 Once I arrived in Pakistan, I registered as a refugee, even though I had not reached my intended destination. In Pakistan's Baluchistan region, I witnessed a migrant being sexually assaulted. I don't know who the attackers were.

4 Through fellow migrants and a smuggler, I got in touch with other smugglers in Islamabad and they organized my flight to Kuala Lumpur. There, another smuggler helped me get a boat to Jawa Barat, in Indonesia, where I am now.

MALAYSIA

Kuala Lumpur

5 I could not have made this 8,000-kilometre journey (which, as well as the boat and plane, included stretches on foot and in cars) without smugglers. Some of them lied to me – about routes, money, and what the journey would be like – and one of them abandoned me to fend for myself. Still, it's thanks to smugglers that I got the documents I needed and managed to cross borders safely. Smugglers also provided accommodation, food and water, and they helped me receive money transfers

Jawa Barat

INDONESIA

6 I initially intended to get to Australia or some other developed country to realise these dreams and settle permanently, but, because of asylum rules, that is now not to be. Although I felt compelled to do so at the time, I wish I had never left my home in Afghanistan. And after what I have been through, I would not encourage others there to migrate.

7 I am not sure what my final destination will be, but wherever it is, when I get there I will apply for asylum. I hope to find a job within a few months. If my asylum claim is rejected, I will find some way to stay there regardless.

4Mi survey conducted in Jawa Barat (West Java) Indonesia, December 2018.

Interview

A turnable tide?

Slavery has been a widespread constant throughout human history, explains **Philippa Southwell**; what's changed recently is a question not so much of numbers, but of terminology and recognition. A combination of legislation and public pressure could, she believes, start to turn the tide of exploitation.

Philippa Southwell founded the Human Trafficking & Modern Slavery Expert Directory in 2015 and is its managing director. She is a specialist criminal defence and human trafficking lawyer and published author on modern slavery law. She is the co-author of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery Law and Practice. Southwell sits on various advisory boards dealing with exploitation, child labour and human trafficking. She regularly lectures and trains on many aspects of modern slavery law, forced criminality and child criminal exploitation.

How would you characterize the current status of human trafficking and modern slavery globally?

We currently have an epidemic of trafficking and modern slavery throughout the world. I think that we have become alive to this issue that has been here forever, and we have now given it a new label of "modern slavery". It isn't a new concept, but it is positive that globally, there is a lot more recognition of the different faces that exploitation can take and the different types of exploitation.

Do you think that giving it a new label, and expanding the definition of what a slave is, is partly why the numbers claimed to be living as modern slaves (up to 45 million globally) are so large?

Yes, I think so. I do not think the growing numbers reflect the fact that we are seeing more people enslaved. I think that it is just that those numbers have always been

there, and it is just that they have failed to be identified or acknowledged as victims.

What do you think the root cause is for the proliferation of trafficking and modern slavery?

It's a lucrative business. It's estimated that it's a $3 billion a year criminal trade. And we are idealistic to think that we will eradicate slavery and exploitation. We will always have individuals that will take advantage of those in a position of vulnerability, and humans are a very large commodity. It is a very lucrative criminal activity.

One of the very positive aspects of the way that the modern slavery legislation is moving is that it is focusing on the corporate sector and consumer choice. So, what we're doing is we're saying, "Well, as a consumer, as the public, you have a choice as to where you buy your fruit, where you buy your clothing." And we are

> **We are idealistic to think that we will never have slavery. We will always have people that will take advantage of individuals, it is a very lucrative criminal activity.**

really shining a light on the corporate sector, looking at how companies operate. Are they operating ethically? Are your bananas, is your coffee, are your clothing all produced in an ethical way, in a slave-free way?

Where we can advance change is through that supply-chain human rights aspect. We will always have illicit criminal enterprises operating, and I think that that sort of exploitation will continue. But where we will see change is in relation to how companies operate and focusing on corporate responsibility with big brands and how they treat their workers and where, or what suppliers, they buy their product from. This is the key area where we can effect change, other than the sort of clandestine criminal organised networks that are exploiting people. By targeting legitimate business practices in this way, we can see a really positive impact. But I also think we need to be doing more.

People who are on the move globally are moving as labour migrants, students, joining family members overseas, or arriving as irregular migrants. Are these the same channels used by traffickers to bring people into countries in order to exploit them?

They are. The legal definitions between smuggling and trafficking have become conflated. So an individual will think they are being smuggled into the UK or into Europe but they have engaged with a criminal entity to facilitate their passage to the UK, and the problem is when they get here, they are in a position of debt bondage and are made to work to pay off that debt. Most of my clients that I have represented believe that they're being smuggled, but then they are exploited. So it is very interchangeable.

> **Victims who have been smuggled via agents to the UK and are here illegally will find themselves in a vulnerable position and then expose themselves to further exploitation by a completely different organised criminal network.**

In my line of work, I will be involved where there is an element of exploitation, and that exploitation is usually forced criminality. There are other forms of exploitation

as well: an individual may well be exploited in a number of ways over a number of years. What I also see is that victims who have been smuggled via agents to the UK and are here illegally will find themselves in a vulnerable position and then expose themselves to further exploitation by a completely different organised criminal network.

It's been said that asylum denials undermine Britain's vow to lead global efforts to end slavery because once victims of trafficking reach 17.5 years of age they can be deported to their home country and fall victim again to repeat trafficking. Is that your experience?

I have seen this on a number of occasions. I have seen clients returned who have been identified as a victim of trafficking or who are pending a "conclusive grounds" trafficking determination.[1] I have also seen clients that have been removed and re-trafficked back to the UK. And I've seen clients who have actually been re-trafficked twice back to the UK, after being removed. And the reason for that is that the debt doesn't go away. The individual, the victim who goes back to their community for example, they will still owe that debt. Their family will owe that debt to the agent who had either trafficked or smuggled them to the UK and they are indebted, they will have to go back to work, or be subjected to different forms of exploitation to pay off that debt. So yes, it is a common pattern that I see.

> **I've seen clients who have been re-trafficked twice back to the UK after being removed. And the reason for that is the debt doesn't go away.**

Is that a real debt or a fictitious one just to get a hold over those trafficked?

Out of the hundreds of cases that I've done in my career, I've only seen about three cases where the debt has been paid off. So it is a fictitious debt as such. Even where the individual has been working, say, for example, for three years in an illicit cannabis factory to pay off a £30,000 debt for bringing them from Vietnam to the UK, it is a fictitious debt in the sense that it's never decreased. The traffickers will just exploit them for as long as they can until they either escape or they have contact with the authorities.

According to the research there is a lot of modern slavery in countries such as the US, Canada and the UK. What are the areas mainly that they're working in if it's not just criminal activities?

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1   For details of this process, see the UK government's note on the national referral mechanism.

> **Out of the hundreds of cases that I've done in my career, I've only seen about three cases where the debt has been paid off.**

Exploitation and modern slavery have many different typologies. The Polaris Project, which is a large US-based antislavery NGO, published a report about two years ago, where they found 25 typologies of exploitation.[2] But that very much pertained to the US. And different countries, different towns, different regions have different types of exploitation. So for example, here, we in the UK, we see sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced labour, forced criminality, as common forms of exploitation. And you can break that down: in forced labour we see this in agriculture and building sites, for example. Whereas in the US, you see different types of exploitation within different types of construction.

> **We have a problem with forced cannabis production in the UK. We're trafficking Vietnamese nationals to produce our cannabis in cannabis, factories, and we're actually exporting it.**

And we have a problem with forced cannabis production. The UK is actually exporting cannabis. We are trafficking in Vietnamese nationals to produce our cannabis in cannabis factories, and we are actually exporting it. Where as in other European countries that I have worked in they do not have a problem with cannabis production; it's different types of classified drugs such as methamphetamines where victims will be trafficked to produce them, working in the makeshift drug labs to produce other controlled substances. So different countries will very much have different types of exploitation.

To what extent do you think people who end up in modern slavery situations could be rejected asylum seekers or irregular migrants living under the radar?

That's true to some degree. Living under the radar, especially homelessness, where there is a direct link to trafficking. Concerning failed asylum seekers, yes, generally that makes up a huge portion of individuals who are being exploited. But here in the UK, the stats are quite alarming if you look at the breakdown in nationalities. The [most common] nationality of

individuals identified as victims of modern slavery in Britain are British nationals, and that's quite an alarming statistic. We are seeing young people exploited by gangs in what we have been labelling as "county lines" – it is child criminal exploitation.[3]

There still seem to be many people who confuse human smuggling with human trafficking. Does this affect your work?

Yes. I train the Crown Prosecution Service in-house here [in the UK], I train judges, law enforcement and lawyers all over Europe, and it's actually quite alarming to see how even legal professionals do not understand the actual legal definitions between smuggling and trafficking. But smuggling can very easily become trafficking. A victim that is being smuggled can very easily become trafficked. But yes, it is a public misconception as well, and this error dilutes the issue and severity of trafficking.

In your understanding of trafficking and modern slavery, do you think it's the availability of ready, cheap, often-undocumented labour that raises the propensity of human trafficking? Or is it an absence of foreign workers that cause them to be trafficked into the country?

It's more of an economic issue. If a company, or an individual can make the most amount of profit because they are using cheap labour, which may be unethical and may even be illegal, isn't it about greed? Isn't it about making money? If you look at slavery historically, that was the root of what slavery was, and I think that it still is. Even if we looked at slavery in supply chains through a corporate light, these companies want to turn around the biggest profit, don't they?

Do situations where asylum processing takes a long time and people are in a state of limbo create a pool of desperation that is also exploitable?

Yes. A lot of my clients are those whose immigration status has taken a long time to stabilise and have struggled to sustain themselves on the state benefits, which are inadequate, and are desperate to work. They want to be able to earn money, support themselves and have a normal life, or to send money back to families in different countries. And it does expose them to working illegally, particularly if they're waiting a number of years to have their status established. If they are working illegally and undocumented, then of course that environment allows exploitation to thrive, for them to be paid under minimum wage, work long hours and find themselves in a modern slavery situation.

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2   Polaris (2016) *The Typology of Modern Slavery: Defining Sex and Labor Trafficking in the United States.*
3   The term "county lines" refers to urban networks of illegal drug traders who groom and exploit children as young as seven to sell narcotics in more rural areas of the UK. For more details, see the *National Crime Agency's factsheet*.

What do you think human trafficking and human slavery will look like in the next 20 or 30 years?

I think that technology and artificial intelligence is fantastic in relation to supply chain transparency. Being able to trace where a particular button on a coat comes from, or where coffee beans have come from, or where particular metals have come from. I think that technology will be used continually to advance positive change. We are however seeing the other side to this, and technology being used in a negative way. If you look at Backpage for example and all of these issues surrounding sex trafficking and advertising sexual services of minors, as well as social media such as Facebook, it is double-edged.[4]

Criminal entities will continue to use technology and develop their modus operandi as the technology develops, they will us it to exploit people. For the future… there's a whole movement of human rights at the moment, and I am hoping that we will see better business practices. And all companies and businesses have a huge part to play in this. I'm hoping that there will be a strict regime of compliance in relation to ethical business practices and human rights compliance practices.

> **" It's quite alarming to see how even legal professionals don't understand the legal definitions between smuggling and trafficking. "**

What do you think needs to happen for modern slavery and human trafficking to be successfully reduced in the future?

The UK's Modern Slavery Act was a leading piece of legislation, other countries have followed very similar legislation within their legal frameworks. What is very positive is the compliance legislation. The only way we can affect change is by targeting legitimate business practices – we will always have criminal organisations and we will never, I don't think, ever eradicate slavery in that sense or exploitation – but by targeting legitimate practices, businesses, and making the regulations tougher for them, and penalising companies that are not taking the legislation seriously, who may have unethical supply chains and/or aren't publishing modern slavery compliance statements. It has a direct impact on their consumers and the public choose where they buy their clothes groceries, phones, and cars.

If we look at mobile phones and the metals that go into mobile phones, that is an alarming area where there is often exploitation in the mining of particular types of metal. We know that child labour is used in many of the metals [in] many mobile phones. And I think that we are seeing a shift in that the public is able to decide who they buy from and are being more conscious with their decisions. They can boycott brands and companies by choosing not to buy from them. So there's been a huge shift on public awareness and public choice. I think that should continue, and it can affect change. If a company sees their stocks going down, of course they are going to address that issue.

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4   *Backpage was a classified advertising website that had become the largest marketplace for buying and selling sex in the US by the time that federal law enforcement agencies seized it in April 2018.*

Amanata:
"There were no opportunities in Mali."

7 If I get to France, I will not apply for asylum but plan to live irregularly. I hope to find a job within the first six months, most likely as a domestic worker. I am not sure whether I will bring additional family members to join me, but for now, I'd like to stay in France permanently if I can and not return to Mali. And even after everything I went through, I would encourage other people in Mali to migrate too.

6 But the next part of the journey could be the hardest. Many migrants are detained here and crossing the Mediterranean is very dangerous – there are no rescue boats any more to help people who get shipwrecked. When the Libyan coast guard finds people on the water, they bring them back and detain them too.

5 I arrived in Tripoli in August 2019 and am now waiting to go on to France. All in all, the journey so far has been tough. It would have been easier with more money and medical assistance. I would most like to have had safe spaces for women. I have spent $900 to get this far, about $300 more than I had expected. $400 went to smugglers.

Tripoli

LIBYA

4 In Qatrun, I saw security forces sexually assault other migrants. In Sabha, I had to pay $200 in bribes to government officials. In Bani Walid, officials held me for ransom for a week.

Sabhā

Qatrun

MALI

NIGER

Agadez

3 From Mali I rode in cars and pick-up trucks to Agadez in Niger and then on to Libya. In Libya I stayed in several towns, to get money for the next parts of my trip. A lot of bad things happened in that country.

1 I am 29 and was unemployed in Mali. I have had no education. There was a lot of insecurity and violence, including domestic violence. If I had stayed, I might have been forced into a marriage. But the main reason I wanted to leave was that there were no opportunities at home. I want to go to France too because I have some family there. There are job prospects and the social security system is good. If all goes well, I'll earn enough money to send some home. I might even meet a partner.

2 My journey began after friends and family put me in touch with a smuggler. He was also a migrant who helped plan and organise the whole journey. I don't see him as a criminal or someone who exploited me. I always knew what I was letting myself in for because people who had already travelled from my country, Mali, to France, and others who had returned, told me all about their journeys and what their lives were like abroad.
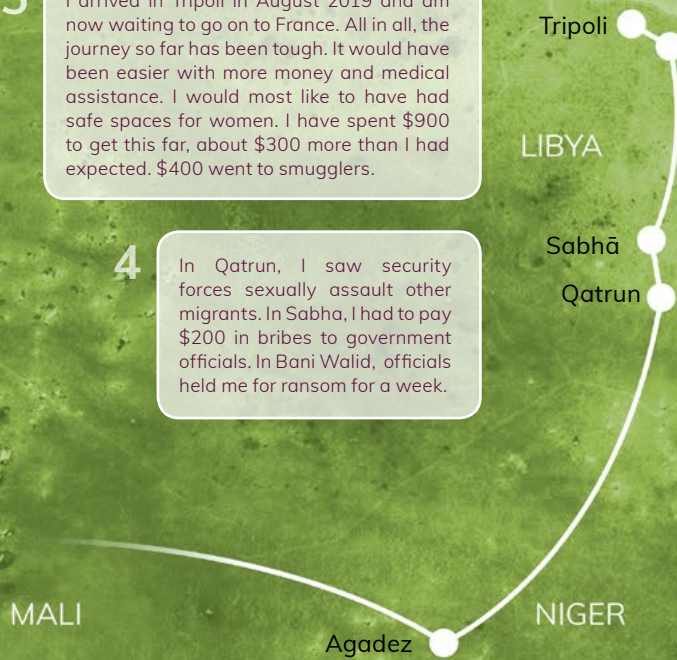
4Mi survey conducted in Tripoli, August 2019.

Zia:
"I just had to leave Afghanistan."

7 Finally, after a journey that involved a lot of walking, as well buses, trucks and trains, I reached Germany, where I now have refugee status. Friends, family and others in my community helped with the initial funds for my journey. Before leaving, I estimated it would cost about $4,500 but, in the end, I paid about $7,800, with $5,400 of that going to smugglers. Before leaving, I wasn't really aware of all the risks, and now that I am, I would not encourage others to migrate too

8 In Afghanistan I was a student, now I do casual work but don't earn enough to send money home to my family as I had hoped. I think I will stay here for no more than five years and then move on to another country. Eventually things in Afghanistan will get better and I will go home, live in peace and have some kind of career.

GERMANY

AUSTRIA

HUNGARY

6 The next leg of the journey took me through North Macedonia and Serbia, and then through Hungary and Austria. Many refugees and migrants hoping to travel north found themselves stuck at the Greece-Macedonia border.

SERBIA

NORTH MACEDONIA

TURKEY

GREECE

Izmir

Tehran

AFGHANISTAN

IRAN

Sistan & Baluchestan Province

PAKISTAN

5 Then I made my way to Izmir, in Turkey. At the border, immigration officials physically restrained and detained me, but I was eventually released without paying any fine or bribe. While in Turkey, I managed to find smugglers to organize a sea crossing to Greece.

4 When I got to Tehran, I was abducted by smugglers and a group of criminals. They threatened to hurt me, and I had to pay them $300 to be released. But generally I used several smugglers to get to Europe. Some were government officials. Different smugglers gave me shelter, food and water, general information, documents, transit across borders, accommodation, transport from and to holding places, and they dealt with authorities. When I reached a new place, I was either handed over by the previous smuggler to a new one, or new smugglers found me, or sometimes other migrants put me in touch with another one.

3 I first headed to Iran. On the border, in Sistan and Baluchistan Province, I paid $100 in bribes to government officials.

1 In the end the violence got so bad I just had to leave. This was three years ago. Everyone seemed to have the same idea. I am 23 and come from Pul-i-Aalam, in the Logar province of Afghanistan, about a two-hour drive from Kabul. It wasn't just the general insecurity and terrorist attacks that made up my mind, other things were getting worse too: basic services and rights, freedom of expression. I just wanted a better life, to live in peace and free from oppression

2 To find out how to go about making my long journey and what route to take, I spoke to my family, friends, people in the Afghan diaspora, and also to local smugglers. On the road, I stayed in touch with them and with other migrants I met, using different apps on my smartphone. There are also several specialized websites that were helpful.

4Mi survey conducted in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, August 2018.

Interview

Time to tool up

The risk that tech tools such as predictive modelling might be used to spread fear, or further restrict migration flows, should not deter us from developing them, insists **Rana Novack**, because their potential to make things better is too great to ignore and, in the case of artificial intelligence, already proven.
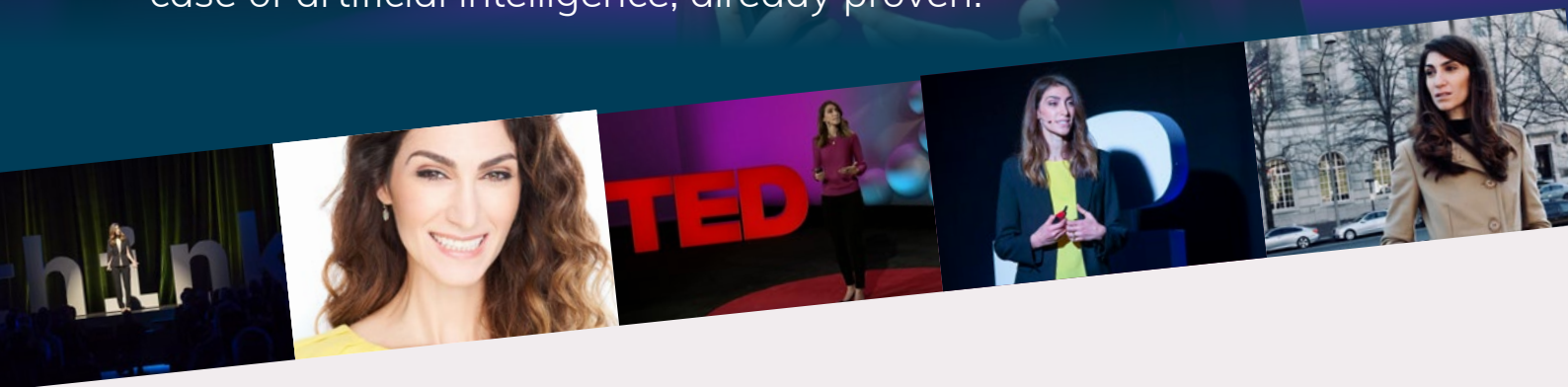
Rana Novack is a Syrian-American advocate for refugees and civilians in conflict, social impact innovator, writer, TED and keynote speaker, and solution owner of IBM's Refugee & Migration Predictive Analytics Solution. Rana Novack has been published in the Wall Street Journal, WIRED magazine, Business Insider, and her work has been cited by Yale University and the Foreign Policy Initiative. She is a Non-Resident Scholar and Global Policy Center Faculty Affiliate of the University of Virginia's Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, and recipient of the 2017 George Mason University Department of Communication Alumnus of the Year and Distinguished Alumna Awards.

Being Syrian yourself, and with many relatives and friends who fled the Syrian war, you have a personal drive to see predictive analysis of migration and refugee crises work. Is this still your main drive or inspiration?

Without a doubt. At the heart of all of this for me has been understanding how far-reaching the effects of war can be and also seeing through the eyes of my relatives what that process looks like. It doesn't mean very much when we hear that millions of people have been displaced, but when you talk to one person and understand their singular journey, and you understand each step that they have to go through to even learn whether or not they might be eligible to escape a conflict, I really learnt a lot about what I consider to be the deficiencies in the process and [that] there's a way that we can do things better. I know there is. And so

that absolutely has been my main inspiration and I don't think I would have been so persistent without it.

How would you respond to those who are sceptical about predictive modelling because of how it may be used by the right-wing to increase the fear of "invasions", or used by governments to tighten their border controls and create policies to prevent access?

We need to make sure that the tools are available for the people who want to do the right thing. I think with any tool, any technology, there's the opportunity for someone to use it with malintent, but that doesn't mean that we shouldn't create these tools so that we can be a force for good in the world. Ultimately, it's up to us to choose how we want to use these tools.

> **We need to make sure that the tools are available for the people who want to do the right thing. Ultimately, it's up to us to choose how we want to use technology.**

Can you describe the advances being made in using big data machine learning and predicting future population movements or refugee crises? How close are we to a workable model?

We already have a workable model. What we have been focused on is leveraging AI, machine learning, predictive modelling, and data analytics to better understand bilateral mixed migration flows and the dynamics of migration, and looking at how we can better explain migratory flows for two reasons. Firstly, and this has always been with the refugee or the migrant at the heart of the solution, how can we make sure we're giving them better options? And then secondly, how do we enable humanitarian assistance so that the people supporting refugees and migrants can do their jobs easier? And we've been looking at all sorts of data sources and really digging into some of the drivers of migration. We have developed a multi-scale model that has been trained on these indicators and historic information, and we are able to generate forecasts and conduct what-if scenario analyses, so we can envision what a migration or refugee crisis might look like or what the consequences on the flow or migrants will look like if, for example, a certain policy is introduced or if a border is closed.

What do you think the private sector can bring to predictive modelling around these movements that is missing from the efforts of the UN, NGOs, academics and governments?

In the private sector, we don't have the same types of mandates. We have the latitude to experiment, to innovate, and the capacity for creativity. It is boundless. The private sector thrives on new ideas, and so if we can bring some of that spirit into the policy and development world, all boats rise with that tide.

> **In the private sector, we don't have the same types of mandates. We have the latitude to experiment, to be innovative, and the capacity for creativity.**

During the Syrian refugee crisis, there was not only an absence of technological analysis but an absence of political will to respond. Isn't that the key issue irrespective of predictive capacity?

That is something that I personally have struggled with in trying to understand the seeming lack of empathy and compassion, and the paralysis of political will. And you're absolutely right, and I have my feelings about that, and about politically, what I think we can and should do differently – I've done advocacy in that respect. I feel that the technology industry isn't constrained by those same parameters. If we can present data and information that's evidence-based to the policy makers, it makes it a lot more difficult to ignore.

> **If we can present data and information that's evidence-based to policy makers, it makes it a lot more difficult to ignore.**

How would you characterize the global North's low appetite to settle and absorb refugees? And do you think it will change in the future?

I feel discouraged and I feel disheartened. I also feel like it is history repeating itself. It's been especially difficult, to be honest because as you know, I have a very personal connection and when I see people that I care about portrayed as villains or invaders in some way, it's just not accurate. It's such a mischaracterization and I think that it's a general lack of understanding and basic education about the processes that refugees have to go through, even to be eligible for resettlement, not to mention facing issues of negative perception and stigma along the way.

The impact of AI in the future looks massive. Do you think there's a risk it will exacerbate local inequality and potential for conflict, causing more refugees or migrants? Or will it be a force for good?

I think maybe it has the potential to do both, but I will say that so far, I've seen AI helping more than harming the plight of refugees and migrants. We're still learning about the limits of AI and the future is still to be determined, but as of right now, I'm seeing three categories where AI has the greatest impact: people, the problem itself, and policy. Concerning people – refugees and humanitarian aid workers – we're already seeing that the lives and conditions of refugees are being improved using AI, which is quite remarkable. The most easily accessible example of this, of course, is smartphones, how refugees and migrants have been able to stay connected both with the world and with networks, things like maps, navigation, translation, healthcare, mental health, humanitarian assistance.

Then moving to the problem itself, the actual issue of mass migration, that raises questions about how we leverage AI to manage this better now while concurrently preparing to respond better in the future. Obviously, I'm

an evangelist for better forecasting, but let's imagine for a minute – we're not quite there yet but let's imagine – if we could predict a refugee crisis, which we're on our way to doing. But what does that mean and what are some of the implications that that would have on the types of support that refugees receive? I'm thinking of empowerment, enabling self-reliance. By the way, there's an AI-powered software that's being tested right now to support the resettlement process based on refugees' skill sets and matching those with the economic needs of the communities in which they're resettled.

> **" AI is helping more than harming the plight of refugees and migrants. The most easily accessible example of this is smartphones: how refugees and migrants have been able to stay connected both with the world and with their networks. "**

Thirdly, policy. Policy is such an important part and there are so many ways that AI can offer better insight into policy. For example, AI can support unbiased practices throughout the immigration process. You may have heard of the first robot citizen, the robot that's a citizen in Saudi Arabia?[1] I find that so interesting that we can have a robot with citizenship while millions of people are considered stateless. There are some really conflicting things that are going on that make me pause and think about what this all means, both in terms of technology but also technology's influence on the dynamics and conceptions of citizenship and nationality.

I feel very encouraged about what I'm seeing so far, but AI is a developing field, so we will see what the future holds – and the future we create with this new technology.

Is there a risk that as AI advances more in some countries than others, refugees may be left behind from a skills point of view?

You're asking specifically about the skills gap, or the skills gap that might be created because of the advances in technology and how refugees will fare in that new work environment? I think that it's an opportunity for people to re-skill and to learn AI and learn about these new technologies and to even develop further technologies. Many refugees are very technically fluent. That means that with the right training there is great opportunity for refugees to make meaningful contributions in this new workforce.

How important do you think categorical distinctions are between those on the move?

I do think that a distinction is important. And the reason is that we have a legal and moral responsibility to support refugees. When someone is fleeing war and persecution, it's unconscionable to me that they might be turned away. According to international law, we have an obligation to help refugees, period. Now, I also believe that respecting borders, respecting the laws of migration, and supporting refugees are not mutually exclusive. I often find that they are pitted against one another, but we can respect security and immigration laws while upholding our obligation and responsibility to support refugees.

Given the behaviour of some countries, are the aspirations of the global compacts unrealistically optimistic?

Is it more important to be realistic or idealistic? I do think they're optimistic, and I also believe that it's incredibly important to be idealistic. We know that in practice and in reality it doesn't always work out. Something that's struck me about the compacts is that the word "burden" is used repeatedly, 26 times. Which plays into the false narrative and perception that refugees are something negative. Refugees are not a problem to be solved, and supporting them is not a burden: it's a legal obligation and moral responsibility.

> **" When someone is fleeing war and persecution, it's unconscionable to me that they might be turned away. "**

The compacts are certainly a wonderful step forward in terms of collaboration and encouraging international cooperation. It remains to be seen how this is going to play out in practice. The reality is that it's shocking to think of proportionately how few refugees globally are resettled. But we all must stay vigilant and make sure that we hold ourselves, and each other, accountable.

Thinking of the future, are you a pessimist or an optimist, dystopian or utopian?

It depends on the day! In all honesty, I go back and forth. I have days where I'm incredibly pessimistic and I get stuck feeling discouraged, just watching what's happening in the world and how some of the world's most vulnerable populations have been targeted. And I have thought a lot about empathy, and I've wondered where is the compassion and why should it matter if they're either five miles away or 5,000 miles away? And

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1   For details, see for example: Stone, Z. (2017) Everything You Need To Know About Sophia, The World's First Robot Citizen Forbes

then I have other times where I'm incredibly encouraged and I'm a witness to the overwhelming love and support that refugees and migrants are receiving; and I'm inspired by the creativity, resourcefulness, and above all, the strength and resilience of people. And I think to myself, if they can get through this, anything is possible.

> **The word 'burden' is used 26 times in the global compacts. Supporting refugees should not be called a burden: it's a moral responsibility.**

Yonas:
"It took me six months to travel 500 km. But I have no regrets."

1 Even though I am only 22 I have been dreaming of migrating for many years. There was no-one in particular who told me or persuaded me to do so, but seeing people come back with money to Amhara, my hometown in northern Ethiopia, or sending money home from abroad, made think it was a good idea.

ERITREA

2 Before I left, I was a farmer. If I'd had enough money, or thought I had a chance of improving my situation and my place in society, I might well have stayed. Things might have gotten better for me, but I thought it would take too long, and I didn't want to wait. In fact, I would have left sooner if I had had enough money.

YEMEN

DIJBOUTI

Amhara

Asayita

Dijbouti

5 Even though Djibouti City is only 500 km from Amhara, it took me six months to get here. So far, I have no regrets and I am still determined to get to Saudi Arabia and the only way is to go across the Red Sea and through Yemen. I won't try to claim asylum in either Yemen or Saudi Arabia. I just want to get some kind of informal job so I can send some money home to help my family and save a bit. I don't plan to stay there for very long, but I know I will have to be careful to avoid getting picked up by the authorities and deported. If everything works out, I might help some of my family to join me. Eventually I would like to return home to set up a business with my savings. I have seen others do this.

3 My route changed a few times along the way, sometimes because of the price, or the security situation. I did not have a phone with me so most of the information I needed I got from friends and family before leaving, and then from other migrants once I began my journey.

4 I had heard lots of stories about other people's journeys to Saudi Arabia and other places, so I thought I understood what it involved, what the risks were. I set off for Saudi Arabia in early 2018, heading first to Asayita in Ethiopia's Afar region, travelling on foot and by car. I left with $450. I knew it wasn't enough and that I would have to work now and again to pay for the whole trip.

ETHIOPIA

4Mi survey conducted in Djibouti City, October 2018.

Abdi:
"I am in limbo."

1 I started my journey about a year ago in Baidoa, a town not too far from my home in Bakool in central Somalia. I had spent my whole life there and I am 40 now. I am married and I have seven children. Where I come from, people of all ages have been migrating for years. I myself probably would have stayed had there been peace and security in Somalia, rather than years of civil war and attacks by the Shabaab insurgency. But my wife encouraged me to leave, and my friends and family who were already abroad also persuaded me and gave me useful information.

2 I was not very fussy about exactly where I went, as long as things there would be better: better education and medical care. A good social welfare system was also important. Once the decision had been made, nothing was going to stop me, although I was worried about violence or even dying on the way.

3 In the end, I opted to head south, to South Africa, at least to start with, as this route was cheaper and seemed safer than others. I figured the whole trip would cost me about $2,700. I had some savings and sold some possessions to pay for it. My plan was to pay smugglers as I went. If I ran out of money, I knew I could receive more money via hawala, an informal money-transfer network. It turned out that not all the smugglers I used were friendly or helpful.

4 My first stop was in Mandera, a town on the other side of the border with Kenya. I stayed there for a while to earn money for the next leg. Then I went down to Nairobi, hoping to find smugglers to help me get through Tanzania.

5 I found smugglers to take me through Tanzania and I paid them, but they abandoned me at the border town of Namanga. I managed to make my way to Dar es Salaam, where I stayed with friends and relatives for a short time. I also had to pay bribes of some $50 to Tanzanian government officials.

6 I then travelled on South through Tanzania to Malawi. There is a big refugee camp in Dzaleka that has been there for a long time. I was abandoned by my smugglers there as well. It was hard in Malawi. I saw another young migrant die after falling sick. He didn't have the right medicine, even though I think his smugglers could have helped him.

7 During my journey, I saw a lot of children travelling with adult migrants. I'd say that at least a quarter, perhaps half, of all the migrants I saw were under 18.

8 Then I got to Zimbabwe, and had more trouble. In Bulawayo, a gang robbed me. They took my money and some personal belongings.

9 Now I am in South Africa. In the end, after paying smugglers and bribes, the trip cost a bit more than I expected, about $3,500 in all. I am in limbo here. I applied for asylum but was rejected. This happens to thousands of other people from Somalia, and also Ethiopia. I'm going to stay here, for now anyway, keeping under the radar. I haven't decided whether I want to stay here for the long term and have my family join me, or move on somewhere else, or go back to Somalia. At some point that could be the best option, but not yet.

Mandera · SOMALIA
Baidoa
KENYA
Nairobi
Namanga
TANZANIA
Dar es Salaam
Dzaleka
ZIMBABWE
Bulawayo
Musina
SOUTH AFRICA

4Mi survey conducted in Musina, South Africa in October 2018.

Interview

Zoom out

Western ideas about migration management would benefit from more heed being paid to the different dynamics and policies that operate in the global South, argues **Anna Triandafyllidou**. A better understanding of the socio-economic insecurities that drive the West's misguided, narrow, and stubborn preoccupation with securitisation would also pay dividends.
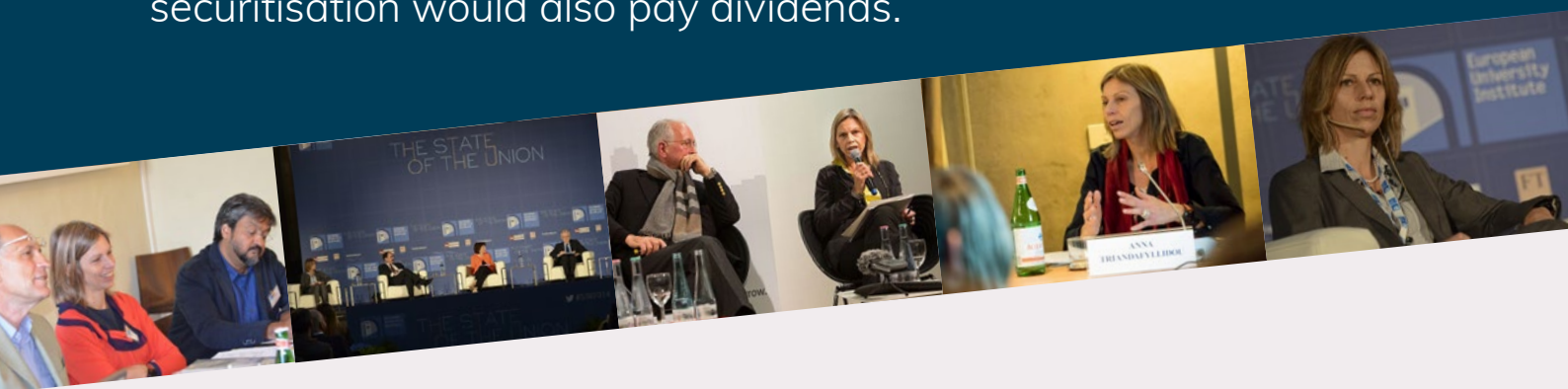
Professor Anna Triandafyllidou recently started a seven-year research programme at Ryerson University as Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC) in Migration and Integration. Previously she held a Robert Schuman Chair at the Global Governance Programme of the European University Institute in Florence. She is the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies.

Looking at the situation along the US-Mexican border, the Eastern Mediterranean from Turkey to Europe, and the route from North Africa to Europe, we see now it's far harder for migrants to access their chosen destination, with or without smugglers. Do you think the peak levels of mixed migration and human smuggling from 2015 have passed and that we are now in a much more reduced environment?

No, I think mixed migration will be the norm, more than the exception. We had certainly a high volume of flows in 2015-16. I think that was partly driven by need, and partly driven by opportunity. So once the Balkan path was open, people who were considering leaving their countries or their transit countries, made a move. Whether they were moving for economic or political reasons, they were able to make a new assessment of the situation and decide to move. I think to a certain extent, it was something similar with the Central American route in that the route was already there, but there was a moment, a political moment where again

people felt there was an opportunity, which is I think always an element in these decisions, that if you are among the first you'll make it, but then if you're late, the route will be blocked.

And I think now, in the Central American path, like in the South to North Mediterranean path, whether through Libya and Italy or through Turkey and Greece, or also through Morocco to Spain, we see the same. The pressure continues, but it's not a very high flow. But overall, I think we're not going to go back to the situation of clearly distinguishing between asylum seekers and labour migrants.

It's often said that it's impossible to stop irregular migration, but doesn't the experience of the last three years, with the significant reduction of new arrivals in Europe and the other major destination countries, suggest something different?

> **Mixed migration will be the norm, more than the exception... We're not going to go back to the situation of clearly distinguishing between asylum seekers and labour migrants. What are the human and the material costs of very high migration controls?**

I think migration can be stopped depending on the price you want to pay for it. Because there was a stop of people's movement between Eastern and Western Europe for a good, what, almost 30 years between the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 and '63 and 1989. There is highly controlled migration in China and in North Korea, but it depends on what is the price you want to pay. If the price is to shoot people who cross the border, then you can do it. The question is, we need to assess what is the price to pay. What are the human and the material costs of very high migration controls? One set of costs is civil liberties and democracy and rule of law and human rights, but then also the amount of money that you pay to companies, often private, for the equipment to guard the border, creating detention facilities, etc., and also the cost of not taking advantage of the human and social capital that migrants and asylum seekers bring with them.

> **Mixed Migration can be stopped depending on the price you want to pay for it. If the price is to shoot people who cross the border, then you can do it.**

Mixed migration, irregular migration, is a big disruptor politically, even though it involves relatively small numbers of people compared to displaced people, or of course regular migration. How do you explain that disruption?

I think we tend to forget that this idea of good management or control of things is very much a Western idea. So when, 200,000 people move from Sudan to, say, Kenya, or from Burundi to Rwanda, or from Sierra Leone to Cameroon, these countries do not expect to have full management of this population, full control of the situation, so it's not a crisis. The idea of borders that are clear territorial lines, and when you cross the line, you go from Italy to France, or from Turkey to Greece, the idea that you have to completely control the situation is a very Western idea. I'm not saying it's a bad idea, but I'm just saying we should be aware of that and we should be aware that we are only a small part of the world and that in most other world regions things happen differently.

'Agency' is a key term for you in your work, and it's one of the five streams you're going to explore while taking up the Canada Excellence Research Chair at Ryerson's. Can you outline why you think it's such an important aspect of migration studies?

As policymakers and researchers we tend to assume that migrants have full knowledge of the policies. We assume that they change their behaviour because they know a change has happened and they know the details, and I think that's quite far from truth. We need to understand better how migrants get their information, and how they assess their information, how credible they find different sources, and [understand that] when somebody really needs and really desires to do something that they process information differently.

How would you characterise the increased securitisation of migration in the global North, in the US, Europe and Australia? Is this securitisation occurring mainly in the global North, or are you seeing it elsewhere in the world?

In other world regions, there's much less control, and in that sense much less securitisation. At the same time, probably there's less concern about human rights and rule of law. So these are two sides of the same point. In Africa, certainly borders are very fluid, there's a lot of inter-regional migration, and that is something that I think we need to know more about, but it's also true that perhaps there's much less preparation.

On the other hand, I think in Europe we need to see securitisation as part of a wider debate about how our lives are changing, and how we feel insecure. I think this is the key to understanding that all of migration, all of this is a catalyst or it's a scapegoat, in general. We should never forget that we need to see migration as a part of wider socio-economic transformation processes. The way the global economy is structured has changed in the two last decades, in that a single product is produced in three different continents, five different countries, from the time that it starts being produced until it gets to the market. Global trade has increased exponentially, outsourcing of production has changed localisation, people are worried about how their lives, their work and their welfare is changing, and immigration is the tangible demonstration of these changes. So, these changes have much more to do with the way we work and the way our economy works, and migration is a functional element into it, rather than the driving force. But of course, if you are a skilled worker in a European country and you see your work and welfare in danger you think the problem is the asylum seekers or migrants coming from Africa, and we don't realise it's part of a much wider moving picture.

Nevertheless, is this a long-term trend that you would expect to see running into the future?

I'm not sure how long is long-term, but yes, I would see it staying with us for a decade or two. And what is worrying is perhaps that we see this kind of discourse arriving in classical immigration countries like Canada, Australia or the US, and also in countries in Europe like Germany or Britain that had actually integrated immigration and ethnic minorities in their national identity concept, and suddenly there's almost like a going back, reconsidering this.

I think what we saw in [June], for instance, in Germany with far-right groups, and the killing of a pro-migrant activist, and the reaction of the far-right people, is very strange. To think that it's been 20 years since Germany has reformed its citizenship law. And fortunately, now we have the second and third generations of former migrants in Germany, who are German citizens and contribute not only to the economy but also to social and political life. There should be also a discussion within the left and centre-left parties and how they are being drawn into a debate that is not their debate and it's not their values, as they try to compete with the far-right groups.

> **" My motto is, 'if it weren't for migration there would be no one in Europe,' as it seems that the first human in Europe was a female from Africa. "**

In Africa, we see very large population increases in the next 35 years and up to the next 85 years. What sort of impact do you think this is going to have on migration, having such a large group of young potentially unemployed?

I think this has an impact on migration, but it is not the predominant impact because take China and India for example. China has practised the one-child policy and has managed to meet the millennium goal of lifting more than 100 million people out of poverty. That hasn't meant that we haven't seen significant emigration from China to other countries or regions. India, by contrast, has not practised such a policy, and has been demographically increasing, but I don't think we have seen some really big pressure of people going out of India. So demography alone is not such an important factor.

And for instance, some of the countries where we see high pressure to leave… Afghanistan is not such a huge country, but it is the situation that drives people away. Indonesia is a big country and we don't see such a huge migration trend, so maybe keep in mind that generally people don't want to leave to go far away, maybe they

want to leave to go to the nearby region or city, but generally people don't wake up one day and say, "Oh, I live in Ghana, I'm going to go to France." It just doesn't happen.

When we look at the global compacts we see a narrative of inclusion and hopes to accommodate or facilitate more migrants and refugees, to share the burden, etc. This seems to be at odds with the political realities. Do you think the compacts are a bit of a feel-good exercise in international diplomacy? Will they amount to much, in your view?

It's much better to have them than not to have them. Now, of course, they're not a panacea. They're a beginning, they're not an endpoint, so I think what the process of the global compacts signals is an awareness of different countries, destination, origin and transit countries, that migration is a transnational issue and that we need to govern it all together, and that we need to create forums where countries and civil society actors can meet and discuss, that we need to put more weight into international or transnational organisations, in helping govern this, and that migration is not a national issue where you control your borders, your control your citizenship, and you decide what to do.

Now, of course such overarching agreements cannot be binding, but it is important that they create forums for exchange and for discussion. What I think is a risk within the global compacts – and it's a risk that we should avoid – is that by [giving] too much emphasis to safe or orderly and regulated migration, [we say] "so this is a good migration" and that everything that is not orderly, not regulated, not fully legal, we try to stop it, [and say] "this is not good." Because a lot of migration happens outside safe, orderly and regulated pathways. There's no one single solution, no one single scheme, no one single regulation that will be the silver bullet. We need certainly not forget that a lot of the migration will happen spontaneously.

You have said in some of your work that the new level of containment and deterrence through externalising and securitization migration "invites us to rethink the global governance of irregular migration and asylum through the notion of hegemonic partnership with third countries." Can you briefly explain what you mean here?

We're talking about asymmetrical relationships. I think that what happens is that the destination countries think they can dictate terms, and these are not real partnerships. Earlier, 10 years ago, it was the mobility partnerships; now more recently it has been these migration partnerships with specific African countries where the EU will tell them what to do in terms of controlling migration, both emigration and transit migration, and in exchange they will receive financial aid and general privileged cooperation with the EU.

But the problem is that such schemes ignore regional realities and intra-regional trade exchanges, flows, historical relations. And also, I think they privilege the interests of exactly the hegemonic part of the partnership, which is the migrant destination country, in this case EU countries. We see that the smaller and poorest countries, like Mali or Niger, will go into these partnerships, but countries like Nigeria, that is a very important country in all respects, might refuse, because the cost of stiffening cross-border relations, trade… managing this internally in an internal political environment is much higher than what they gain by cooperating with the EU.

Do you think there is a link between involuntary immobility and extremism? Or do you think there could be one in the future, with all the different pressures?

Does involuntary immobility lead to radicalisation? No, I don't think it's involuntary immobility specifically. Socioeconomic inequality, yes. A feeling that not much changes and there is no hope for the future… this is an element certainly, particularly in North Africa. Because first, Tunisia, for instance, is perhaps the most successful country in managing a democratic transition, giving a more important role to religion, Islam in particular, in its governance and in its government.

At the same time, we see that Tunisia is over-represented in the foreign fighters, in people who become foreign fighters. I think part of the answer has to do with what is called the religious market, what versions of religion and religious associations are available to young people who are frustrated, and that some of them are extreme rather than mainstream channels. So instead of channelling frustration to normal political and social channels, they channel them to extremism.

Amid the rise of technology and the fourth industrial revolution, automation and AI, etc., combined with declining population numbers, some writers foresee an end to international migration. Where are we going with migration? What's the future of migration going to look like?

I have no crystal ball, but migration has always been with us and it's been cyclical in terms of high periods of population movements followed by lower periods with lower movements and then high again. So it's not a linear evolution. Think about the turn of the 19th to the 20th centuries and the very high movement towards what was called then the "New World". Think about after 1989, very important flows within Europe, only to give two examples. What we are witnessing, and I think it fits with what I was saying about socioeconomic transformation, there's more fluidity. So before, people would leave Greece and go to Australia for good. You would be on the ship for two months and you wouldn't

come back for a good 10 years or more. Nowadays, I think people who come from, say, Bangladesh to Italy, or from India to Britain, they will go back. Even irregular migrants who come from, say, some place in Eurasia to Russia, or from some place in Eurasia to Germany, they will go back. Probably the thing that's different, this fluidity is a question of documents: if people are without documents they cannot travel. But there is no longer this thing of definitive [migration], where you go to a new country and that's it, you never come back, or you come back after 25 years. At the same time, I think what we also see is that even countries that were mostly based on long-term migration and privileged long-term settlement are experimenting now with temporary schemes.

What is happening in this respect in Australia, Canada, and perhaps the US, but particularly in Australia and Canada, it's very interesting, as these countries are experimenting socioeconomically, [to see] whether these temporary schemes work better for the labour market. But I think it's a big question for them also in terms of national identity, because these are settlement countries, these are countries where, when people go for a temporary permit for a couple of years, they then go into long-term residency and then they're going for citizenship. They use the word "settlement", while in Europe we don't; we use "integration" and things like this, and this is for me the main element of the future of migration.

> **We've become accustomed to thinking that Europe and North America dictate the rules of the game, and I think we need to really consider the viewpoints from India or Russia or China or Latin America.**

Are you an optimist or a pessimist? Will the future of migration be dystopian or utopian?

I'm a convinced optimist. My motto is, "if it weren't for migration there would be no one in Europe," as it seems that the first human in Europe was a female from Africa. I'm certainly an optimist in general, and, I'm also an optimist about migration. Everything has its challenges but I think maybe what we should be prepared for is that Europe and the West become less hegemonic, because we've been, I think, too accustomed to think that Europe and North America dictate the rules of the game, and I think we need to really consider the viewpoints from India or Russia or China or Latin America.

4Mi Explainer: The Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism initiative

4Mi is MMC's flagship data collection project. Regional teams in West Africa, North Africa, East Africa and Yemen, and Asia collect and analyse data on mixed migration flows, including profiles, drivers, means and conditions of movement, the smuggler economy, aspirations and destination choices. Launched in 2014, 4Mi today consists of a network of over 100 monitors in more than 20 countries, with new data collection programmes beginning in Europe (Italy and Greece) and Latin America (Colombia and Peru) in the last quarter of 2019. Stationed in known gathering points for refugees and migrants on commonly used routes, 4Mi monitors use questionnaires to conduct in-depth structured surveys of people on the move on a continuous basis. These surveys provide indicative insights into the profiles, drivers, protection concerns, and experiences of refugees and migrants along mixed migration routes. Monitors also use a separate questionnaire to survey people smugglers, and at times 4Mi conducts short-term, topic-specific surveys in particular locations. To date, 4Mi monitors have conducted more than 35,000 surveys.[1]

4Mi in the MMR 2019

The data presented in this year's Mixed Migration Review (MMR) is drawn from 9,749 surveys conducted in 15 countries.[2] It is grouped to provide snapshots of our data on key topics: the drivers of migration, destination intentions, protection incidents en route, the use and perception of smugglers, and decision-making.

The number of survey respondents is indicated in the graphs and varies from region to region. The number of people responding to a particular question also varies. We have not included questions with fewer than 100 responses, and we have not presented cumulative totals because of the wide variety in sample sizes across different regions. For each graph, the wording of the relevant survey question appears in a note.

The 4Mi data in the MMR 2019 is presented by region of survey and region/country of origin. This breakdown enables a clear picture regarding experiences en route. For example, for West Africans surveyed in North Africa, it can be safely assumed they have travelled along the route from West Africa through the Sahel towards Northern Africa. However, because respondents who have only recently begun their journey are likely to report very differently from those who have moved to another region, far away from their country of origin, we group the data for analysis by survey location rather than intended destination. This means, for example, that East Africans surveyed in Djibouti or Somalia are presented as "East Africans surveyed in East Africa" even though many of them are on their way to Yemen and Saudi Arabia. However, assigning them to the route to Yemen/Saudi Arabia may present a slightly distorted picture, especially since many of the incidents take place during a subsequent sea crossing from the Horn to Yemen or upon arrival to Yemen.

To allow for comparisons in the experiences of refugees and migrants along different routes and in different regions, the data in this report is presented as follows:

East Africans in East Africa

People from:
Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia

Interviewed in:
Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia

It is important to note that 40.7 percent of East Africans surveyed in East Africa said they were heading to Yemen or Saudi Arabia, 13.1 percent to North Africa or Europe, and seven percent to South Africa, with the rest heading elsewhere or undecided.

East Africans in North Africa

People from:
Burundi, Comoros, DRC, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda

Interviewed in:
Egypt, Libya

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1 The vast majority of these are the core migrant survey, but this figure includes other surveys.
2 Altogether, 4Mi conducted more than 10,200 surveys in this period. Several hundred have not been taken into account because they did not fit into the region-based breakdown used in this report.

East Africans in Europe

People from:
Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea

Interviewed in:
Denmark, Germany

East Africans in Southern Africa

People from:
Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia

Interviewed in:
South Africa

West/Central Africans in West/Central Africa

People from:
Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Chad, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo

Interviewed in
Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali

Among West and Central Africans in West Africa, 64.3 percent of respondents were heading to North Africa or Europe, 21.3 percent intended to remain within the West/Central Africa region, and the remaining 14.4 percent were heading elsewhere or were undecided.

West/Central Africans in North Africa

People from:
Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, São Tomé and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo

Interviewed in:
Libya

Afghans in South/Southeast Asia

Interviewed in:
India, Indonesia, Malaysia

Afghans in Europe

Interviewed in:
Germany and Greece

Rohingya in Malaysia

Interviewed in:
Malaysia

Limitations of the 4Mi data presented here

A lack of data on the target population, coupled with the difficulties in accessing a very diverse, hard-to-reach and highly mobile population, means that we cannot conduct random sampling. Instead, 4Mi uses a combination of purposive and snowball sampling. Data is therefore not representative, and we do not provide estimates of the volume of migration flows or of the prevalence of violations along routes.
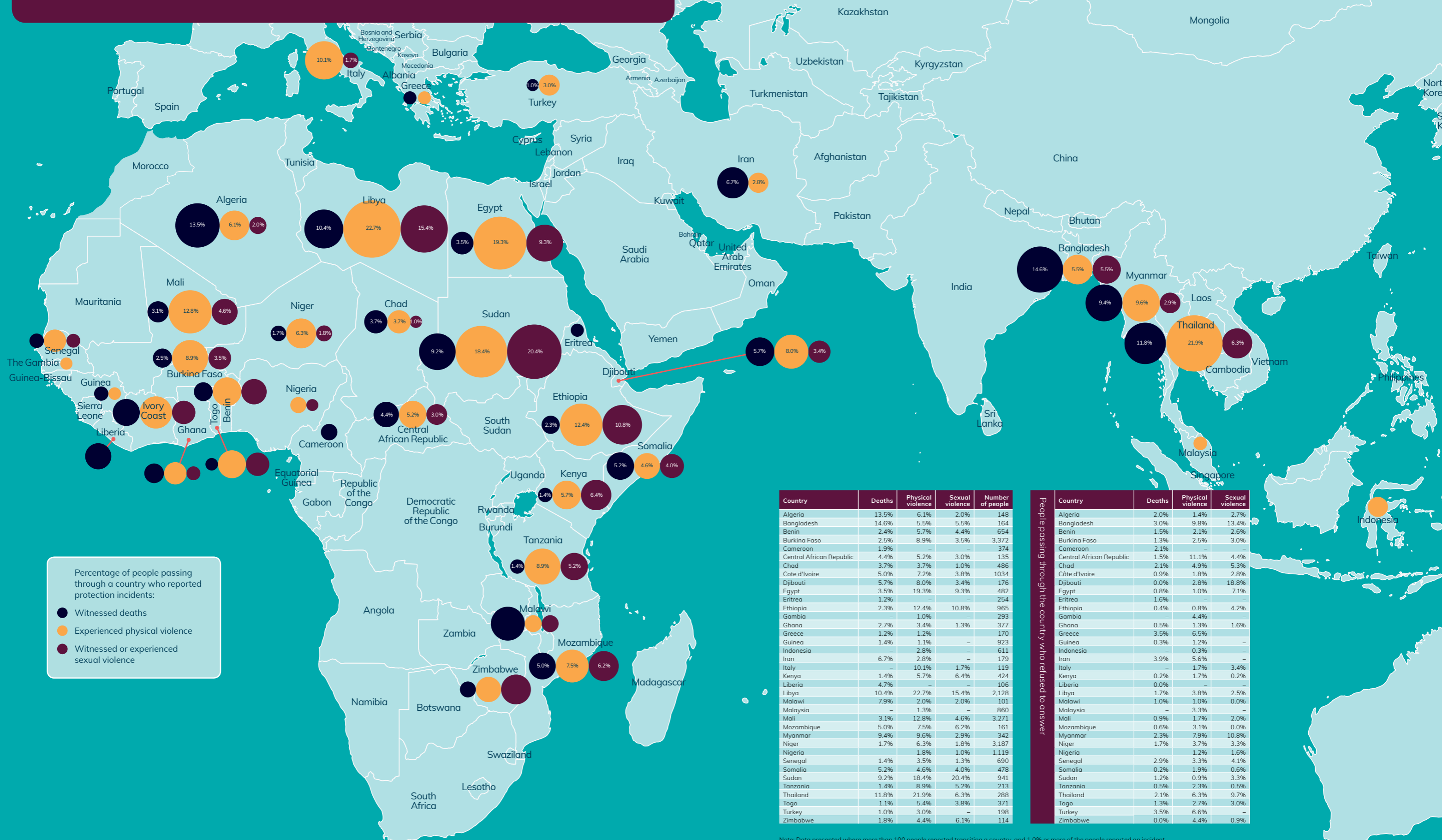
The breadth of the target population and the constraints on sampling mean that particular profiles are likely to be over- or under-represented in the data. While 4Mi strives for diversity of respondents, conducting surveys in all possible languages in every location is impractical. With regard to gender, 4Mi strives to adhere to a policy of at least one male and one female monitor in each data collection location.

Finally, 4Mi data is self-reported. It depends on respondents' recall, and the information they choose to share with monitors. This may vary according to a range of factors, including the personality, profile, and circumstances of the respondent, the location and environment in which the survey takes place, and the rapport between monitor and survey respondent.

4Mi continuously reviews and improves its methodology. For more information, see the MMC website: http://www.mixedmigration.org/4mi/

protection risks

deaths, physical violence, sexual violence

4Mi

Percentage of people passing through a country who reported protection incidents:

- ● Witnessed deaths
- ● Experienced physical violence
- ● Witnessed or experienced sexual violence

People passing through the country who reported protection incidents:

Country	Deaths	Physical violence	Sexual violence	Number of people
Algeria	13.5%	6.1%	2.0%	148
Bangladesh	14.6%	5.5%	5.5%	164
Benin	2.4%	5.7%	4.4%	654
Burkina Faso	2.5%	8.9%	3.5%	3,372
Cameroon	1.9%	–	–	374
Central African Republic	4.4%	5.2%	3.0%	135
Chad	3.7%	3.7%	1.0%	486
Côte d'Ivoire	5.0%	7.2%	3.8%	1034
Djibouti	5.7%	8.0%	3.4%	176
Egypt	3.5%	19.3%	9.3%	482
Eritrea	1.2%	–	–	254
Ethiopia	2.3%	12.4%	10.8%	965
Gambia	–	1.0%	–	293
Ghana	2.7%	3.4%	1.3%	377
Greece	1.2%	1.2%	–	170
Guinea	1.4%	1.1%	–	923
Indonesia	–	2.8%	–	611
Iran	6.7%	2.8%	–	179
Italy	–	10.1%	1.7%	119
Kenya	1.4%	5.7%	6.4%	424
Liberia	4.7%	–	–	106
Libya	10.4%	22.7%	15.4%	2,128
Malawi	7.9%	2.0%	2.0%	101
Malaysia	–	1.3%	–	860
Mali	3.1%	12.8%	4.6%	3,271
Mozambique	5.0%	7.5%	6.2%	161
Myanmar	9.4%	9.6%	2.9%	342
Niger	1.7%	6.3%	1.8%	3,187
Nigeria	–	1.8%	1.0%	1,119
Senegal	1.4%	3.5%	1.3%	690
Somalia	5.2%	4.6%	4.0%	478
Sudan	9.2%	18.4%	20.4%	941
Tanzania	1.4%	8.9%	5.2%	213
Thailand	11.8%	21.9%	6.3%	288
Togo	1.1%	5.4%	3.8%	371
Turkey	1.0%	3.0%	–	198
Zimbabwe	1.8%	4.4%	6.1%	114

People passing through the country who refused to answer

Country	Deaths	Physical violence	Sexual violence
Algeria	2.0%	1.4%	2.7%
Bangladesh	3.0%	9.8%	13.4%
Benin	1.5%	2.1%	2.6%
Burkina Faso	1.3%	2.5%	3.0%
Cameroon	2.1%	–	–
Central African Republic	1.5%	11.1%	4.4%
Chad	2.1%	4.9%	5.3%
Côte d'Ivoire	0.9%	1.8%	2.8%
Djibouti	0.0%	2.8%	18.8%
Egypt	0.8%	1.0%	7.1%
Eritrea	1.6%	–	–
Ethiopia	0.4%	0.8%	4.2%
Gambia	–	4.4%	–
Ghana	0.5%	1.3%	1.6%
Greece	3.5%	6.5%	–
Guinea	0.3%	1.2%	–
Indonesia	–	0.3%	–
Iran	3.9%	5.6%	–
Italy	–	1.7%	3.4%
Kenya	0.2%	1.7%	0.2%
Liberia	0.0%	–	–
Libya	1.7%	3.8%	2.5%
Malawi	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Malaysia	–	3.3%	–
Mali	0.9%	1.7%	2.0%
Mozambique	0.6%	3.1%	0.0%
Myanmar	2.3%	7.9%	10.8%
Niger	1.7%	3.7%	3.3%
Nigeria	–	1.2%	1.6%
Senegal	2.9%	3.3%	4.1%
Somalia	0.2%	1.9%	0.6%
Sudan	1.2%	0.9%	3.3%
Tanzania	0.5%	2.3%	0.5%
Thailand	2.1%	6.3%	9.7%
Togo	1.3%	2.7%	3.0%
Turkey	3.5%	6.6%	–
Zimbabwe	0.0%	4.4%	0.9%

Note: Data presented where more than 100 people reported transiting a country, and 1.0% or more of the people reported an incident. Note that the number of people transiting varies broadly. Blank cells in tables indicate fewer than 1.0% of people reported incidents. For details on where and how 4Mi operates, see p. 68.
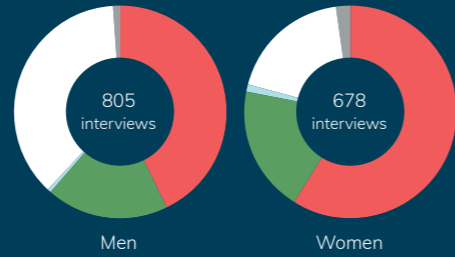
risk awareness & decision making

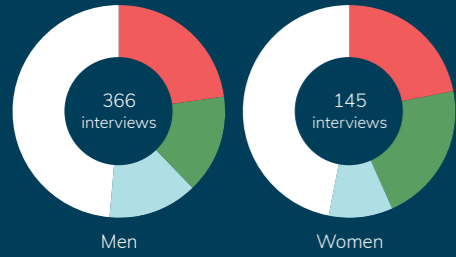## "Do you feel that you were fully aware of the risks before you started your journey?"
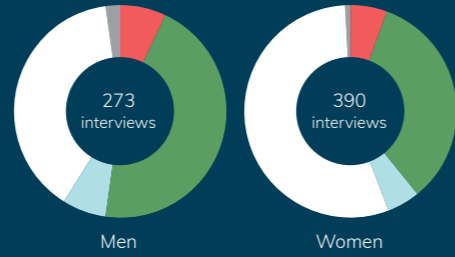
West/Central Africans in West Africa
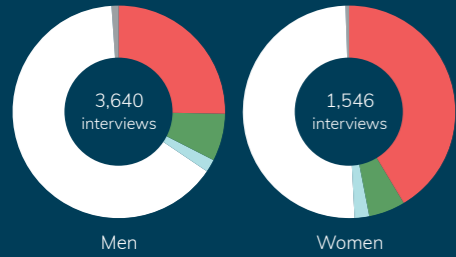
3,640 interviews — Men

1,546 interviews — Women

West/Central Africans in North Africa

805 interviews — Men

678 interviews — Women

East Africans in East Africa

366 interviews — Men

145 interviews — Women

East Africans in North Africa

273 interviews — Men

390 interviews — Women

East Africans in Southern Africa

138 interviews — Men

93 interviews — Women

Afghans in South/Southeast Asia

690 interviews — Men

339 interviews — Women

Rohingya in Malaysia

218 interviews — Men

115 interviews — Women

Legend:
- Yes, but it is/was worse than I expected
- Yes, and it is/was not as bad as I expected
- Yes, I was fully aware
- Refused
- No
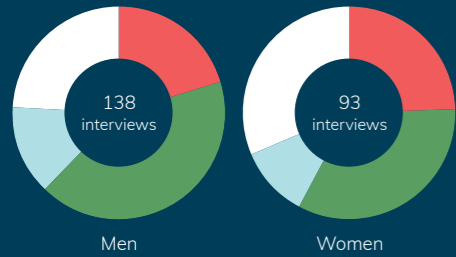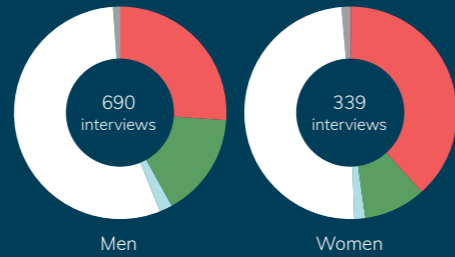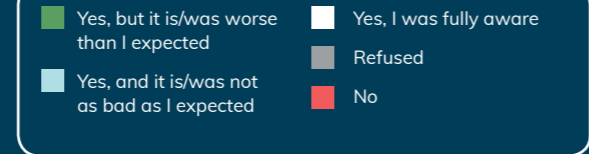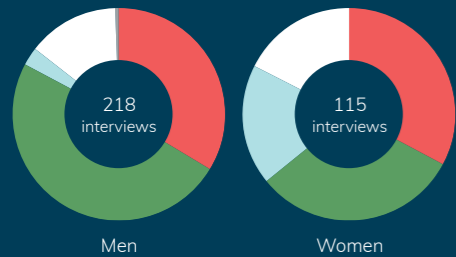
The majority of 4Mi respondents felt that they were not aware of the risks, or they were and it was worse than expected. More confident perspectives – respondents who felt they were fully aware of the risks - dominate among East Africans in East Africa, West Africans in West Africa and East African women in North Africa.

In general, West Africans are less aware of the risks than East Africans, particularly in North Africa. More than 30 percent of the East African respondents in North and Southern Africa and the Rohingya in Malaysia found the journey worse than expected.

"Would you migrate again knowing what you know now?"

West/Central Africans in West Africa — m / w
West/Central Africans in North Africa — m / w
East Africans in East Africa — m / w
East Africans in North Africa — m / w
East Africans in Southern Africa — m / w
Afghans in South/Southeast Asia — m / w
Rohingya in Malaysia — m / w

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

Legend: Yes | Don't know | No | Refused | m - Men | w - Women
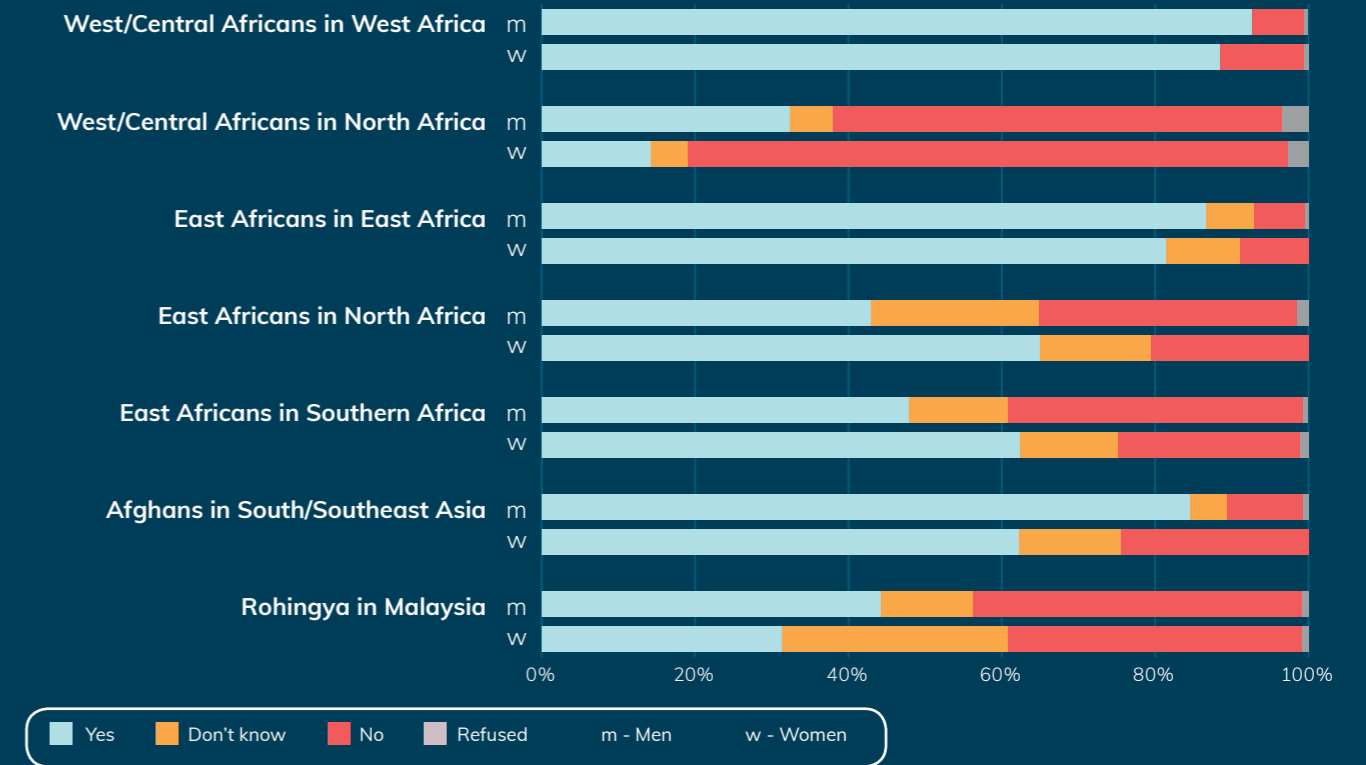
Respondents consistently report that they are more likely to migrate again than they are to encourage others to migrate. There are interesting differences between women and men in willingness to migrate again, particularly among refugees and migrants interviewed in North Africa.

"Would you encourage others to migrate?"

West/Central Africans in West Africa — m / w
West/Central Africans in North Africa — m / w
East Africans in East Africa — m / w
East Africans in North Africa — m / w
East Africans in Southern Africa — m / w
Afghans in South/Southeast Asia — m / w
Rohingya in Malaysia — m / w

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

Legend: Yes | Don't know | No | Refused | m - Men | w - Women
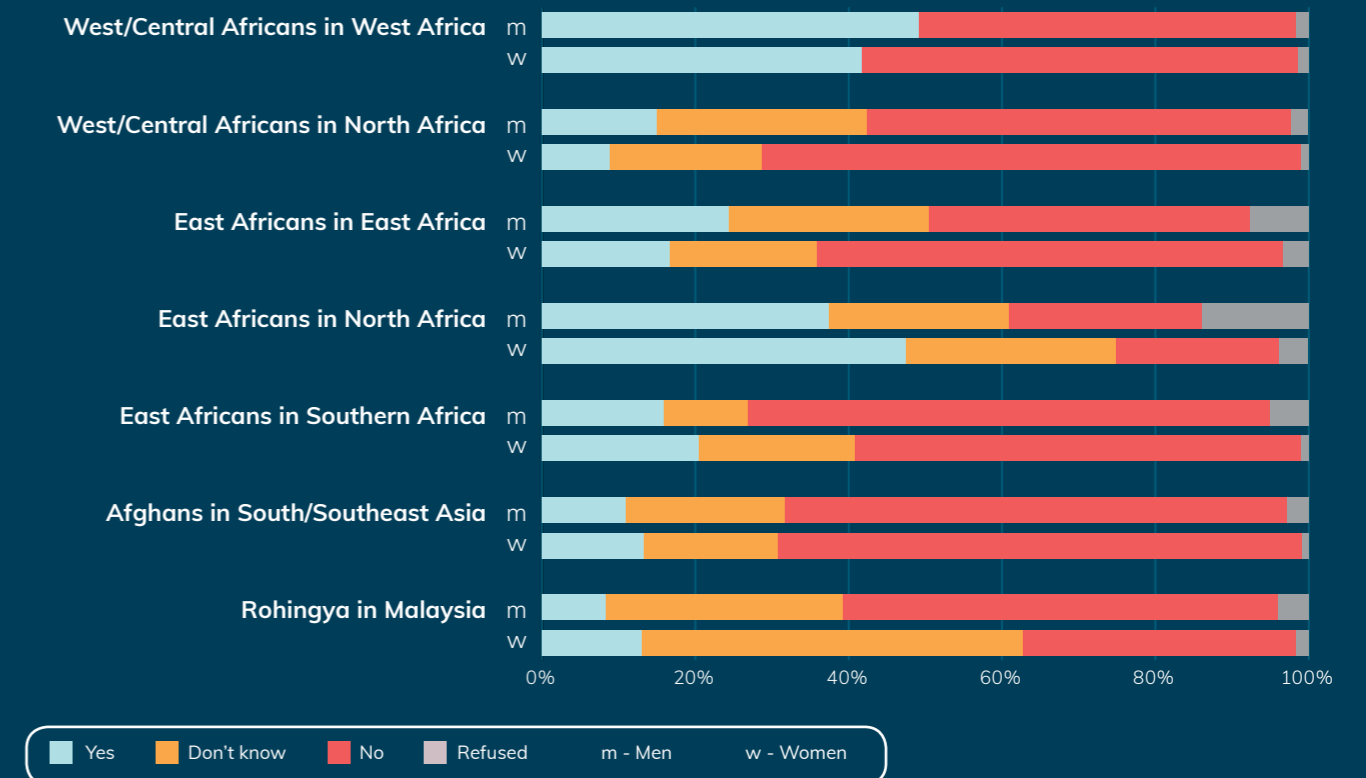
violence against refugees & migrants: who was responsible?

"Who was responsible for the physical abuse or harassment in this incident?"

Smugglers are most frequently reported as responsible for acts of physical violence – overwhelmingly so among Rohingya in Malaysia and East Africans in North Africa and Europe.

East Africans and in particular West Africans still traveling within their region much more frequently report security forces as perpetrators of physical abuse. Once in North Africa, smugglers and unknown individuals, and other migrants are more often considered responsible.

West/Central Africans in West Africa

1,534 incidents in 5,186 interviews. (Don't know: 0.4%, Refused: 0.5%)

West/Central Africans in North Africa

380 incidents in 1,480 interviews. (Don't know: 0%, Refused: 0.3%)

Legend: Security forces | Immigration officials/guards | Other authorities | Smugglers | Family members | Other migrants | Criminal gangs | Unknown individuals

East Africans in East Africa

81 incidents in 511 interviews. (Don't know: 2.5%, Refused: 0%)

East Africans in North Africa

377 incidents in 663 interviews. (Don't know: 0.3%, Refused: 0%)

East Africans in Europe

140 incidents in 106 interviews. (Don't know: 0%, Refused: 0%)

Rohingya in Malaysia

119 incidents in 333 interviews. (Don't know: 0%, Refused: 0%)

"Who was responsible for the sexual assualt or harassment in this incident?"

Smugglers were most frequently reported as perpetrators of sexual violence among people interviewed in North Africa and Europe. In East Africa, East Africans cited security forces more frequently. In West Africa, West Africans cited unknown individuals, security forces, groups of criminals, and other migrants before smugglers. (West Africans are less likely to use smugglers while still travelling within their own region, see p. 80).

West/Central Africans in West Africa

587 incidents in 5,186 interviews. (Don't know: 2.7%, Refused: 1.5%)

West/Central Africans in North Africa

309 incidents in 1,480 interviews. (Don't know: 1%, Refused: 0%)

Legend: Security forces | Immigration officials/guards | Other authorities | Smugglers | Family members | Other migrants | Criminal gangs | Unknown individuals

East Africans in East Africa

81 incidents in 511 interviews. (Don't know: 0%, Refused: 1.2%)

East Africans in North Africa

913 incidents in 663 interviews. (Don't know: 0.1%, Refused: 0.9%)

East Africans in Europe

152 incidents in 106 interviews. (Don't know: 0%, Refused: 0%)

Note: data presented where more than 80 incidents reported among respondents.

smuggling

"Did you use a smuggler?"

Only 30% of West Africans interviewed in West Africa report using a smuggler; this jumps to 80% when interviewed in North Africa.

64% of East Africans report using smugglers within region, and this jumps to 94% of East African respondents in Europe.

Afghans' reporting of smuggler use is lower: 60.5% of those in Europe, and 41.1 % of those in South/Southeast Asia, while almost all Rohingya used a smuggler to get to Malaysia.

Legend:
- Yes
- No

East Africans in East Africa
511 interviews

East Africans in North Africa
663 interviews

East Africans in Europe
106 interviews

East Africans in Southern Africa
231 interviews

West/Central Africans in North Africa
1,480 interviews

West/Central Africans in West Africa
5,186 interviews

Afghans in Europe
210 interviews

Afghans in South/Southeast Asia
1,029 interviews

Rohingya in Malaysia
333 interviews

"What services did the smuggler offer?"

> West Africans report safe transit across borders less frequently than East Africans.

West/Central Africans in West Africa
1,531 interviews

West/Central Africans in North Africa
1,182 interviews

East Africans in East Africa
325 interviews

East Africans in North Africa
442 interviews

> Provision of documents is often reported by those travelling within Asia – many of these respondents travelled by plane, so didn't need other services.

"The smuggler I used helped me in achieving my goal."

Most interviewees believe that smugglers help them to achieve their goal, despite smugglers frequently being reported as perpetrators of violence (see p. 78). Strong agreement is more frequent among West Africans, and East Africans in Europe, but does not exceed 21%. And there is ambivalence among respondents, with 59.6% of Afghans in Asia and 60.1% of Rohingya in Malaysia remaining neutral. The strongest disagreement can be found among West and East Africans in North Africa, which might be linked to the high levels of violations in Libya, with smugglers as the most common perpetrators.

Legend:
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

West/Central Africans in West Africa
1,541 interviews

West/Central Africans in North Africa
1,189 interviews

East Africans in East Africa
329 interviews

East Africans in North Africa
445 interviews

East Africans in Europe
100 interviews

East Africans in Southern Africa
153 interviews

Afghans in Europe
127 interviews

Afghans in South/Southeast Asia
423 interviews

Rohingya in Malaysia
297 interviews

East Africans in Europe
100 interviews

East Africans in Southern Africa
153 interviews

Afghans in Europe
126 interviews

Afghans in South/Southeast Asia
413 interviews

Rohingya in Malaysia
282 interviews

Legend:
- Safe transit across border
- Transportation to holding place
- Accommodation
- Collecting clients from a meeting point
- Liaising with authorities
- Provision of documents

assistance

"Assistance en route: assistance received compared to assistance needed."

Assistance needed
Assistance received

West/Central Africans in West Africa
Assistance received (n=5,157); assistance needed (n=5,038)
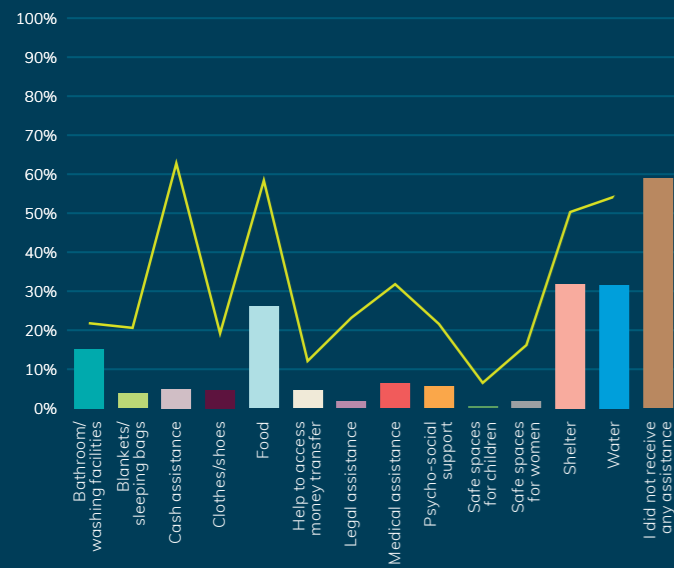
West/Central Africans in North Africa
Assistance received (n=1,474); assistance needed (n=1,455)
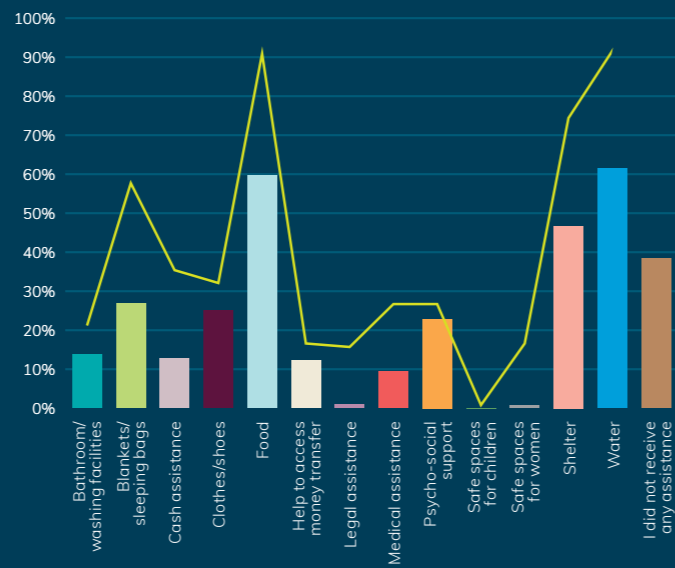
People responding in North Africa or Europe were more likely to have received assistance than in West or East Africa.

East Africans in East Africa
Assistance received (n=504); assistance needed (n=507)
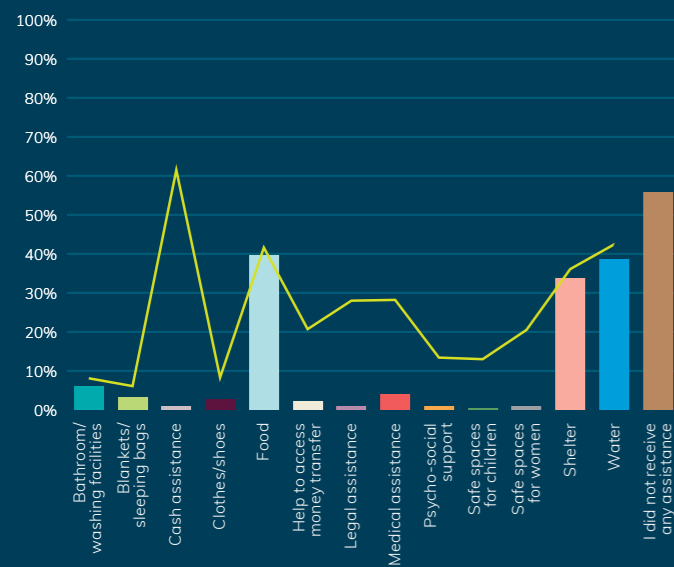
East Africans in North Africa
Assistance received (n=663); assistance needed (n=551)
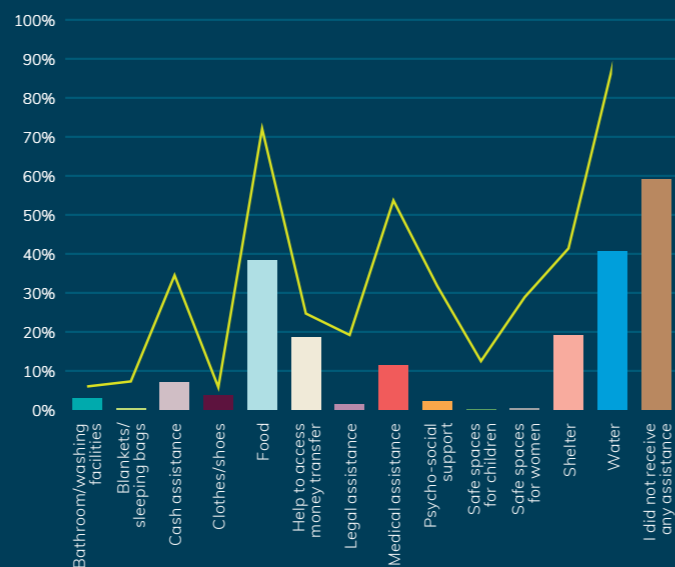
East Africans in Europe
Assistance received (n=106); assistance needed (n=106)

East Africans in Southern Africa
Assistance received (n=225); assistance needed (n=231)
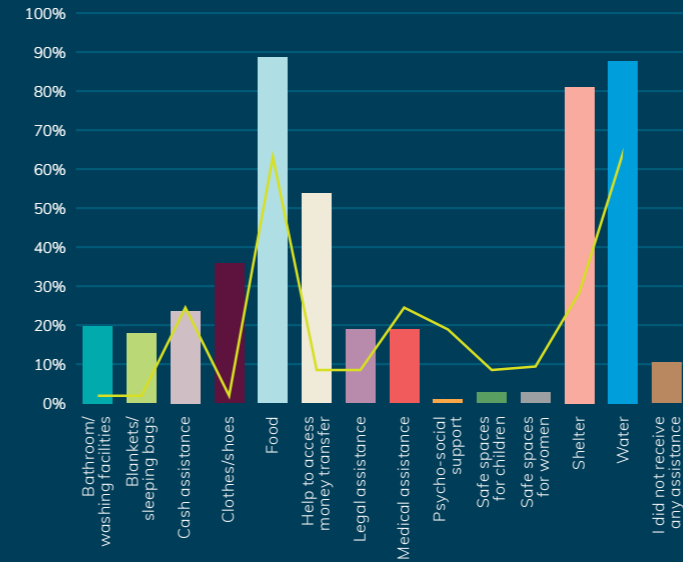
Contrary to the situation in all other regions, East Africans in Europe in general report a higher level or assistance received than needed.
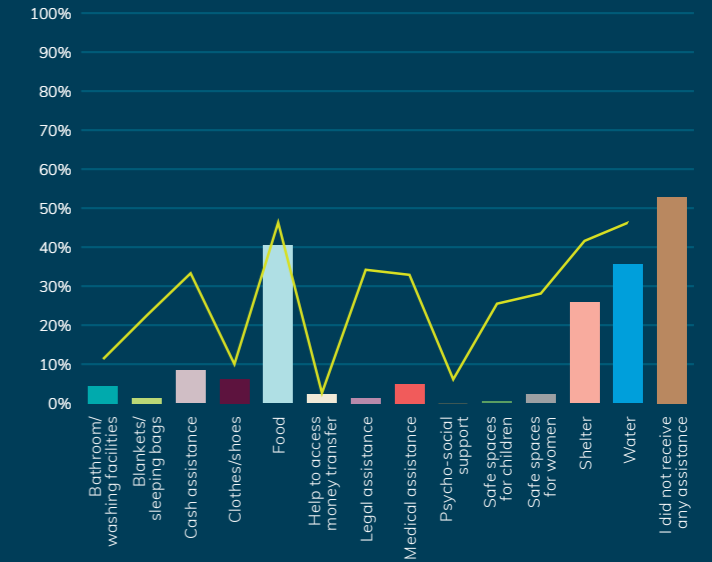
Afghans in Europe
Assistance received (n=207); assistance needed (n=188)
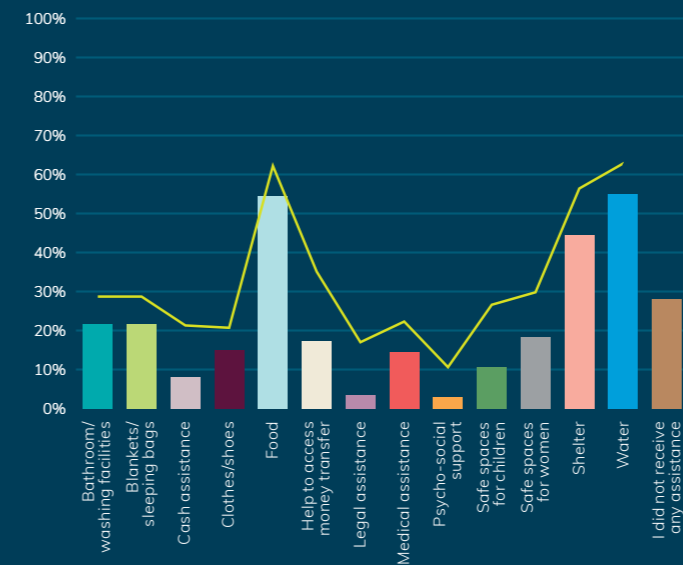
Afghans in South/Southeast Asia
Assistance received (n=897); assistance needed (n=737)
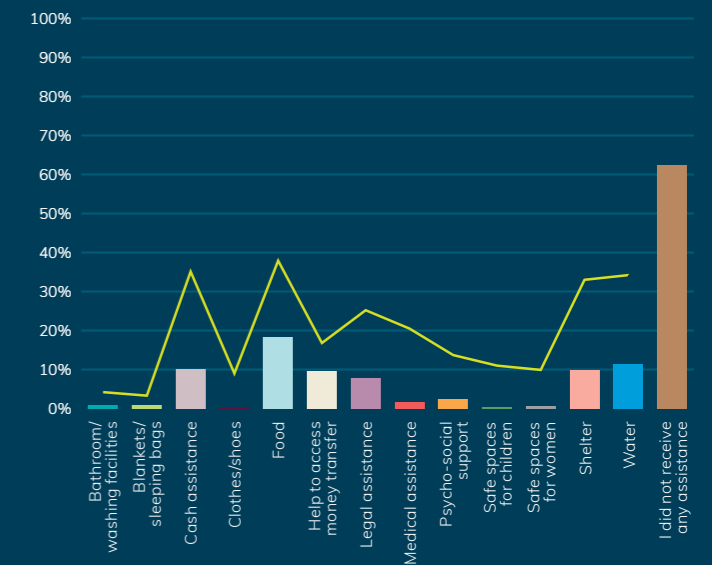
Rohingya in Malaysia
Assistance received (n=330); assistance needed (n=310)
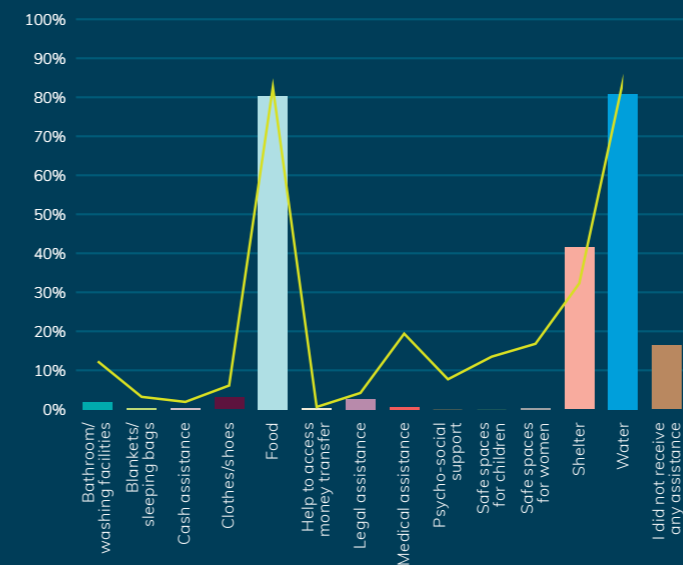
Needs for specialised services (medical, legal, safe spaces) are less well met in a number of regions.

Basic needs are high among Rohingya, but seem to be well met.

Note: Full questions: Did you receive any of the following assistance on your journey? Which kind of assistance would have most helped you during your journey? Assistance can be from anyone, and is not always understood as being for free. Respondents can choose more than one option.

migration drivers and decisions

"Why are refugees and migrants leaving?"

4Mi respondents report a variety of reasons for migrating, and 5,051 out of 9,754 respondents (51.8%) gave more than one. Violence, insecurity and lack of rights play a stronger role for some groups (Afghans, Rohingya) than others. Drivers also affect the choice of route/destination: East Africans in East Africa (mainly in transit to Saudi Arabia) primarily move for economic reasons, while East Africans in North Africa and Europe also cite violence, insecurity and lack of rights. While environmental factors may have a strong influence, it remains in the background as it impacts on people's livelihood opportunities, making them more likely to cite 'economic' reasons.

West/Central Africans in West Africa
5,125 interviews.

Violence & general insecurity	Lack of rights	Economic reasons	Personal/ family reasons	Lack of social services/ poorly governed	Everybody around me was leaving	Environ- mental factors
13.2%	3.3%	91.3%	31.7%	7.3%	9.6%	1.7%
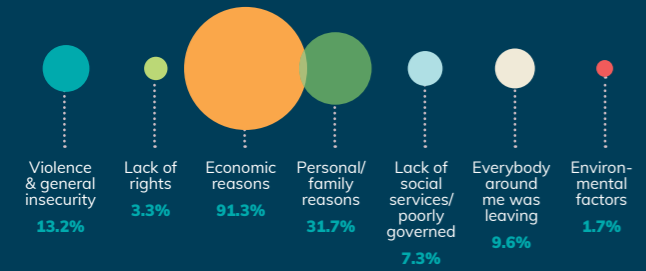
72.4% of West/Central Africans in West Africa reported only economic reasons, family/personal reasons, or a combination of the two, as their reasons for leaving.

West/Central Africans in North Africa
1,471 interviews.

Violence & general insecurity	Lack of rights	Economic reasons	Personal/ family reasons	Lack of social services/ poorly governed	Everybody around me was leaving	Environ- mental factors
7.3%	30.7%	94.8%	22.4%	37.7%	42.2%	2.3%
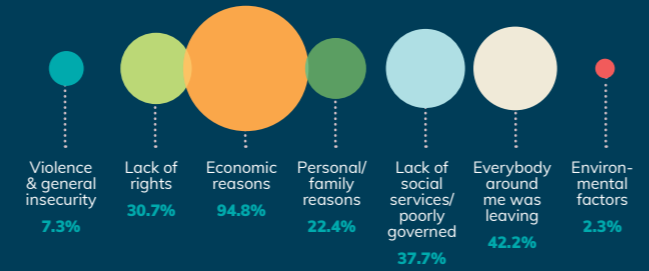
While 29.0% of West/Central Africans interviewed in North Africa reported economic reasons only, the rest of the sample gave combinations of varying reasons.

East Africans in East Africa
505 interviews.

Violence & general insecurity	Lack of rights	Economic reasons	Personal/ family reasons	Lack of social services/ poorly governed	Everybody around me was leaving	Environ- mental factors
33.6%	19.4%	73.8%	23.9%	13.9%	12.9%	3.1%
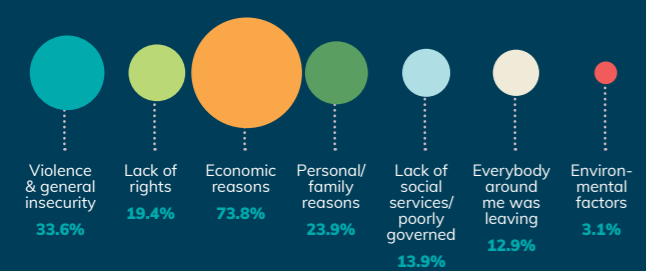
The distribution of reasons reported by East Africans was broad. Economic reasons was often cited, but in combination with different reasons.

East Africans in North Africa
657 interviews.

Violence & general insecurity	Lack of rights	Economic reasons	Personal/ family reasons	Lack of social services/ poorly governed	Everybody around me was leaving	Environ- mental factors
61.5%	60.7%	62.3%	36.6%	30.1%	4.4%	0%
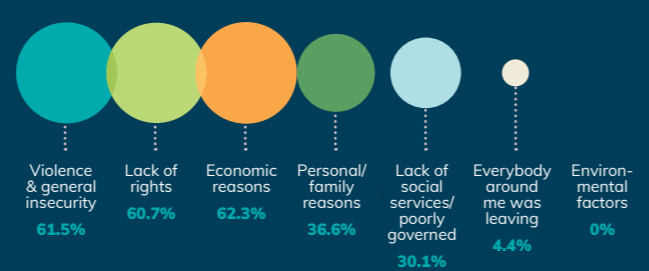
25% of East Africans in North Africa reported 3 reasons for leaving, which frequently included violence and general insecurity, as well as lack of rights.

East Africans in Europe
106 interviews.

Violence & general insecurity	Lack of rights	Economic reasons	Personal/ family reasons	Lack of social services/ poorly governed	Everybody around me was leaving	Environ- mental factors
54.5%	82.9%	17.8%	5.2%	35.6%	20.3%	2.0%
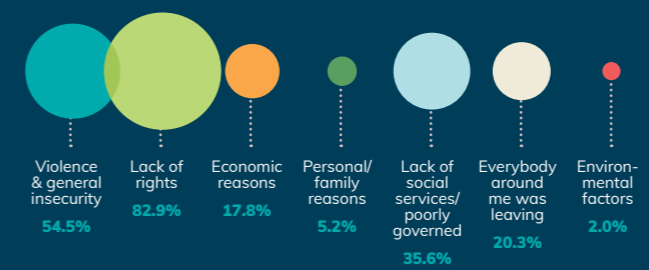
More than 50% of East Africans in Europe reported lack of rights, either exclusively or combined with violence and insecurity or lack of services.

East Africans in Southern Africa
228 interviews.

Violence & general insecurity	Lack of rights	Economic reasons	Personal/ family reasons	Lack of social services/ poorly governed	Everybody around me was leaving	Environ- mental factors
60.1%	33.5%	59.1%	28.0%	8.8%	3.8%	1.5%
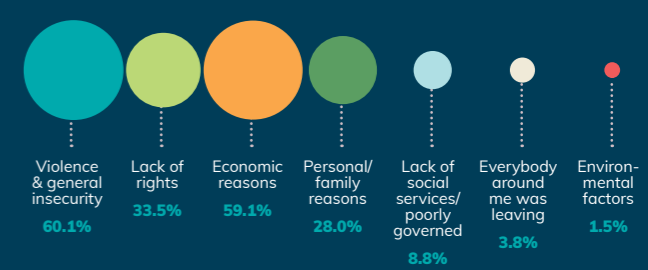
47.4% of East Africans in Southern Africa cited only violence and insecurity, economic reasons, or a combination of the two, as their reasons for leaving.

Afghans in Europe
205 interviews.

Violence & general insecurity	Lack of rights	Economic reasons	Personal/ family reasons	Lack of social services/ poorly governed	Everybody around me was leaving	Environ- mental factors
62.7%	25.8%	24.2%	45.9%	8.9%	12.0%	0.6%
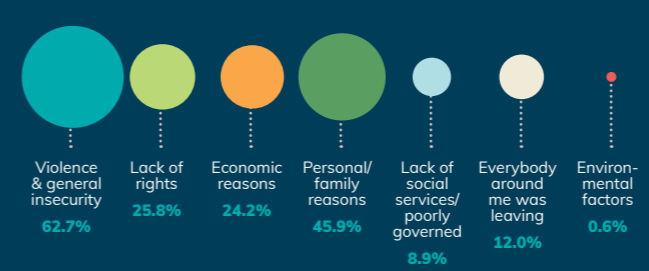
52.7% of Afghans in Europe reported only violence and insecurity, personal or family reasons, or a combination of the two, as their reasons for leaving.

Afghans in South/Southeast Asia
1,007 interviews.

Violence & general insecurity	Lack of rights	Economic reasons	Personal/ family reasons	Lack of social services/ poorly governed	Everybody around me was leaving	Environ- mental factors
77.1%	33.9%	14.5%	23.3%	13.5%	2.7%	0.8%
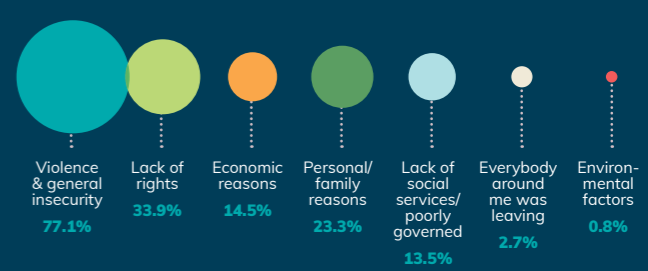
58.7% of Afghans in South/Southeast Asia reported only violence and insecurity, lack of rights, or a combination of the two, as their reasons for leaving.

Rohingya in Malaysia
333 interviews.

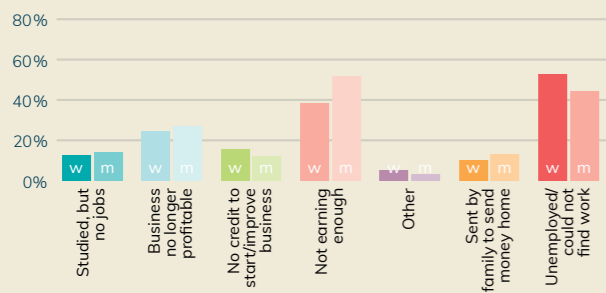| Violence & general insecurity	Lack of rights	Economic reasons	Personal/ family reasons	Lack of social services/ poorly governed	Everybody around me was leaving	Environ- mental factors
83.8%	83.7%	12.9%	18.7%	10.0%	6.1%	0%
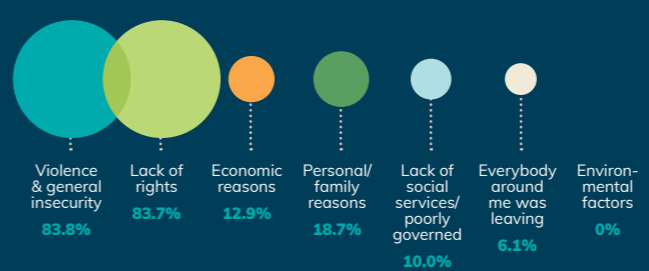
54.4% of people from Myanmar in South/Southeast Asia cited only violence and insecurity, lack of rights, or a combination of the two, as their reasons for leaving.
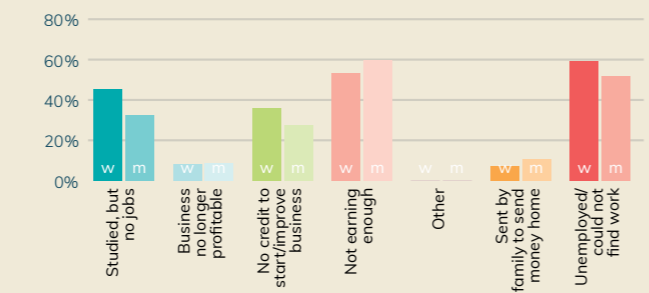
Note: Only showing groups where more than 100 people were interviewed. Full question and answer options: Why did you leave your home country? A lack of rights in country of origin, Economic reasons, Environmental factors and natural disaster, Everybody around me was leaving so I also wanted to migrate, Lack of social services/poorley governed country, Personal and/or family reasons, Violence and generally insecurity. Respondents can choose multiple answers, and are not prompted.

"If economic, please specify..." (w=women; m=men)

Compared to West Africans, East Africans more often indicate they were send by family to earn remittances. West Africans in North Africa - compared to East Africans - more often say they studied but could not find jobs. Among West Africans this is a more common reason for women, while for East Africans men are more likely to give this as a reason.
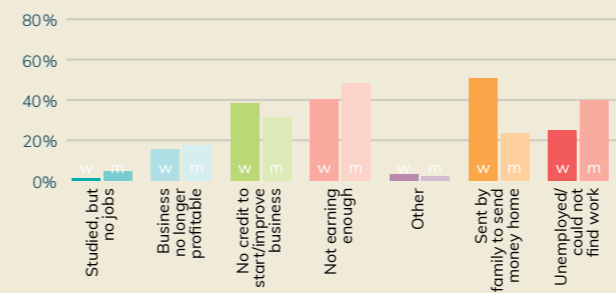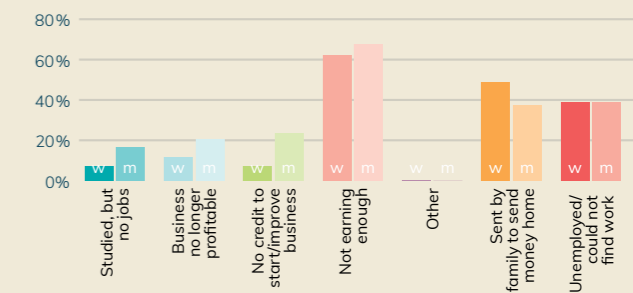
West/Central Africans in West Africa

West/Central Africans in North Africa

East Africans in East Africa

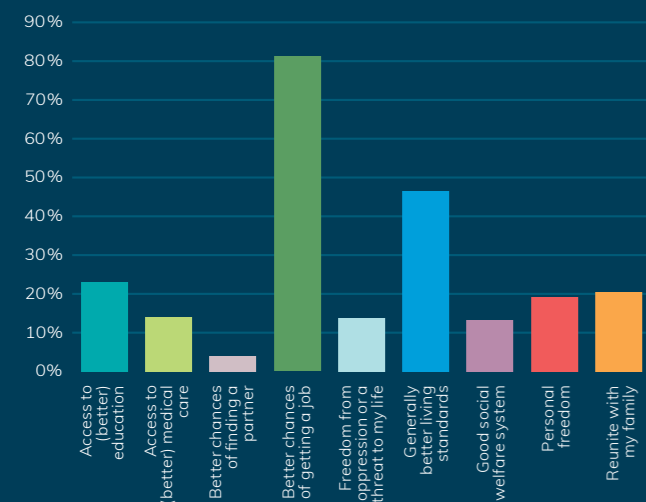### East Africans in North Africa

destination intentions

"Why do you want to go to your destination country?"

There is a wide range of reasons, and combination of reasons, for choosing a destination across the samples presented here. Better living standards is frequently reported among all groups - reported by more than half, with the exceptions of East Africans in East Africa (46.5%) and Rohingya in Malaysia (29.8%).
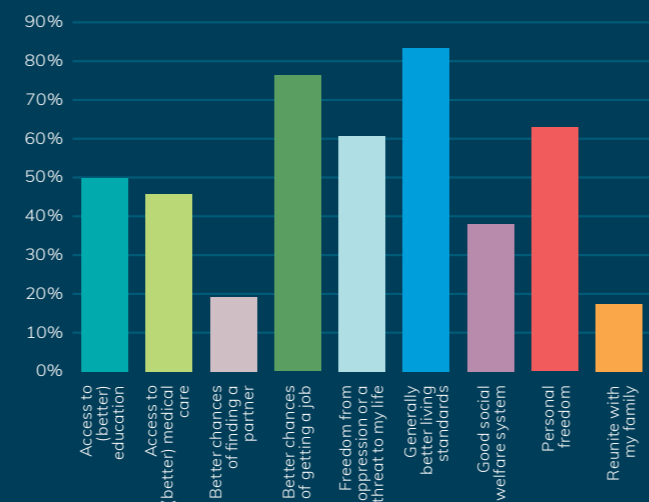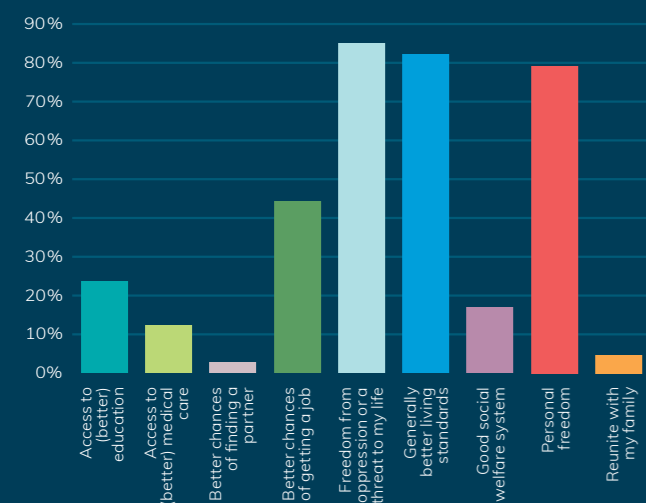
East Africans in East Africa
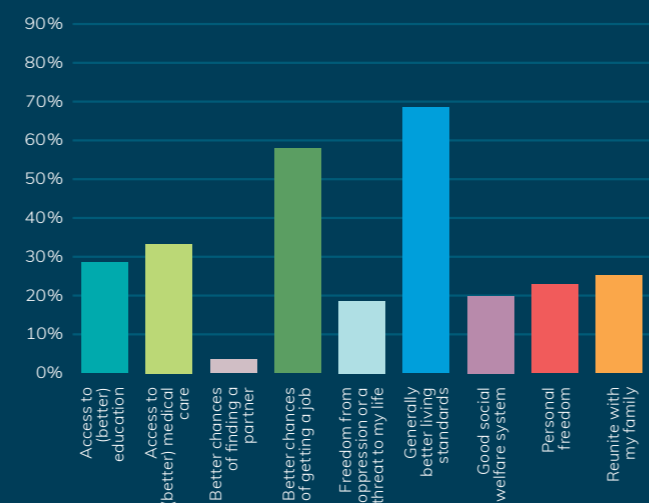510 interviews

East Africans in North Africa
663 interviews

East Africans in Europe
106 interviews

East Africans in Southern Africa
231 interviews

Most respondents are sticking to their destination plans: between 87% and 95% of West and East Africans interviewed (both within their respective region and in North Africa) say they have not changed their destination. Almost 21% of Afghans in South and Southeast Asia have changed their destination, however, and 26% were undecided.

Most East Africans and West Africans interviewed within their region or in North Africa report that they chose the country they want to go to for the job opportunities (between 76.3% and 92.1%).

West/Central Africans in West Africa
4,921 interviews
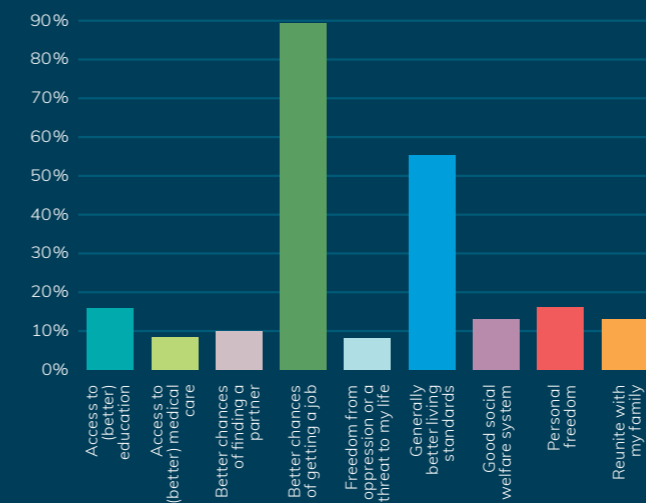
West/Central Africans in North Africa
1,474 interviews
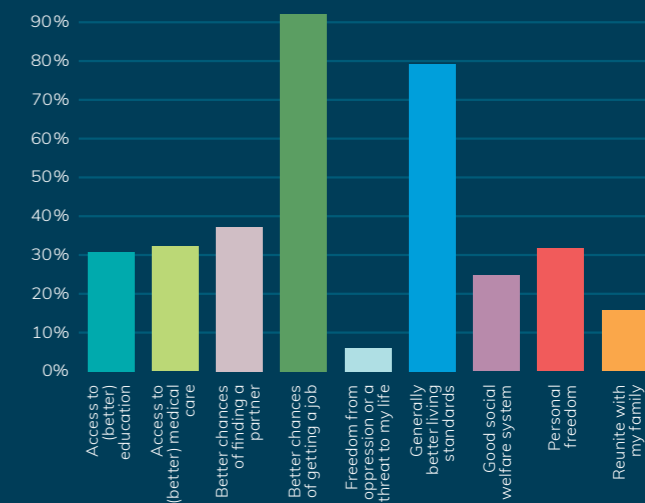
Personal freedom is reported as a reason for choosing a destination among the majority of East Africans in Europe and North Africa, Afghans in Europe, and Rohingya in Malaysia.

The Rohingya interviewed also frequently cite access to services (education and medical care as drivers). Services appear less important to the other samples.

Rohingya in Malaysia
332 interviews

In general, the reasons for choosing a destination are closely linked to the reasons for leaving the country of origin. For example, those leaving for economic reasons primarily choose a destination because of job opportunities, while those leaving because of violence or a lack of rights are most likely to choose a destination that they expect will offer freedom and security.

Afghans in Europe
207 interviews
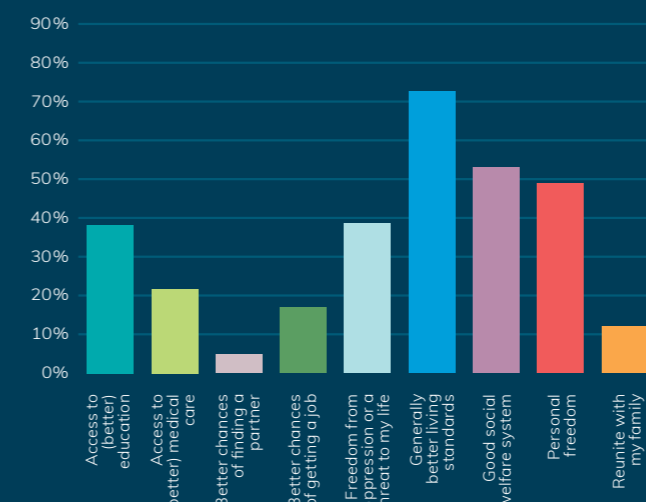
Afghans in South/Southeast Asia
1,015 interviews
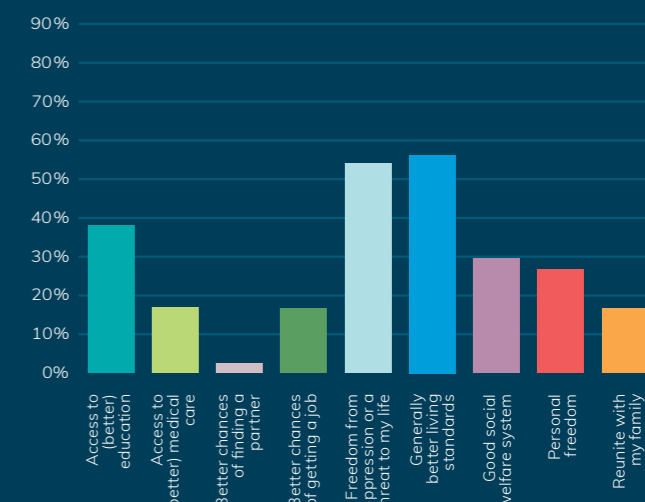
Note: Only questions with over 100 respondents considered. Respondents can give more than one answer to this question.

Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. June 2019. Abdul Aziz (60, left) with his son Abdullah (15) in the Kutapalong Rohingya refugee camp. Abdul says he was willing to take the risk of smuggling his children to Malaysia for a better life. He arranged with people smugglers to send his daughter Shahina (17) and son Abdullah to Malaysia but the attempt failed: his children were stopped and held to ransom on the Bangladesh/Indian border. ''As I only have my earnings as a day labourer for an NGO in the camp, I don't know how I will ever be able to repay the money I borrowed to free the children from the traffickers.'' Abdul's story illustrates the risks facing those who feel compelled to use irregular methods and pathways in the hope of attaining a better and safer future. It also shows how trafficking and smuggling are commonly interlinked. MMC' 4Mi data shows how many of the worst abuses meted out to migrants and asylum seekers are perpetrated by the same smugglers they pay to protect and transport them.

Photo credit: prdyapim / Shutterstock

A refugee camp for Syrians in Sanliurfa, Turkey. As of late 2019 Turkey hosted almost four million refugees, of which 3.6 million are Syrian. Given the political turbulence and policy panic that the influx of approximately one million asylum seekers and migrants caused in Europe in 2015-2016, Turkey holds a strong hand in what is increasingly being regarded as "migration diplomacy". President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan alarmed the EU in October 2019 with threats of sending the refugees to Europe if the EU interfered with or denounced his military offensive against the Kurds in Northern Syria. Apart from migration diplomacy, the unequal global spread of hosting refugees and burden-sharing is illustrated by the Syrian caseload. The low international appetite to host refugees and the shrinking of asylum space does not bode well for a future where an increasing number of displaced people fleeing conflict, insecurity and climate-related disasters is expected.

Section 3

Future scenarios

How human mobility and other pressing issues are likely to affect each other in the coming years

This section dives deep into a range of issues that are set to have a significant impact on mixed migration, and vice versa. Using essays and interviews with experts, it examines the likely effect of human displacement and mobility on society and the world through the lenses of economics, artificial intelligence and automation, as well as demography and the very unpredictable but undoubtedly profound phenomenon of climate change. In each case, MMC seeks to identify forces and trends that could influence the future pace and character of mixed migration.

Predictive modelling:
Can mixed migration be accurately forecast?

Migration and refugee flows increasingly dominate national and international political and humanitarian agendas. There is a heightened appetite to better understand the dynamics that make people move and to predict how, when, and in what numbers they will do so, in order to improve planning and formulate new policies. Human movement has important humanitarian, societal, and political implications, so anticipating future flows of mobility and mixed migration has become a key objective of several new initiatives using a wide spectrum of data sources, sometimes in combination with machine learning and artificial intelligence.

This essay reviews new developments and the challenges associated with tech-driven predictive analysis, and explores whether human migration, and especially mixed migration that includes forced mobility, is just too complex to reliably predict.

> "A number of early warning signals were identifiable in the years prior to the 2015/16 refugee surge in Europe, yet the world was caught off-guard by mass migration movements from the Middle East and Africa. In the past, this has also been the case in the context of most major geopolitical or environmental shocks. Capacity to anticipate all but directly-regulated migration flows appears to be quite weak."[1]

Qualitative and quantitative approaches

Predictions of migration flows and trends traditionally use *quantitative* modelling methods. This approach statistically models future migration trends based on historic quantitative data. It relies on a wealth of numerical information about inflows and outflows and policy changes. "The quantitative modelling approach, however, does not take into account factors that are unquantifiable and uncertain, yet relevant to migration."[2]

This is a major limitation. Within this approach, over the decades, a wide variety of techniques have been used, often giving statistical emphasis to data from whichever sector the modellers are most interested in (economic, political, geographic, etc.). The approach has been described as "forecasting" that produces "informed guesses."[3]

A more recent approach envisages a range of possible migration flows and trends in the medium to long-term future using *qualitative* methods; it can be described as "foresight".[4] This approach depends less on past numerical data and instead describes future migration developments in terms of narrative scenarios, based on a variety of information on migration factors and drivers, as well as on socio-political events and conditions. At best, its fruits are speculative, rough estimates. "Qualitative techniques used in such futures studies are largely subjective, based on the opinion and judgment of experts."[5]

There have also been efforts to combine quantitative and qualitative approaches in what are known as expert-based probabilistic methods, or Bayesian statistical approaches.[6]

High risks of error
A comparative analysis of different approaches conducted in 2015 found that migration forecasting was prone to "very high levels of error" and concluded that "no particular model can be considered as conclusively superior".[7] Furthermore, it deemed it futile to design a single predictive model to cover all scenarios due to the vastly different factors affecting migration combined with the uncertainy of the future and the questionable robustness of data being used.

This is an important finding that turns on the critical issue of uncertainty, particularly surrounding the nature and size of future shocks, which can only be assessed to a very limited extent. "As such, any decision-making based on migration forecasts is particularly susceptible to error from unforeseen future events".[8] Instead, the comparative

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1 OECD / European Asylum Support Office (2018) *Can we anticipate future migration flows?*
2 Migration Data Portal (2019) *Migration forecasting*
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 Migration Data Portal op. cit.
6 Bayesian statistics is a system for describing epistemological uncertainty using the mathematical language of probability. For further explanation, see: Spiegelhalter, D. & Rice, K. (2009) *Bayesian statistics* Scholarpedia
7 Disney, G. et al. (2015) *Evaluation of existing migration forecasting methods and models* Economic and Social Research Council - Centre for Population Change, University of Southampton
8 Ibid.

analysis recommended that *bespoke* forecasting models should be developed for a given situation. Attempting to develop a universal model would be "impossible", and even focusing on specific situations would be prone to high levels of error, so more effort needs to be put into translating unavoidably uncertain forecasts into relevant policy advice and decisions.[9] "Scenarios tend to highlight rather than reduce the complexity of policy issues. They are generated through discussions about the past and the future that often help reveal taken-for-granted assumptions about the matter."[10]

Key questions: Aspirations and capabilities

Whether the aim is to predict movement worldwide – which is probably too ambitious to achieve in any meaningful way – or in a specific region or migratory route, the central challenge is to map both migration *aspirations* and *capabilities*. This approach "holds the promise of striking a balance between unity and diversity in theoretical approaches to migration" and offers some probabilistic forecasting on human mobility.[11]

Key to developing useful predictions are two fundamental and inter-related questions:

- Under what conditions do people develop aspirations to migrate?
- Under what conditions do they have the capabilities to realise those aspirations?[12]

Deceptively simple, these two questions elegantly encompass the objectives of many studies of mobility published across the fields of anthropology, economics, geography, refugee studies and other disciplines. Their very broadness makes them particularly useful tools in understanding the multifaceted nature of *mixed* migration.

Issues of migration aspiration cover the whole spectrum of mobility decision factors: fleeing persecution, conflict, and environmental stress; looking for better livelihoods and opportunities; and joining family members who have already migrated. Equally, the "capabilities" covers the range of conditions facing individuals considering movement, such as: available resources; political and geographic constraints; immigration policies and the impact of increased securitisation of migration; and the risks of movement, namely the dangers in transit and conditions in destination countries.

Relatively rare factors

Since only a tiny proportion of any given population choose to move, it follows that aspirations to do so tend to be felt by individuals and families, and sometimes communities, rather than large swathes of a populace. The same applies to the capabilities needed to realise these aspirations. The vast number of permutations of these two components of migration make it hard to model future flows.

In cases of *forced* migration, the proportion of people affected by acute adversity who migrate may be larger, but their numbers and destinations are no easier to accurately predict. For example, if rising sea levels render a low-lying island uninhabitable, or if a specific ethnic group faces brutal persecution, as did the Rohingya in Myanmar in 2017, we can expect considerable displacement. But even in cases of extreme adversity involving violence or major weather shocks, internal or international migration is not inevitable. For example, in the 2019 flooding in Mozambique (from cyclones Idai and Kenneth) the scale of displacement was quite limited relative to the numbers affected: while 200,000 homes were partially or wholly destroyed, around 70,000 moved to emergency shelters within Mozambique and there was no recorded cross border movement.[13] The few thousand people who joined the migrant "caravans" from the Northern Triangle in Central America moving north to the United States in 2018 may have had very compelling reasons to leave their homes, but what of the millions more who live under similar conditions who did *not* move? In the case of Syria, around half the pre-war population of 22 million is now displaced.[14] As the conflict flared up, there was no way of predicting how many people, over the coming months and years, would stay put, move within Syria, or flee across borders, either to neighbouring states or all the way to Europe. As in most crisis situations, there were simply too many variables. Additionally, it's worth recalling that Syrians who have made their way to Europe are only a proportion of Syrian refugees living in the Middle East as refugees, who are themselves a proportion of those who have **not** fled Syria despite many more also being severely affected by the war there. When we compare the Syrian case with Yemen, it is also unclear why, despite the instability, destruction and deprivation experienced by millions of Yemenis so few have left the country. What are the factors that tip internal displacement over into cross border migration, and why does it happen in one region and not in another? These are not simple cause and effect models.

9   Disney, G. et al. op. cit.
10   Ibid.
11   Carling, J. & Schewel, K. (2018) *Revisiting aspiration and ability in international migration* Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies
12   De Haas, H. (2014) *Migration Theory: Quo Vadis?* International Migration Institute. Working Paper 100.
13   UNOCHA (2019) *Mozambique: Cyclone Idai & Floods Situation Report No. 16*
14   UNHCR (2019) *Syria emergency*

Are we guilty of having a "mobility bias" in our conceptualisation of migration as some suggest?[15] In our focus on mobility do we neglect to understand the dynamics of immobility? How does a model capture the tipping points and the details of decision-making sufficiently to be a useful predictive tool?

Widespread disparities

Concerning migration that does not fit the conventional criteria of "forced" (but which is nonetheless equally compelling to those concerned), the evidence shows that not only do individuals and families respond to drivers differently even within communities, but also that some communities or regions are more prone to moving than others. There are also great differences in migration propensity between countries that appear to be facing similar "root causes", particularly if those causes are a combination of poverty, corruption, physical insecurity and poor governance. Concerning conflict, the example of Syria and Yemen is a pertinent one in this regard. So how does migration happen?[16] Perhaps an equally relevant area of study to supplement predictive modelling of mobility is therefore to predict what proportion of any population will not aspire, or not have the ability, to move when faced with compelling drivers.[17]

Can any predictive model encapsulate all the macro multi-variate drivers of mobility as well as the micro-level decision-making to move and the means to do so? These are the challenges facing modellers, and if predictive modelling of mobility is to be successful it must be able to evaluate and quantify both questions concerning aspirations and wherewithal.

Current initiatives

Forced migration

Significant work has been conducted on early warning and risk analysis systems about forced migration. Much of the government work in this area, notably in Switzerland and Sweden, focusses on predicting asylum applications.[18]

The first seminal work on early warning of refugee flows was done in 1989; it was rooted in the idea that such systems "should be based on the analyses of three groups of variables: 1) push factors (root causes and proximate events); 2) intervening factors; and 3) triggering factors."[19] Subsequent efforts by various analysts focused more on determinants for refugee movement, and their conclusions showed that the "violent behaviour of governments and dissidents (and their interaction) are the primary determinants of forced migration flows," but they did not develop any further predictive power.[20]

Adding to research on the conditions that prompt people to move, a 2016 paper by Georgetown University's *Forecasting the Break* project posits the idea of "a menacing context" which arises when "a dread threat persists and requires a community to reorganize its life to help mitigate consequences of threat."[21] The project uses large-scale data-intensive research techniques across several disciplines to detect forced population displacement with the aim of improving government planning, but it does not strive to offer a universal or regional-specific *predictive* model.

UNHCR has developed the Demographic Projection Tool (DPTool), intended to provide population projections for specific refugee populations once displacement has already occurred. It is primarily a tool for conducting evidence-based planning exercises.[22] In late 2018, UNHCR and the World Bank established the Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement in Copenhagen. Its mission is to make "timely and evidence-informed decisions that can improve the lives of affected people." Again, at this stage, it does not try to predict *future* displacement and refugee events.[23]

Several NGOs are working on more predictive analysis: Save the Children International's Migration and Displacement Initiative created a prototype tool that predicts the duration and scale of a forced displacement event once it has started.[24] The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre is also currently developing predictive analytics with a view to improving humanitarian response in relation to displacement. These tools do not attempt to be a predictive model for irregular migration although they may go some way to contribute to future models.[25]

15 Schewel, K. (2019) *Understanding Immobility: Moving Beyond the Mobility Bias in Migration Studies* International Migration Review
16 Carling, J. (2017) *How does migration arise?* Ideas to Inform International Cooperation on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, IOM: Geneva
17 Schewel, K. op. cit.
18 OECD/European Asylum Support Office op. cit.
19 Lopez-Lucia, E. (2015) *Early warning models for irregular migration* GSDRC
20 Ibid.
21 Collmann, J. et al. (2016) *Measuring the Potential for Mass Displacement in Menacing Contexts* Journal of Refugee Studies; Georgetown University *Forecasting the Break: Building Community and Capacity for Large-Scale Data-Intensive Research in Forced Migration Studies* Institute for the Study of International Migration
22 Alburez-Gutierrez, D. & Segura García, C. (2018) *The UNHCR Demographic Projection Tool: estimating the future size and composition of forcibly displaced populations* UNHCR Statistical Technical Series
23 World Bank *UNHCR-World Bank Group Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement Fact Sheet*
24 Kaplan, J. & Morgan S. (2018) *Predicting Displacement: Using predictive analytics to build a better future for displaced children* Save the Children
25 IDMC (2019) *Workshop on predictive analysis in humanitarian response*

Meanwhile, some data scientists have recently used mapping and extensive refugee data to trial a "generalized simulation development approach" for predicting refugee destinations. Although they claim their simulations consistently predict more than 75 percent of the refugee destinations, and consistently outperform alternative "naïve" forecasting techniques, this is only possible 12 days after an event that prompts forced displacement.[26] It remains to be seen whether this will mature into a predictive model for forced displacement and refugee movement.

Regular and irregular migration – forecasts and challenges

Predictive modelling for regular migration is fraught with difficulties and rarely successful except in developing estimates and broad general observations. As IOM cautioned in 2016, "there is vast inherent uncertainty and complexity in migration processes".[27] The theoretical base for analysis often consists of simple economic arguments that relate migration to gains and losses in terms of human capital and costs of migration.[28] More importantly, this approach is premised on migration being voluntary, and therefore has limited use when considering *irregular* migration where a significant proportion of those on the move are asylum seekers and are considered involuntary or forced.

Statistics from major databases (such as those of the United Nations Global Migration Database, ILO, OECD, UNHCR, the Migration Policy Institute and the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) are used to analyse previous trends, make assumptions about the main relationships with key variables, and forecast migration flows into the future.[29] A recent example of such an analysis based on past historical findings is a study claiming that "illegal immigration is set to rise after Brexit".[30]

Predicting future migration trends is difficult because, as we have seen, forecasting models are unable to capture the multitude of social, political, demographic, economic, environmental, and technological drivers that underpin migration processes. The problem is not just that assumptions are made, but also that statistical findings may be erroneous or misleading. For example, a multivariate regression analysis trying to ascertain which independent variables (e.g. drivers) from a wide variety of databases influence which dependent variable (in this case migration) is not just an exercise in

making assumptions, but also in establishing statistical correlations. That part can be done, but there remains the problem of determining causality, and the troublesome fact that models can only "discover" past relationships, so cannot account for anything that has not *yet* happened but which *might* happen in the future. In addition, models have difficulty establishing, identifying and predicting tipping points and triggers. Finally, there is the problem of data quality, in particular data about key dependent variables and outcome indicators: models will only be as good as the data entered.

Digital tech and machine learning

Some are bullish that the use of AI and machine learning will transform predictive modelling, and assert that "machine learning models are able to incorporate any number of exogenous features, to predict origin/destination human migration flows," and outperform traditional human mobility models on a variety of evaluation metrics.[31] But no such functioning model is currently available.

The Center for Climate Systems Research at Columbia's Earth Institute is attempting to pioneer a migration prediction model using global systems with a particular focus on global climate as a main predictor of future mobility trends. It remains to be seen whether it will bear useful fruit.[32] There is also considerable discussion about and examples to be found of the potential use of big data in migration prediction as well as in assessing future movement by forced migrants.[33]

The main drawback such predictors face is that they assume that a past relationship between migration and its main determinants will apply in the future. They also suffer from a lack of consistent or reliable data, especially data about *irregular* migration.[34] This kind of data is the key "outcome variable" needed for the model to understand and learn from past relationships between a wide variety of independent variables (such as migration drivers) and irregular migration. The Pew Research Centre often tries to estimate the current number of irregular migrants in the United States, and the CLANDESTINO project (2007-2009) in Europe briefly produced an online database of contemporary irregular migration into Europe. But its researchers concede that estimation is always problematic because "by its very nature irregular migration is undocumented and unobservable".[35] These efforts have also not tried to develop empirical models to predict *future* irregular mobility.

26 Suleimenova, D. et al. (2017) *A generalized simulation development approach for predicting refugee destinations* Nature
27 IOM (2016) *Migration forecasting: Beyond the limits of uncertainty* Global Migration Data Analysis Centre
28 Kancs, D. (2005) *Can we use NEG Models to Predict Migration Flows? An Example of CEE Accession Countries* Migration Letters
29 Lopez-Lucia, E. op. cit.
30 Thomas, J. (2019) *Back to the future - What history tells us about the challenges of post-Brexit UK immigration policy* Social Market Foundation
31 Robinson, C. and Dilkina, B. (2017) *A Machine Learning Approach to Modeling Human Migration*. Cornell University
32 Fecht, S. (2018) *Where will future migrants come from?* Earth Institute, Columbia University
33 Such data might include: anonymized data generated by users of mobile devices, internet-based platforms; or by digital sensors and meters, and satellite imagery.
34 Paoletti, E. et al. (2010) *The concept and theory of migration scenarios* International Migration Institute, Oxford University
35 Lopez-Lucia, E. op cit.

IBM has been working with the Danish Refugee Council and the Mixed Migration Centre to develop an ambitious model to predict mixed migration. The Mixed Migration Foresight (MM4Sight) project aims to "develop conceptual, tech-driven, probabilistic methodology utilizing fact-based datasets from multiple sources and combined with first hand observations and expert judgment."[36] But again, it remains to be seen if their efforts in using this more Bayesian approach will be successful.

Scenarios vs forecasts

In frustration with quantitative approaches to forecasting and recognizing the unlikelihood of developing a reliable model, Oxford University, through its now defunct International Migration Institute, pioneered innovative scenario methodology to identify key uncertainties and relative certainties that may drive future migration.[37] The Global Migration Futures methodology is both exploratory and participatory: "Migration scenarios are not forecasts, the point is not so much to get it right as to have a set of scenarios that illuminates the major forces driving the system, their relationships and the critical uncertainties."[38] The results of this work provide a range of scenarios for specific global regions, but it is not clear how useful these have been to policymakers or planners. This approach has been more recently picked up and taken forward by the EU Policy Lab.[39]

In terms of raising political consciousness and managing expectations, there may be a role for indicative models that use a few key indicators to try to envision the scale of future movement. The Brookings Institute did this in late 2018, in an effort to predict the numerical impact Venezuelan oil production, combined with the international oil price and the level of foreign aid, would have on displacement and the continuing exodus of Venezuelans.[40]

Is mixed migration too complex to model into the future?

The distinction between forced and voluntary migration is increasingly challenged, both in academia and amongst practitioners. There is still no consensus that it is appropriate to the real world, that it adequately captures people's experiences, vulnerabilities and reasons for moving. Debate and discussion in the face of mixed flows have come to the fore in recent years, even as international legal frameworks and immigration policies continue to impose these labels on people on the move.

Some academics question the voluntariness of many migration decisions and would prefer forced and voluntary migration to be recognised "as a continuum of experience, not a dichotomy."[41] From an experiential perspective and in terms of concrete reality, examining irregular migration through the mixed migration lens is unavoidable, but it presents predictive forecasting with big challenges, not least because of the need to use statistics on migration and refugee movement drawn from a wide range of data sources of varying quality. And in the case of irregular migration, such data is often simply absent.

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36 Christoffersen, S. (2018) *Mixed Migration Foresight* IBM blogs
37 International Migration Institute *Global Migration Futures* (website homepage)
38 Ibid.
39 Szczepanikova, A. & Van Criekinge, T. op. cit.
40 Bahar, D & Barios, D. (2018) *How many more migrants and refugees can we expect out of Venezuela?* Brookings Institute
41 Bivand Erdal, M. & Oeppen, C. (2017) *Forced to leave? The discursive and analytical significance of describing migration as forced and voluntary* Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies

Table 1 shows how OECD assesses the predictability of different types of migration over different timescales. As we can see, forced and irregular migration are the most problematic for medium- to long-term forecasting.

Given how challenging it is to develop separate universal predictive modelling tools for refugee events and for on-going irregular migration of so-called economic migrants, the complexity of combining *both* categories of people on the move in a reliable unified predictive model of mixed migration is probably too great for such a model to be feasible at present.

A more realistic approach may be one based on what some call the *Oxford school of thought* and pioneered by the now defunct International Migration Institute-IMI,

focusing on envisaging future scenarios and anticipating possible shocks, informed by statistical analysis of the past and developed through multidisciplinary expert collaboration. As mentioned above, a more recent iteration of this approach is being promoted by the EU Policy Lab.[42]

A universally applicable tool is therefore unlikely any time soon. Focussing on specific countries, sub-regions, and migratory routes offers more hope of predictive success. This is an approach the Mixed Migration Centre aims to promote, but anyone expecting a reliable "silver bullet" predictive tool for future mixed migration movements in the near future may be disappointed.

Table 1. Predicting different types of migration: tools and timeframes

	Short term / next week or month	Medium term / next year	Long term / next decade
Forced & irregular migration	**Early warning & alert sytems** Medium to high predictability	**Modelling & risk analysis** Low to medium predictability	**Foresight** Very low predictability
Labour & free movement	**Administrative & LFS data** Medium to high predictability	**Modelling & programming** Medium predictability	**Foresight** Low to medium predictability
Family	**Administrative data** High predictability	**Programming** Medium to high predictability	**Foresight** Low to medium predictability

Source: OECD[43]

42 Szczepanikova, A. & Van Criekinge, T. op. cit.
43 OECD/European Asylum Support Office op. cit.

MM4Sight
Predicting mixed migration flows from Ethiopia

The Mixed Migration Foresight (MM4Sight) project is a collaboration between IBM and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) to develop and assess the feasibility of a machine learning model for predicting and better understanding mixed migration flows. The collaboration grew out of a recognition that humanitarian and development organisations generally face difficulties making the best use of a wealth of existing data to analyse migration-driving factors and aggregate them into useful predictive models. The hope is that IBM's innovation will help DRC better serve people on the move and the agencies that support them by anticipating needs in a thoughtful, timely, and complete fashion.

Focussing on Ethiopia as a country of departure, MM4Sight draws on fact-based datasets from multiple sources, including the World Bank, the World Health Organization, Systemic Peace, Freedom House, ACLED, and the International Disaster Database. Developed over six months, the predictive model considers a range of root causes of migration in the broad realms of economy, governance, environment, demography, and violence/conflict.

MM4Sight leverages machine learning and advanced analytic and statistical models to predict migration from Ethiopia to six destination countries: Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Italy, the United Kingdom, Denmark, and Sweden. These countries cover approximately 35 percent of total mixed migration flows out of Ethiopia and 66 percent of those going beyond the Horn of Africa.

During the development phase, the model was tasked with making 42 predictions about the size of mixed migration flows from Ethiopia to these six countries from 2010 to 2017, based on data from the preceding 15 years. Only three of the predictions were significant misses and 20 (i.e. approximately half of all the predictions) were within a 10 percent margin of error. The model outperforms the baseline approach of using current flows to estimate future ones. As such, the model is considered a viable alternative to other means of forecasting.

Still, a number of limitations to accurate forecasting were identified. The primary concern is the quality of data related to mixed migration numbers. Given the irregular situation of some people travelling in mixed migration flows, there is a great deal of uncertainty around the numbers used in the model as the dependent variable (i.e. volume of mixed migration). Moreover, as the source data does not distinguish between irregular and regular migration, the model may be less useful than envisaged in guiding humanitarian programming. The uncertainty around the numbers used in the model may therefore limit the accuracy of concrete forecasts, although the broad trends it identifies (such as increases or decreases in mixed migration flows) could still be valid.

The model's predictive power is also somewhat limited by its focus on the macro, or structural, factors that affect migration flows, and by its disregard of micro, or proximate, factors which may influence or trigger individual decisions to migrate, such as aspirations, social networks, family pressure, loss of job, feelings of insecurity, etc. While some changes in these factors will be captured in changes at the macro level (for example, losing a job can be captured by a rise in overall unemployment rates or decreasing GDP), the model is not very sensitive to them. Furthermore, the MM4Sight model does not take into account other influential factors, such as policy regimes (visa requirements, etc.), the hardships and risks of long migration journeys, or the role of facilitating agents (other migrants in destination countries, human smugglers, etc.) because they are less quantifiable.

The next phase of the project will focus on determining the causal relationships between macro factors and migration flows as a basis for scenario-building and planning using causality analysis. Additional work will be carried out to build a similar model to forecast forced displacement, where more accurate and credible data exists on flows and stocks.

Interview

Dig the data

As Africa's population soars, more of its citizens are expected to head to Europe. But for **Rainer Münz**, drawing such a direct correlation between swelling demographics and increased migration is too simplistic: if economies don't grow along with population, many Africans won't have the means to migrate. Better education, family planning, and economic growth, conversely, would boost opportunities to do so.

Rainer Münz is Adviser on Migration and Demography at the European Political Strategy Centre (EPSC), the in-house think tank advising the president of the European Commission. Prior to joining EPSC he was head of research at Erste Group and had an academic career teaching as full or visiting professor at different universities, including Bamberg, UC Berkeley, HU Berlin, CEU Budapest, HU Jerusalem, Frankfurt, Vienna and Zurich. He also worked as fellow at the macroeconomic think tanks Bruegel (Brussels), the Hamburg Institute of World Economy and the Migration Policy Institute (Washington DC). Münz is a co-author of Many More to Come? Migration from and Within Africa, published by the EU in 2018.

Many More to Come? argued that people migrating from Africa to Europe are increasingly taking less legal, more irregular routes. Could you elaborate?

Migration flows from Africa to Europe have always been mixed. Over the last 20 years the most important legal gate of entry was and is marriage, i.e. newly wed African citizens joining their spouses already residing in an EU member state. In the past, legal labour migration also played a role, but numbers have been going down over the last 10 years, in particular between 2008 and 2012. Both flows mainly concerned people migrating from the Maghreb to Europe. Significant volumes of asylum applications and irregular arrivals are a more recent development partly linked to stricter visa regulations. Asylum claims have increased between

2013 and 2017. The majority of people arriving that way are from Western Africa as well as from the Horn of Africa. Most recently, irregular arrivals of Africans in Italy have been sharply declining.

Do you expect this to continue, is the mixed migration model going to persist and increase?

Numbers of African-born people arriving and remaining in Europe for an extended period (12+ months) have not changed a lot over the last 15 years. They have fluctuated between 500,000 and 600,000 people annually. There is no indication of an imminent increase.

You have written that under any plausible scenario in the medium term, (over the next 20-30 years)

socio-economic development, population growth and climate change will lead to more Africans on the move than today. Isn't this projected trend on a direct collision course with current migration and refugee policies?

The majority of geographically mobile Africans moves within their continent as well as to the Gulf States. In the future, the number of mobile Africans is expected to increase as the African population will double between now and the year 2050. Socio-economic development and climate change might also contribute to such an increase. At first, this will lead to more migration within Africa, but it might well mean that more Africans will emigrate to Europe, Asia and North America.

The next three questions relate findings in *Many More to Come?* that many might find surprising. First, please briefly explain the contention that rapid population growth goes hand in hand with lower emigration.

Rapid population growth usually is associated with low education (in particular of girls and young women), early marriage, women giving birth at young ages, a high degree of subsistence farming and a low GDP per capita. All these factors are holding back migration as the large majority of people living in poor countries with high population growth do not have the means to migrate and/or are held back by family obligations. Investing in education and family planning as well as economic growth usually lead to lower birth rates. But the same change also gives more people the opportunity of becoming mobile.

> **" Rapid population growth usually is associated with low education, early marriage, women giving birth at young ages, a high degree of subsistence farming and a low GDP per capita. All these factors are holding back migration. "**

Second, could you elaborate on why Africa's youth bulge does not play a major part in emigration, either within the continent, or to destinations outside it?

A higher share of young age groups usually is the direct result of high population growth. As a result, the share of people being able to make the choice between moving and staying is smaller than in societies with smaller demographic growth and higher GDP per capita.

Third, in most of the world, urbanisation seems to act as a key driver reducing international migration. Why is this different in Africa?

Many parts of Africa experience high population growth and rapid urbanisation at the same time. Growing

numbers of people move from the countryside to cities. While subsistence farmers may never be able to save enough money for emigration, city dwellers have more opportunities doing so. And some of those who have successfully moved from their native rural places of birth to a larger city are confident that this experience enables them to make the move abroad.

The gravity model findings you used in the study show that high population growth, a higher share of young people, and a low degree of urbanisation in a given African country go hand in hand with lower emigration from that country. Were you surprised at these findings? They sound rather counterintuitive and certainly contrary to popular understanding...

Intuition might help you developing a hypothesis. But in the end, we should rely on available data. And they speak a clear language. Poverty is a trap that prevents the majority of Africans (and people in many other parts of the world) from moving to other places. Lifting people out of poverty by providing access to skills and a cash income empowers more of them to make choices. Migrating or having fewer children are part of these options that become available.

Between 2019 and 2030, Africa's population is set to almost double, from 1.3 to 2.5 billion people. Your "slow development" scenario suggests an increase in migration from Africa in the same period from 1.4 million per year now to 2.8 million and with the "rapid development" scenario from the present 1.4 to 3.5 million per year in 2050 (2.5 times more). And most of these would migrate within Africa?

These scenarios are not predictions, but calculate what might happen under given assumptions. The slow development scenario leads to a doubling of Africa's population. If migration rates stay the same this simply translates into twice as many migrants. More rapid development goes hand in hand with slightly less population growth, but GDP per capita increases will make migration more likely. Initially this leads to a higher absolute number of international migrants. These calculations do not indicate how many of them might be leaving the African continent.

Migration transition theory suggests that migration first rises with economic development, up to a GDP per capita threshold of roughly of 7,000 to 13,000 (USD) dollars per year, after which the relationship is reversed, and people are more likely to stay in their home countries. Yet you identified three countries where the threshold had been met and which are still emigration countries. Do you have any idea why this is the case?

The transition theory – also known as "migration hump" – is based on a statistical correlation. In reality, as predicted by theory, we find almost no emigration

from very poor countries, but among those with slightly higher GDP per capita there are both countries with high and with low emigration. The same is true for countries above the threshold. Poland, for example, has had a GDP per capita above $13,000 per year since 2008, but has experienced mass emigration until 2015 as its citizens got free access to labour markets across the EU. Turkey has a GDP per capita around $10,000 per year and has experienced very little emigration, but considerable immigration (already before the arrival of millions of Syrian refugees).

It will take a long time before most African countries reach the tipping point of a GDP per capita of between 7,000 and 13,000 international dollars per year. What will we have in the meantime when we add climate change and other stress factors into the mix? Is the threat of instability and conflict even very high (producing more displacement)?

Available indicators hint at more migration within Africa and more internal displacement linked to climate change and conflict, but possibly also at more people leaving the continent.

In terms of the global population *decline*, from a demographic point of view is there an inevitable continuum of reduction? How will such a decline be halted? How will the future look in terms of generalised decline?

Global population decline might take place after the year 2100. It will be the result of more people dying than being born. Long before that, there will be regional population decline. Today rich countries like Japan, mid-income countries like Hungary, Romania and Russia, as well as poorer countries like Kyrgyzstan are already experiencing population decline. Soon China will join this group as a result of its one-child policy that lasted for more than 40 years. The fastest remedy would be immigration, but the example of Japan shows that demographic shrinking does not necessarily translate into socio-economic decline.

According to a recent *Lancet* report, all regions in the world are showing fertility decline, with Europe as one of the leading regions in this regard.[1]

The Lancet article refers to data provided by the UN Population Division based on national statistics (wherever available). These data do not show universal fertility decline. In the USA and Canada, the number of children per woman has not changed since the mid-1970s. In the EU and in China, the average number of children has slightly increased since the 1990s. **We also have increased aging, but what will happen when the *generation turnover* hits Europe? How serious are the repercussions and the problems of "replacement" in your view?**

Demographic ageing is the result of a truly positive development: mortality is declining while our life expectancy increases. This leads to higher numbers of elderly citizens. If retirement age remains fixed while life expectancy increases, ageing makes the financing of pensions more difficult. In order to make pension systems more resilient it would be necessary that people work longer and retire at a later stage in life. This, in turn, would require many more people engaging in re-skilling and lifelong learning as well as pay schemes that do not link higher income to higher age. Ageing of electorates also has political repercussions. Many elderly tend to be less interested in long-term issues – including reforms that would make pension systems more resilient.

To what extent do you think automation, AI and robotics will compensate for the population decline in Europe and other global North states? Or is the only way to maintain economic strength to bring in migrants?

Admitting regular or irregular migrants does not automatically strengthen the economy of a receiving country. Very much depends on the skills that migrants bring along and on their ability to join the labour force. Comparative data for the EU shows that people arriving as asylum seekers being granted refugee status as well as those arriving via marriage migration on average need more than 10 years before reaching labour force participation rates of 50%; which is about 15-20 percentage points below labour force participation of natives.

The current attitude to migrants and refugees is not conducive to bringing large numbers into countries of the global North. Do you think this attitude will soften or harden in the future?

Current public attitudes do not necessarily translate into fewer arrivals. Donald Trump got elected on an anti-immigrant platform. Apparently, this has not affected the issuance of Green Cards, while asylum claims became more frequent than during the Obama administration. The Polish government has also signalled that immigrants might not be welcome, but available statistics show that Poland has issued over two million (mostly short-term) residence permits to Ukrainian citizens over the last four years. These are signs that political rhetoric, migration policies and actual figures can differ a lot. Labour market gaps in key sectors of an economy can also lead to political

1   The Lancet (2018) *Population and Fertility Collaborators Population and fertility by age and sex for 195 countries and territories, 1950–2017: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017*

approaches that are more pragmatic.

Do you think there could be an alternative migration model as a compromise? More like the Gulf States model, or more circular migration? Will it be an economic necessity for policies to change, or will technology fill the labour gap?

Today EU countries issue more than two million residence permits for a period of 12+ more months annually. More than 60 percent of these residence permits go to people admitted as asylum seekers, refugees, newlywed spouses and other dependent family members. In all these cases, compatibility with the needs of European labour markets plays no role. In contrast to this, only 10-15 percent of all residence permits (12+ month) are issued to regular labour migrants coming from non-EU countries. European countries might need to change that balance by trying to attract migrants that are selected for their talent and skills. At the same time there are some 1.3 million EU citizens migrating within the EU every year. Their labour force participation is high, but the majority of them do not stay for good, but rather moves on or returns to the home country. As such, free movement of labour within the EU has created a flexible workforce consisting of EU migrants. Only the aspect of flexibility is comparable to the situation in the Gulf States, but EU migrants are not generally recruited by agencies or member states, yet are free to select or change their employers, get equal pay and to claim most available benefits just like natives.

In your work with International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD), what sort of projects or recommendations are you making for future planning?

My work for IOM and in the context of KNOMAD relates to the analysis of data and trends. Recommendations are limited to improved data collection, forecasting methods and more realistic assumptions about future migration flows.

Some writers commenting on the rise of technology and the decline of populations talk of the eventual end of international migration. What's your view, not just of African migration but global migration? What of the emerging markets and China, Russia, Japan or even Brazil? Will it soon become a seller's market in terms of migrant labour?

The eventual end of international migration is an assumption on which several development theories and most international demographic projections are based. This is less related to the rise of technology, but to a global convergence hypothesis. In the future, that is the assumption, living standards will converge and

this will lead either to less migration or even to zero net migration. Personally, I do not think that this is a likely development.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the global compacts on migration and refugees have many aspects relating to the role of migration and increasing mobility. Do you think these provisions and aspirations are enough, or do we need a new, bolder vision to deal with the world's migration and refugee or displacement question?

The global compacts on migration and refugees as well as the SDGs have emerged from multilateral negotiations with the UN framework. They will serve as starting points for future dialogue between sending and receiving countries. In order to have such a dialogue, we have to understand that sending and receiving countries might have quite diverging interests and perspectives. Most receiving countries would like to avoid the emergence of any legally binding international framework giving non-citizens a right to enter a particular country without founded fear of persecution. Ideally, they would become more selective by choosing who is allowed to enter and who is not. With respect to rejected asylum seekers and non-citizens without valid residence permits, receiving countries would, however, be interested in a framework that requires sending countries cooperating in the readmission of their own citizens abroad. Many sending countries have opposite interests. For them the emigration of young adults that might otherwise be unemployed and unhappy at home is perceived as a political safety valve and as unique opportunity to generate foreign currency income by way of remittances. At the same time, local cooperation in the readmission of nationals is hugely unpopular. Reconciling these views is not an easy task, but there will be no safe, orderly and legal migration without bilateral and multilateral frameworks.

> **" There will be no safe, orderly and legal migration without bilateral and multilateral frameworks. "**

Are you pessimistic or optimistic, dystopian or utopian?

I am not pessimistic about the future, but I see many challenges, including some for which we have not even started preparing ourselves. The majority of them are largely unrelated to migration but might lead to future migration flows.

Rich pickings and missed opportunities
The future global economy, labour markets and mixed migration

Whether they move irregularly or regularly, the global economy and labour markets are critical for migrants and refugees. Once they find sanctuary from the persecution or physical insecurity they left behind at home, their top priority is generally to obtain paid work. After all, poverty and lack of opportunities are among the primary mobility drivers of those in mixed migration flows.

This essay outlines some global economic projections and explores their implications for people on the move.

Projected convergence

By 2050, global GDP will have grown by 130 percent over the figure for 2016, according to a recent study of 32 of the world's largest economies.[1] Technology-driven productivity improvements will account for much of this expansion, which will significantly surpass population growth. The study projected that the economies of seven key emerging markets (the "E7": China, India, Brazil, Mexico, Russia, Indonesia and Turkey) will on average grow twice as quickly as those of the G7 (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States). Consequently, six of the top seven economies in 2050 will be countries now classed as emerging, with the top 10 ranked thus: China, India, US, Indonesia, Brazil, Russia, Mexico, Japan, Germany and the UK. By the same year, the EU's 27 member states (potentially without the UK after Brexit) are projected to account for under 10 percent of global GDP. (A separate analysis puts the EU's share in 2019 – albeit including the UK – at 16%.)[2] Also by 2050, several other emerging economies, such as Vietnam and Turkey, are set to rapidly overtake some more established European economies.[3] The maturation of today's emerging markets will reduce their appeal as low-cost manufacturing bases but make them "more attractive as consumer and business-to-business markets."[4]

Several other forecasts offer similar pictures of rapid global economic convergence, even if their timelines and rankings vary.[5] The OECD predicts that living standards (measured by real GDP per capita) will continue to advance in all countries between now and 2060 and will gradually converge by varying degrees toward those of the most advanced countries.[6]

If certain policy reforms (such as improving governance and educational attainment to the level of the 36 OECD states) take place in the emerging economies of Brazil, Russia, India, Indonesia, China and South Africa, their living standards could get an extra boost of up to 50 percent.[7]

Snapshots of today's migrant labour markets

Migrants and refugees account for around three percent of the world's population, yet they contribute almost 10 percent of global GDP.[8] They foster "native and aggregate prosperity, especially over longer time frames."[9] When they are highly-skilled they "contribute substantially to technology innovation and research and development in destination countries – particularly high-income countries."[10] (That this cuts both ways to forge a sort of virtuous circle led one academic to offer a Swiftian solution to those determined to reduce migration: "wreck the economy".)[11]

1   PwC (2019) *The World in 2050.The long view: how will the global economic order change by 2050?*
2   Plecher, H. (2019) *European Union: share in global gross domestic product based on purchasing-power-parity from 2014 to 2024* Statistica
3   PwC op. cit.
4   Ibid.
5   For example, data visualization of Standard Chartered Bank forecast by: Desjardins, J. (2019) *Chart: The World's Largest 10 Economies in 2030* Visual Capitalist; Next Big Future (2019) *World GDP forecast for 2030*
6   Guillemette, Y. & Turner, D. (2018) *The Long View: Scenarios for the world economy to 2060* OECD
7   Ibid. See here for a list of OECD member states.
8   Woetzel, J. et al. (2016) *Global migration's impact and opportunity* McKinsey Global Institute
9   Goldin, I. et al. (2018) *Migration and the Economy - Economic Realities, Social Impacts & Political Choices* Citi GPS/Oxford Martin School. See also: Clemens, M. & Pritchett, L. (2016) *The new economic case for migration* IZA policy paper; Clemens, M. (2011) *Economics and emigration: trillion-dollar bills on the sidewalk?* Journal of Economic Perspectives
10   Gelb, S. & Krishnan, A. (2018) *Technology, migration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* ODI and Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development
11   De Haas, H. (2011) *The only way to reduce immigration is to wreck the economy* Personal blog

The following snapshots illustrate the scale and diversity of existing migrant labour.

- In the **UK**, migrants from other European Union states numbered 3.7 million in the last quarter of 2018 and 83 percent of them who were of working age (2.3 million people) were employed.[12] Food and drink production provides about a quarter of these jobs; other key sectors include: warehousing, accommodation and hospitality, construction, retail, residential and social care, professional services, and healthcare.[13]

- Generally, across **Europe**, more than half of newly arriving citizens of non-EU countries are now admitted on rights based (family reunion) and humanitarian grounds (including refugee status) or arrive in mixed migratory flows and are later granted asylum. The primary reason for their acceptance is not related to any economic agenda or planning and the result is that their integration into formal labour markets is slow and limited, "reducing the potential economic gains from migration."[14]

- In the **Gulf States**, migrant workers make up most of the population – at least 80 percent in Qatar and the UAE.[15] Most work in construction and as domestic staff, sectors in which migrant labour accounts for over 95 of the work force. Saudi Arabia absorbs millions of migrants, many of whom arrive in mixed flows through Yemen and work informally in agriculture, livestock, transport and construction. Saudi Arabia sporadically detains and expels large numbers of migrants; it did so in 2013, 2018, and 2019.[16]

- In the agriculture, fishing, and forestry sectors in the **United States** immigrants make up 46 per cent of the workforce.[17] Almost 20 percent of workers in the transportation sector, the country's largest employer, are immigrants.[18] In the top 25 sectors where migrants are most employed, there is much diversity between skilled and non- or semi-skilled workers. White-collar jobs in science, computing, engineering and architecture, healthcare, management, business, arts and media, and the legal professions have a high level of migrant participation by skilled, (and predominantly documented) migrants.[19] In 2016, more than 11 million irregular migrants (many of whom had overstayed their visas) were living, and mostly working, in the US. [20] Overall, migrants "play vital roles in the US economy, erecting American buildings, picking American apples and grapes, and taking care of American babies."[21]

- **South Africa** has a long history of migrant workers (permanent and temporary) who are well integrated into the labour markets. In some sectors, such as agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining, construction, wholesale and retail, and hospitality, up to a quarter of the workforce were foreign migrants in 2011.[22] Overall, about four percent of working-age residents were born outside the country and this cohort has a higher rate of employment than native South Africans, although their jobs are more likely to be in precarious jobs or the informal sector.[23]

- **Malaysia**'s economy relies heavily on migrant workers to perform low-skilled jobs. Approximately 30 per cent of workers in the agricultural, manufacturing, and construction sectors are migrants.[24] There are an estimated 3–4 million migrants working in Malaysia of which about a half (1.7 million) were employed with legal documentation in 2017 while the rest were irregular. If irregular migrants are included, then approximately 30 per cent of Malaysia's overall workforce are migrants.[25]

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12 Fullfact (2019) *EU immigration to the UK*
13 BBC (2018) *EU migration: Which industries employ European workers?* citing Migration Advisory Committee (2018) *EEA migration in the UK: Final report*
14 European Political Strategy Centre (2018) *Global Trends to 2030: The Future of Migration and Integration*
15 ILO (2019) *Labour Migration – Arab States*
16 See, for example: Human Rights Watch (2019) *Ethiopians Abused on Gulf Migration Route - Trafficking, Exploitation, Torture, Abusive Prison Conditions*
17 Kolko, J. (2017) *How the Jobs That Immigrants Do Are Changing* Indeed blog
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
21 Dudley, M. (2019) *These U.S. industries can't work without illegal immigrants* CBS News
22 OECD/ILO (2018) *How Immigrants Contribute to South Africa's Economy*
23 African Centre for Migration & Society (2017) *Fact sheet on foreign workers in South Africa*
24 ILO (2019) *TRIANGLE in ASEAN Quarterly Briefing Note: Malaysia*
25 Ibid.

Tomorrow's labour markets

As sectors expand and contract over the course of economic cycles, both at a national level and in terms of their share of the global economy, a given country's labour demand and its absorptive capacity of both regular and irregular migrant labour fluctuate. The International Labour Organization (ILO) predicts migration will intensify as "decent work deficits remain widespread" in countries of origin.[26] Demographic dynamics will also have "profound implications" for national and global labour markets, while "machines are unlikely to fully replace the labour of human beings any time soon".[27] Meanwhile, the projected addition of 100 million elderly people and 100 million children under the age of 14 to the world's population by 2030 is set to create millions of new job opportunities.[28] Many of these jobs will need to be filled by migrant workers due to lack of available home-sourced workers, especially for long-term care.

More than half a billion new jobs will be needed by 2030 to accommodate the world's growing labour force, even without taking into account potential increases in female and older-worker labour force participation, let alone migrants and refugees.[29] This is particularly relevant to sub-Saharan Africa, where the working-age population as a share of total population is "expected to continue to increase between 2015 and 2040, while it will stagnate in Latin America and decrease in East Asia as well as in advanced economies".[30] Even if developing economies achieve double-digit growth, analysts fear many of the growing number young people entering the labour market will be deprived of job opportunities.[31]

Migrant workers, by income level of destination/host countries, 2017
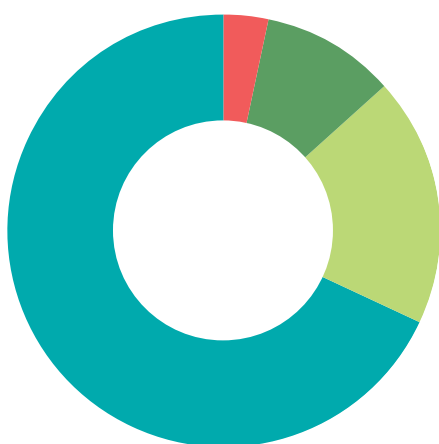
- Low-income
- Lower middle-income
- Upper middle-income
- High-income

Distribution of migrant workers, by broad subregion, 2017

- Arab States
- Central and Western Asia
- Eastern Asia
- Eastern Europe
- Latin America & the Caribbean
- Northern Africa
- Northern America
- Northern, Southern & Western Europe
- South-Eastern Asia & the Pacific
- Southern Asia
- Sub-Saharan Africa

Source: International Labour Organization ILO Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers

26 ILO (2019) *Migration is likely to intensify in the future as decent work deficits remain widespread* The "decent work deficit" refers to the absence of sufficient employment opportunities, inadequate social protection, the denial of rights at work and shortcomings in social dialogue.
27 ILO (2019) *The Future Of Labour Supply: Demographics, migration, unpaid work*
28 ILO/OECD (2019) *New job opportunities in an ageing society*
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid. See also the essay, *The 'immigration dividend' in a world of demographic turbulence* in this report
31 For example, Pompa, C. (2015) *Jobs for the Future* Overseas Development Institute; Kapoor, K. et al. (2018) *The Future of Work: Regional Perspectives* African Development Bank Group/Asian Development Bank/IDB/European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Uncertain opportunities

Global economic growth does not *guarantee* greater employment opportunities for migrants because much of it is expected to derive from the increased productivity due to automation, and it is still unclear what impact this will have on replacing work or creating new work.[32] The general expectation is that the initial waves of automation will have little effect on most of the low-skilled work currently undertaken by migrants, particularly irregular migrants.

The scale of unfilled work vacancies in some regions has been apparent for some time. In the European Union it is already significant, not only in highly-skilled occupations, but also "in medium-skilled and low-skilled occupations, including home-based personal care workers, cooks, waiters and cleaners". As the expected G7/E7 convergence occurs, and as ageing and population decline bites in the global North, these labour opportunities can be expected to increase considerably. In fact, the question may be whether the emerging economies become a more potent magnet for labour migrants, resulting in developed economies struggling to attract the labour migrants they need.

Uneven markets

In some developing countries that are points of origin for mixed migration flows, economic growth most probably won't deliver enough jobs to accommodate the rising number of citizens reaching working age. Afghanistan, for example, "is unlikely to make major progress in reducing poverty. Growth is expected to accelerate to around 3.7 percent by 2021. But with a current population growth rate of around 2.7 percent, a much faster growth rate will be required to significantly improve incomes and livelihoods for most Afghans, or provide jobs for the approximately 400,000 young Afghans entering the labour force every year."[33]

The larger job markets and better security in some developing states – such as Kenya, South Africa, Nigeria and Ghana – already create a magnetic pull for the South-to-South movement of millions of regular and irregular migrants, and many refugees. This trend is set to continue.

Climate change and other variables

These projected shifts in global economic characteristics will occur alongside, and be affected by, other megatrends that include rapid urbanisation, climate change and resource scarcity, demographic and social change, and technological innovations and disruption.

"Future forecasts vary from 25 million to 1 billion environmental migrants by 2050, moving either within their countries or across borders, on a permanent or temporary basis, with 200 million being the most widely cited estimate."[34] These kinds of movements would put significant pressure on urban centres to provide livelihoods to the displaced, or could result in significant cross-border irregular movement.

All this makes for a heady mix that impedes confident answers to pressing questions. Will climate-induced migrants be welcomed where labour demand exceeds supply, and unwelcome where wide-scale automation is shrinking job opportunities? Will they be a massive burden on cities (in the global South) where local unemployment is already high? What impact will wide-spread AI-led automation of the so-called 4th Industrial Revolution have on future societies and the labour market? What will labour markets look like once nascent sectors like biotech, robotics, autonomous vehicles and nanotechnology come to fruition? Will the effects of climate change turn out to be more, or less disruptive to global economies and societies than currently predicted?

Impact on migration

As the educational attainment and prosperity of those living in emerging and developing economies rise, the kind of work that will be increasingly shunned by native populations is likely to result in high demand for migrant labour. By the same token, emigration could become a more attractive option for new cohorts of better-educated youths whose job aspirations go unmet or insufficiently remunerated at home.

Moreover, as emerging economies evolve from being dominated by manufacturing to more consumer- and business-to-business based economies, their demand for foreign labour is likely to rise. The *demographic dividend* could be a boon for developing countries while at the same time translating into an *immigration dividend* as both skilled and non-skilled workers find themselves in higher demand abroad.[35] In countries of origin, this will increase the share of gross national income that derives from remittances. Recorded annual remittance flows to low- and middle-income countries reached $529 billion in 2018, "an increase of 9.6 percent over the previous record high of $483 billion in 2017."[36]

32 Chui, M. et al. (2016) *Where machines could replace humans—and where they can't (yet)* McKinsey Digital
33 The World Bank (2018) *Afghanistan Development Update*
34 IOM (2019) *Migration and Climate Change*
35 The UN Population Fund defines the demographic dividend as "the economic growth potential that can result from shifts in a population's age structure, mainly when the share of the working-age population is larger than the non-working-age share of the population." See also the essay, *The 'immigration dividend' in a world of demographic turbulence* in this report
36 The World Bank (2019) *Record High Remittances Sent Globally in 2018*

Refugees' right to work

Refugees' right to work is enshrined in the 1951 Convention and other international instruments, and tracks with the Sustainable Development Goals to reduce poverty and inequality.

Respecting this fundamental human right is key to preserving human dignity and is also "beneficial to the societies in which they live and, where appropriate, the societies to which they return. The majority of these people [refugees and asylum seekers] are of working age and bring knowledge, skills and training with them. Allowing and enabling them to work reduces the likelihood of them taking up informal employment or becoming dependent on State support."[37]

Such benefits are obviously enhanced in aging societies whose native workforce is diminishing. Aside from granting refugees direct access to labour markets, investing in their language skills and educational qualifications promises high returns in terms of labour market integration and fiscal benefits.[38]

Yet at the national policy level, international obligations and economic good sense are often trumped by popular opposition fanned by far-right groups, by "concerns of labor market distortion and limited capacity, decreasing jobs available to citizens, reductions in wages, and working conditions" as well as by an aversion to citizenship claims lodged by refugees who are allowed to work.[39] Consequently, "efforts to implement work rights have been limited, and many of the world's refugees, both recognized and unrecognized, are effectively barred from accessing safe and lawful employment for at least a generation."[40] A likely consequence of perpetuating such *realpolitik* is that mixed migration flows become the norm.

Female refugees often face higher hurdles to finding employment – let alone fair wages – than their male counterparts. Yet if female refugees were gainfully employed and paid the same as workers in the host population, they could add up to US$1.4 billion to global GDP.[41]

Potential game-changers

In 2016, international donors and the governments of Jordan and Lebanon agreed on a pair of "compacts" in response to the exodus of Syrians since conflict broke out in Syria in 2011. Around 660,000 Syrian refugees now live in Jordan and almost a million in Lebanon. The compacts outline infrastructure projects, employment opportunities and basic services for refugees. Despite slow progress, the agreements have been described as "game-changing – not only for the Syrian crisis, but also as a model for refugee response around the world."[42]

Other examples of this new focus on "refugee economics" are being developed in countries such as Uganda and in Ethiopia's special economic zones.[43] Some of these ventures have been problematic and disappointing but represent a new approach to thinking about refugees even though some critics see them as effectively serving the *western* agenda of keeping refugees working in developing regions – far away from the global North.[44]

Shadow worlds

Ineffective integration of migrants and refugees often stimulates secondary markets for informal labour that feed off irregular migration. The relationship between irregular migration and the informal economy is relevant to mixed migration flows because both undocumented migrants and failed asylum seekers – as well as victims of human trafficking – are often found in these un-taxed shadow economies, deprived of a wide range of rights and legal protections.[45]

37 Quote from; Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (2014) *Resolution 1994 - Refugees and the right to work*; see also: Collier, P. & Betts, A. (2017) *Refuge. Transforming a Broken Refugee System* London: Penguin Books; Arnold-Fernández, E. & Pollock, S. (2013)*Refugee's right to work* Forced Migration Review; Zetter, R. & Ruaudel, H. (2016) *Refugees' Right to Work and Access to Labor Markets – An Assessment Part II* KNOMAD; Kancs, d'A. & Leca, P. (2018) *Long-term social, economic and fiscal effects of immigration into the EU: The role of the integration policy* The World Economy
38 Bach, S. et al. (2017) *Refugee integration: a worthwhile investment* DIW Economic Bulletin
39 Zetter, R. & Ruaudel, H. (2016) *Refugees' Right to Work and Access to Labor Markets – An Assessment Part I* KNOMAD
40 Asylum Access (2014) *Global Refugee Work Rights Report 2014: Taking the Movement from Theory to Practice*
41 Kabir, R. and Klugman, J. (2019) *Rescue Works. Unlocking Refugee Women's Potential* IRC
42 Huang, C & Ash, N. (2018) *Jordan, Lebanon Compacts Should Be Improved, Not Abandoned* Refugees Deeply
43 Betts, A. et al. (2014) *Refugee Economies Rethinking Popular Assumptions* University of Oxford; Miller, S. (2018) *A New Response to the Protracted Refugee Crisis in Ethiopia - A case study of World Bank financing for refugee-hosting nations* International Rescue Committee
44 Yaghmaian, B. (2017) *How Not to Fix the Refugee Crisis – A Response to 'Refuge'* Refugee Deeply
45 Aggarwal, V. *Irregular Migration, Refugees and Informal Labour Markets in the EU: The rise of European Sweatshops?* European Institute for Asian Studies

How do host states' migration policies correlate with the real-world economic context where blind eyes are turned to cheap, agile, undeclared and unregulated workers? Increasing, regular migration may pay economic dividends but, for reasons outlined above, is often politically unpalatable.[46] This is a reality that the United States, with its continually high level of deportations and newly-accelerated processes, has accepted for decades – and Europe too, albeit more recently and to a lesser extent.[47] Such conflicting imperatives are particularly evident in Saudi Arabia, which sporadically expels millions of irregular, mostly low-skilled workers in the name of "Saudisation", despite a persistent demand for labour deemed too menial by most Saudi citizens.[48] The informal sector tends to find ways to bridge the gaps.

Conclusion

Stepping back, the current approach is as irrational as it is inefficient. The political energy and financial costs associated with keeping migrants and refugees out of countries (and their labour markets) is astronomical and increasing rapidly every year. The world's border security sector is estimated to have been worth 15 billion euros in 2015, a figure that is projected to almost double by 2022.[49] Meanwhile, irregular migrants and refugees collectively spend hundreds of millions of dollars annually on smugglers, bribes and ransom payments, transport and fake documentation, etc. At the same time, destination countries spend billions subsidising or otherwise protecting strategic sectors such as agriculture, making it difficult for businesses in origin countries to compete, resulting in fewer jobs and more migration, much of it entailing deadly perils en route.

In a more sustainable and efficient scenario, migration and asylum applications would be preferred to the prevalent irregular mixed migration, which creates so much misery for those using these channels, and so much political anxiety for destination countries. This is the vision of the 2018 Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Its aims include promoting increased regular migration channels, greater investment in training and empowering migrants and societies to realise full inclusion and social cohesion. Objective 16 urges nations to "work towards inclusive labour markets and full participation of migrant workers in the formal economy by facilitating access to decent work and employment for which they are most qualified, in accordance with local and national labour market demands and skills supply".[50]

It remains to be seen how far this non-binding agreement will stimulate effective policy reform on the ground. But it is clear that as demand – and indeed competition – for migrant labour increases with economic growth, governments and societies need to find smarter and safer migration pathways.

46 Taczos, G. (2018) *Irregular migration and migrants' informal employment: a discussion theme in international migration governance* Globalisations Journal; see also: Benton, M. & Patuzzi, L. (2018) *Jobs in 2028: How Changing Labour Markets will affect immigration integration in Europe* MPI Europe

47 Hals, T. *U.S. to ramp up rapid deportations with sweeping new rule* Reuters; Maroukis, T. et al. (2011) *Irregular Migration and Informal Economy in Southern and Central-Eastern Europe: Breaking the Vicious Cycle?* IOM

48 Domat, C. (2019) *Saudization Takes Priority*. Global Finance

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Interview

Get real

Pay less attention to the population doomsters and gloomsters, urges **Darrell Bricker**, who sees the glass as very much half-full. Human ingenuity and adaptiveness have seen us thrive as a species so far, and even the daunting power of artificial intelligence will be no match for us.
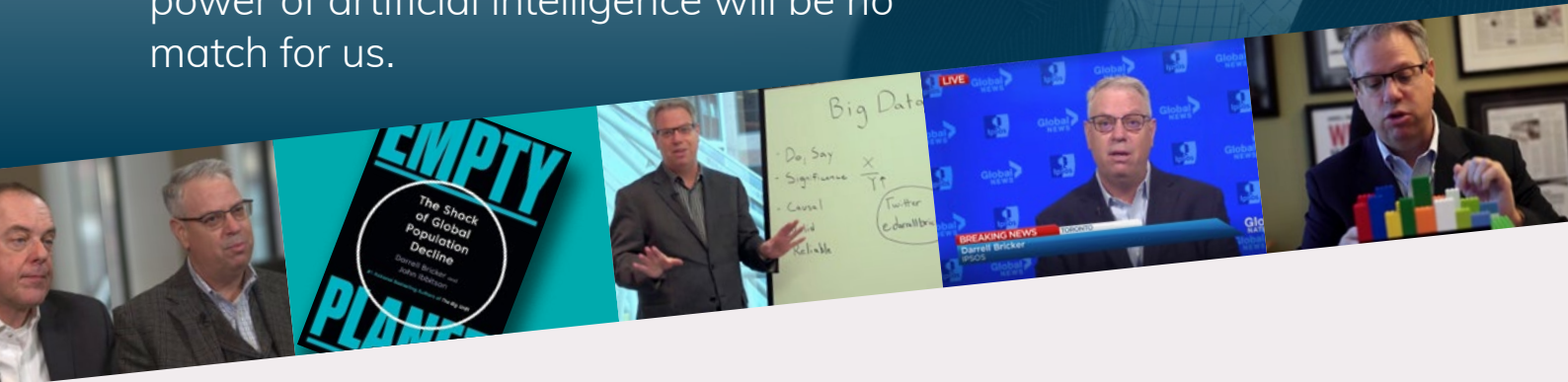
Darrell Bricker is a Canadian author and CEO of Ipsos Public Affairs, a global polling, research, marketing, and analysis company. He has published several academic articles and non-fiction books, all which became bestsellers in Canada. His sixth and most recent book, published in 2019, is Empty Planet - The Shock of Global Population Decline, *written with John Ibbitson.*

Is the big difference between the projections in *Empty Planet* and those of the United Nations simply that global population will peak earlier and at a smaller number?

Yes, that's basically what we suggest. Now, that's not based on unique estimates that John Ibbitson and I came up with; that's the growing consensus, I would say, among demographers. There's a very interesting article that came out in The Lancet magazine in November [2018] in which a whole series of demographers went and re-examined all of the data, and all of the estimates they have from just about every country are lower than what the UN has. And if you accept that what the UN says is true, which is that the biggest driver of population growth going forward is going to continue to be birth, then one has to wonder how it is that we can continue to stick with the estimate of 11.2 billion people. I don't think that there's really a reasonable debate at this stage of the game that suggests that 11.2 billion and decline after that is really realistic.

It seems that not many people are making plans for the population rise, whether it's to a peak of nine billion or 11 billion. So how does it really change anything at a policy level?

Well, what it changes, I think, is your estimates going forward of what the composition of the population is going to be and where it's going be living, and how big it's ultimately going to be. One thing I do agree with the UN on is that there's been a massive migration. The biggest migration in human history is taking place right now, and its people moving from the countryside to the city. So really the topic of what the management of humanity is going to be going forward is really more around how we're going to accommodate all of these people in cities, and how are we going to move them around, how are we going to provide for them, how are we going to be able to deal with the pressure that's going to come on everything from housing through to healthcare.

> **The biggest migration in human history is taking place right now, and its people moving from the countryside to the city.**

The other part of that is that we're not talking about a population that looks like the population today. Not only is it going to be incredibly urban, it's also going to be increasingly old and increasingly female, so it's going be a different population than the one that exist on the face of the earth today.

And the other major trend is population decline, happening at the same time as population rise?

Exactly. China, for example, is one of the biggest stories in all of this. I mean, 35%-36% of the world's population lives in two countries, China and India. I'm seeing reports in the last couple of weeks that some demographers are claiming that India has already passed China as the most populous country in the world. China, even using the UN's estimates, is going to lose 300 million people this century. Estimates that I'm seeing from the other demographers suggest it could be as high as 500 or 600 million people. That's an enormous number of people leaving the human population, and just in one country.

Your book outlines how once the declines starts it will never end. Can you describe the process you're imagining? How would it manifest itself, and why is it so unlikely to reverse or halt?

Well, because of a few reasons. The first one is that once you get stuck in what demographers call the low fertility trap, which is the idea of the sociological preference, the cultural preferences for smaller families, everybody adopts that preference. It becomes fairly universal. We did a survey in which we asked people in 25 countries, "what's the ideal number of kids in a family?" and regardless of where you go it's two. So once you get stuck in that situation of low fertility, and it is around replacement rate or slightly lower, it just steamrolls going into the future. And if the smaller family becomes the cultural reality like it is in China now today, or increasingly in places like India, then that's the population pattern that you can expect.

The other thing that happens is that the one thing that we haven't changed is the biology of creating people. So we almost universally today create human beings the old-fashioned way. But if that's the way that we continue to create human beings, while women are changing – and this really is a story about women – women are changing the way that they participate in that process. So even in developing markets now, they're getting married in many countries later, if they get married at all. They're having their first kid older than when their mother or their grandmother did, and

then they're having fewer of them. So the problem that you have with that is, when you take out the most productive years of someone's reproductive capability, so between the ages usually of about 18 and 35, well, if you're staying in school till you're 30, then you're taking a pretty big chance on whether or not you're actually going to be able to have your two. And the one thing that we haven't changed in all of humanity about reproduction other than we still do it the old-fashioned way is, when it effectively ends for women. And that's usually around the age of 45. If you condense everything in terms of human reproduction between the ages of 30 and 45, when you cut that other time out, you've already created this phenomenon that is not only cultural, but is now biological.

> **Imagine people on a spaceship aging as they move through time and space: that portion of the population that can actually create new human beings, which are women between the ages of about 18 and 45, is getting smaller and smaller.**

Imagine people on a spaceship ageing as they move through time and space, that portion of the population that can actually create new human beings, which are women between the ages of about 18 and 45, is getting smaller and smaller.

So where will it end up?

Well, as with anything, I think that at some point, there's going to be a natural stasis point, where it's going to be a reflection of the biological and cultural realities, and what that number is going to be and how small it's going to get, nobody knows.

You focus very much on the fate of humans. What about the potential environmental dividend of this reduced population and falling number of consumers on the planet?

We found one study that suggests that just the changing of the human population has a positive effect on climate change. The other thing is, it's not just the size of the human population, it's the distribution of the human population. So, if we are moving more and more to urban areas, that means things like marginal farm land, for example, all of a sudden reverts to nature.

I would expect the technology and improved farming techniques, just as they've improved things in the past, are going to continue to improve things in the future. And a lot of that marginal farmland that's still being farmed is going to revert to back to nature. So when I see David Attenborough on TV talking about the future

of the giraffe, or the future of the elephant and saying encroachment of human beings is going to be the biggest impact on that, I have to say, "Well, Sir David, maybe you should rethink that idea, because maybe there aren't as many human beings in the world as we think there's going to be, and secondly, maybe they're not going to be distributed as you're assuming they will be."

Do you have an optimum number for a sustainable human civilisation? Paul Erlich still claims it's two billion.

No, I don't have a number. The combination of millenarian/Malthusians have an incredible record of just getting it wrong. We are actually sustaining the human population today. Steven Pinker's work is quite instructive on this. All of those things that usually are markers of human progress, all of them have been improving. Everything from declining violence to declining child mortality. There are no famines in the world today that are other than those caused by humans through war or civil strife or something of that nature. Just look at longevity: I think the average person in 1960 lived to the age of around 50, they're now living into their mid-60s. In China, the average person back in 1950 lived to the age of 40 years old. Today, they're living into their late 70s and early 80s. So if things are so dire and so we're-going to-blow-up-tomorrow because of this huge weight of humanity, well, if you look at the facts, it's just not true.

> **" The combination of millenarian/ Malthusians have an incredible record of just getting it wrong. We are actually sustaining the human population today. "**

What about equity internationally? Are Africa and the Middle East going to benefit from a demographic dividend?

Well, yes, and that's the hope. To the extent that human brain power and human physical power is going to be necessary to drive the future, this puts places like Africa, if they can ever get their act together politically, in a pretty good place, but I think anybody who's bet on Africa over the space of the last few decades is still waiting for that one to pay off.

In the coming years, do you expect robots and AI to displace as many jobs as feared?

No. It always amazes me the degree to which futurists just don't get the future. Don't forget that robots don't go shopping and don't consume. They don't pay taxes either. And so, when I hear all of this stuff about AI and robotics and everything that's related to what new technology is going to be, my view is, it never survives

the way that we intended it to survive after coming into contact with human beings. The internet was developed for the defence community and for academic researchers. Nobody ever thought of Netflix. The human species is incredibly innovative, incredibly adaptive, and my personal view is we'll do just fine in the future. There's going to be adjustments that are going to have to be made. There's going to be all sorts of discussions about technology, particularly when it comes into the issue of jobs, but also things like privacy. Technology, globalization, people's sense of culture and community, a sense of privacy, personal ownership… all of these things are going to collide as we move into the future. But I'm a perpetual glass half-full kind of guy. So I think that humanity will work out a way to deal with this, but exactly how it all is going to work, I don't think it's that easy to predict.

The UN predicts the global population of sub-Saharan Africa by mid-century will be over four billion. What do you think the potential implications are?

Well, it's a young population and the assumption is that it will behave the same as previous populations. I don't know if that's right. The same phenomena that are happening in the rest of the world are happening in Africa. So there's going to be a downward pressure on their population eventually, but they do have a young population and it will continue to grow. Will it get to four billion? I really, really question that.

But potentially there will be millions of surplus young, under-trained, unemployed people particularly sub-Saharan Africa. Is this a recipe for unrest or tensions?

Yes. It's proven to be a recipe for global unrest in the past. When you have large populations of young men – and by the way, there's always more young men born than young women – it's never good news. The potential for civil strife in that situation is very high. I came across some research recently that looked at the history of countries that had a greater prevalence for war, and they were always countries that had a higher proportion of younger men over older men. So, say for example if it was 8-to-1, that would mean there'd be eight people trying to fill the job of the one person, creating a restless type of environment. We've done research in the Middle East, and if you want to know what's driving Islamic fundamentalism, it's exactly that issue.

Throw in two other countries that have a related problem right now: China and India. Because of their heavy male selection at birth and their disproportionate gender ratios, I've seen estimates of 30 to 60 million women missing from both populations. So it could be 60 to 120 million in total missing from their population. And that's a lot of men who are not going to find wives.

Eventually, aren't most countries going to become more adaptive to migrants, as Canada is, and often cited by you as a good example of multiculturalism?

It depends on what form you're talking of. I recently spoke to a Japanese demographer who said, "You know, we look with a certain amount of admiration at Dubai." He meant the idea of guest workers. So there's going to be different versions of that discussion happening all over the world. As John and I observe in our book, many countries might be too Chinese or too German or too British to contemplate the type of change that's taking place in Canada. And it's a big source of populism around the world. Populism is essentially an output of nativism. It's not really about economics. It's really about nativism culture. So when they see too much change happening around them too fast... And by too much and too fast, I'm saying their definition of too much and too fast, they strike back through the political system.

> **The absolute number of migrants is higher than it's ever been, but given the growth in the human population, the percentage of people who are going through those experiences right now is actually quite low today.**

The Sustainable Development Goals and the global compacts on migration and refugees have many aspects relating to the role of migration and increasing mobility. Do you think these provisions or aspirations are enough, or do we need a completely new vision to deal with the world's migration and refugee or displacement question?

I think there's two issues that we have to deal with. One is a calibration issue, which is really understanding the numbers that we're dealing with and the population dynamics in the source countries, because I think we need to get that right. One of the things that concerns me about the UN these days is this use of data to push political positions. On refugees and migration, they're right that the absolute number is higher than it's ever been, but the truth is, given the growth in the human population, the percentage of people who are going through those experiences right now is actually quite low. Telling people that the problem is overwhelming just overwhelms them. I think we have to put it in its proper proportion. I wish that we could have that conversation using a real clear understanding of what the data is. And the second thing is, people who are advocates for migration and refugees have got a big job to do to explain to people who these people are and why it works for them in their countries to have these people that make these moves, because the other side is doing a very good job of demonising all that.

Why aren't the advocates winning the argument?

We have to stop talking about macroeconomics and get down to the microeconomics to explain the benefits of refugees and migrants: what affects people's lives. At Ipsos, we have a survey we do in around 28 countries that we call "What worries the world?" – the most important issues facing the world today. And immigration is down near the bottom of the list of 20, and climate change is like number 50. What do people say they care about? Number one is corruption.

But the second issue is really the big problem, and that's the virtue signalling and the finger wagging and the questioning of people's morality and hearts if they have in some instances genuine concerns about how migration is changing their community. We need to engage with those people effectively rather than lecturing them and stiffening their spines. And the problem that we've got right now is that we enjoy the virtue so much, and how it makes us feel personally, that we're losing the war as a result of it.

The discussion has become so very polemical now...

Well yes, and all of these issues are now moving past the question of the real people that are going through these experiences, and they've all become symbols. It's like climate change has moved past a real serious discussion about climate and data and real solutions, into symbolism, and people manipulating symbols, and the same thing's happening with the refugee and immigration issue. The problem that the people who are advocates have is they're getting beaten roundly by the people who are on the other side of this argument, who are better at manipulating the symbols than the advocates are, for their political landscape.

How do you see the future? Are you pessimistic, optimistic, dystopian or utopian?

Incredibly optimistic, because I think that human beings have an incredible capacity to adapt. And the species that we are today is not the species that we were 50 years ago, maybe even 20 years ago. We have a tremendous ability to use knowledge and information over time to make the right decisions. This doesn't mean that there aren't problems or calamities along the way. But I think human beings have a way of adapting to the betterment of at least their species over time, and I think any way that you can measure it, it is getting better. And I absolutely reject these arguments that we're doomsday-plus-two-years or whatever, that people run around talking about. It's just preposterous.

The 'immigration dividend'
in a world of demographic turbulence

This essay explores the multiple links between demographics and human mobility, including mixed migration. Across much of the world, a demographic sea-change is underway: in many developed countries, the "demographic dividend" is being irreversibly eroded as the number of ageing societies grow and as the "baby boom" turns to a "baby bust".[1] In other regions, child mortality rates have plummeted while fertility rates remain persistently high. This discrepancy offers ample opportunity for countries to better recognize, and take fuller advantage of, the "immigration dividend" – the wide range of benefits that can accrue to states which welcome, rather than restrict, new arrivals.[2] The extent to which these opportunities will be taken, however, is far from clear.

To establish the demographic context for this exploration of mixed migration, the first part of this essay offers a summary of key issues drawn from the extensive literature on the subject.

Rising global population, for now

For the last thirty years or more, the global population has been steadily increasing by an annual average of more than 80 million people.[3] The UN predicts a rise from the current 7.6 billion to around 9.8 billion in 2050, and then a peak at just over 11.1 billion in 2100, from when it will start to level off and possibly decline.[4]

"Within 10 years, two thirds of the world's population are expected to live in countries where women will have fewer than 2.1 births on average."[5] Places with high fertility rates, such as various African and Middle Eastern countries, will continue to make massive contributions to the continued growth of the world's overall population. Increased longevity and pyramid-shaped population structures (the age distribution of a population) are also adding to the continued population increase.

Population of the world & regions, 2017, 2030, 2050 & 2100 according to the medium-variant projection

Region	Population (millions)			
	2017	2030	2050	2100
World	7,550	8,551	9,772	11,184
Africa	1,256	1,704	2,528	4,468
Asia	4,504	4,947	5,257	4,780
Europe	742	739	716	653
Latin America & The Caribbean	646	718	780	712
Northern America	361	395	435	499
Oceania	41	48	57	72

Source: UN DESA (2017). *World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision*, New York, United Nations.

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1   The United Nations Population Fund defines "demographic dividend" as the economic growth that can result from shifts in a population's age structure, mainly when the share of the working-age population is larger than the non-working-age share.
2   The term gained currency following the 2015 publication of an op-ed by historian and political speechwriter Ted Widmer: Widmer, T. (2015) *The Immigration Dividend* New York Times
3   Murray, C. et al. (2018) *Population and Fertility Collaborators Population and fertility by age and sex for 195 countries and territories, 1950–2017: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017* The Lancet
4   UNDESA (2017) *World Population Prospects*
5   Ibid.

A recent book contests the UN's trajectory forecast, predicting that the world's population will most likely peak at around only nine billion between 2040 and 2060 and that by the end of this century "we could be back to where we are right now" and that this decline will be "one of the great defining events of human history."[6] The authors' use of data has its critics, but the inevitability of eventual population decline is not in doubt, not least because global fertility rates decreased by 49 percent between 1950 and 2017, with drops recorded in all countries and territories during that period.[7]

Stark regional and country variations

Some 35 countries had decreasing populations in 2017, while 57 had population growth higher than the two percent "replacement" rate. "Country variation in population growth rates is driven to a large extent by wide variations in fertility rates and to a lesser extent by migration rates."[8]

Rapid and irreversible fertility decline

The key drivers of global fertility decline are reckoned to be here to stay. Already, fertility rates far below replacement levels have been the status quo for decades in high-income countries, despite various interventions and natalist policies.[9] Evidence suggests that government policies that encourage couples to have more children are futile.[10] The "low-fertility trap" ensures that, once having one or two children becomes the norm, it stays the norm.[11] Low fertility is closely associated with national wealth and GDP, which in turn are linked to higher outcomes for education, as well as empowerment and employment for women – and are also closely associated with urbanisation.[12]

Longevity and the age of ageing

Increased ageing precedes population decline. Inevitably, populations with a high proportion of older people will decline due to "generation turnover". Countries such as Germany and Japan have already seen a decline of

Old-age dependency ratio of G20 countries in 2015 and 2050 (projected)

Old-age dependency ratio (%)
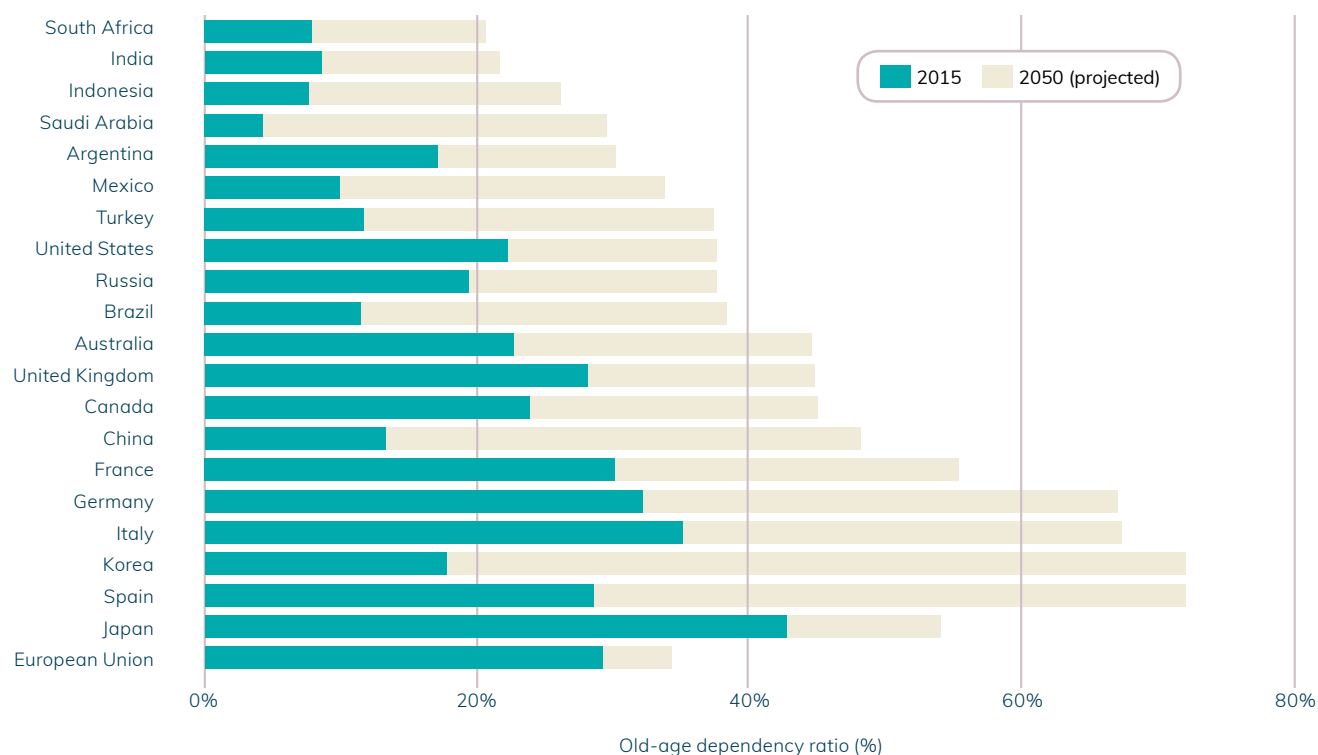
Note: The old age dependency ratio is the ratio of the 65+ population to the working age population (15 to 64).
Source: UNDESA, World Population Prospects. _2019 International Migration and Displacement Trends and Policies Report to the G20_

6 Bricker, D., & Ibbitson, J. (2019) Empty Planet: The Shock of Global Population Decline New York: Crown
7 McKeown, J. (2019) Review of _"Empty Planet: The Shock of Global Population Decline" Part 1_ Overpopulation Project; Murray, C. et al. op. cit.
8 Murray, C. et al. op. cit.
9 Natalist (=pro-birth) policies have been pursued in more than a dozen countries but their effect on fertility rates has generally been modest and it's not clear any boost is sustainable. (See Murray, C. et al. op. cit.)
10 One exception is Denmark, where government campaigns, including one titled "Do it for mum", backed by subsidies, have resulted in a rise in births since 2015. See Sims, A. (2016) _Denmark's bizarre series of sex campaigns lead to baby boom_ The Independent
11 Lutz, W., Skirbekk, V. & Testa, M. (2006) _The Low-Fertility Trap Hypothesis: Forces that May Lead to Further Postponement and Fewer Births in Europe_ Vienna Yearbook of Population Research
12 Roser, M. (2017) _Fertility Rate_ Our World in Data.

approximately 50 percent in the numbers of young adults and children.[13] As fertility declines and life expectancy rises (including due to a reduction in child mortality), the proportion of the population above a certain age rises as well, causing population ageing; this is occurring throughout the world. The current number of over-60s is double what it was in 1980 and will double again by 2050 when it is expected to reach around 2.1 billion – almost a quarter of the projected population at that time.[14]

Urbanisation as birth control

At present, approximately 55 percent of the world's population lives in urban areas, a proportion that is expected to increase to 68 per cent by 2050.[15] By 2030, the world is projected to have 43 megacities with more than 10 million inhabitants, most of them in developing regions.[16] "Urbanisation is the strongest contraceptive known to man," wrote demographer Sanjeev Sanyal in 2013. "Every known society has witnessed large declines in birth rates as it has urbanised, irrespective of cultural background."[17] Sanyal was echoing the findings of a wide variety of field studies about rural-to-urban migration in numerous countries over different periods starting in the 1930s.

Not all urbanites were born in urban centres – many migrated from rural areas, while others moved internationally but predominantly settled in host countries' cities. UN projections show that urbanisation, combined with the overall growth of the world's population, "could add another 2.5 billion people to urban areas by 2050, with close to 90% of this increase taking place in Asia and Africa".[18]

Defusing the "population bomb" and the great economic reversal

In 2015 the IMF warned that "shrinking populations pose a grave fiscal threat" and that if substantial age-related economic reforms were not implemented, the fiscal consequences would be "dire".[19] Some note that demographic trends may account for increased divergence between advanced and emerging economies over the short term, but that over the longer term they will act as a "headwind" (economic slowdown leading to economic reversal) at a net global level. Raising taxes, cutting entitlements, upping the retirement age, and boosting immigration are some potential mitigation policies but all have financial and economic implications, and risk generating "conflicting social tensions".[20]

Africans ascendant

Despite continued reduction of fertility levels in Africa, and although child mortality rates also continue to drop, rapid population growth is anticipated across the continent. After 2050, it is expected that Africa will be the only region still experiencing substantial population growth. The share of global population residing in Asia is currently estimated to be 60 percent, but it is expected to fall to around 54 percent by 2050 and then to 43 percent by 2100. By contrast, according to UN estimates, Africa's share of global population, which is projected to grow from roughly 17 percent in 2017 to around 26 percent in 2050, could reach as much as 40 percent by 2100.[21]

Even if African fertility declines faster than the UN predicts, all future scenarios show Africa playing a central role in shaping the size and distribution of the world's population over the next few decades. Before 2100, the populations of 33 African countries, most at the lower end of development rankings, are very likely to at least triple. "Among them, the populations of Angola, Burundi, Niger, Somalia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia are projected to be at least five times as large in 2100 as they are today."[22]

Given the expected high population of Africa the remainder of this essay will discuss the demographic migration nexus with special focus on the continent.

Africa's demographic dividend

Africa's demographic dividend is not guaranteed unless factors such as good governance, economic growth, infrastructure and investment are in place. What may be more likely, even if many of these factors are in place, is that large numbers of youths will be jobless or under-employed in their countries of origin. The UN warns that "the concentration of population growth in the poorest countries will make it harder for those governments to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality, combat hunger and malnutrition, expand and update education and health systems, improve the provision of basic services and ensure that no-one is left behind."[23] There are critics of such pessimistic approaches, but it is clear that many countries in Africa will continue to face significant development challenges as their populations increase in size.[24]

13 Murray, C. et al. op. cit.
14 Kotecki, P. (2018) _10 countries at risk of becoming demographic time bombs_ Business Insider
15 UN DESA (2018) _2018 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects_ United Nations
16 Ibid.
17 Sanyal, S. (2013) _The rogue demographer strikes back_ Personal blog
18 UN DESA op. cit.
19 Clements, B. et al. (2015) _The Fiscal Consequences of Shrinking Populations_ IMF
20 Clavel, L. & Page, D. (2018) _The economic impact of the impending demographic decline_ Axa Investment Managers
21 UN DESA (2018) op. cit.
22 Ibid.
23 UNDESA (2017) _World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision, Volume II: Demographic Profiles_
24 Héran, F. (2018) _How Oracles Are Forged: The prophecy of an African scramble for Europe_ Collège de France

If the fuller benefits of the demographic dividend are not harnessed domestically due to poor governance, conflict and poor infrastructure, etc. the rising population, especially of those of working age and younger, could be problematic in some countries. Dividends from immigration, then, may be the alternative as African workers become keen to meet potentially increased demand for migrant labour globally.

It is not clear whether a dividend arises from large refugee populations, unless they are allowed to work and integrate more fully, although this too can add to local tensions in resource-scarce contexts. Mixed migration could in such a scenario increase and become more desperate.

The 'immigration dividend': future impact & opportunities

The absence of a demographic dividend could translate into an "immigration dividend". In high-income countries, lower fertility and increased longevity, coupled with a decrease in the proportion of the population that is of working age, are on-going trends that are expected to continue.[25]

Meanwhile, in locations with large populations, given the world's increasing globalisation and connectivity, more and more people will learn about life in Europe, the United States and elsewhere from their networks and the media, and with even modest economic growth will have the resources to consider moving. "While most will simply move to larger cities in their own country or to other countries in Africa or the Middle East, most who are surveyed say that their first choice of destinations is Europe or the United States."[26]

Increased aspiration to migrate is therefore likely, not least because African economic prospects will improve, and evidence shows that capability to be mobile increases with national prosperity.[27] Additionally, while urbanisation may reduce population growth (thereby potentially slowing overall emigration) it is often a first step towards international mobility, as people acquire the requisite resources, networks, and aspirations in urban areas. Equally, fast-growing cities (combined with environmental factors – discussed elsewhere in this report) with larger populations of internal migrants and urban refugees could also generate problems and pressure (in terms of competition for housing, health, sanitation, and impact on crime potentially) which may prompt refugees and migrants to leave in mixed migration movements.

As the graph below illustrates, the proportion of people of working age within global migrant flows is higher than in the world's total population – and this gap is set to widen over coming decades. Such migrants are well-placed to meet the labour demand arising from the concurrent ageing and shrinking of populations in destination countries.

Working-age cohorts within migrant and total populations

Age distribution of total global population, 2017

Source: Citi Research.
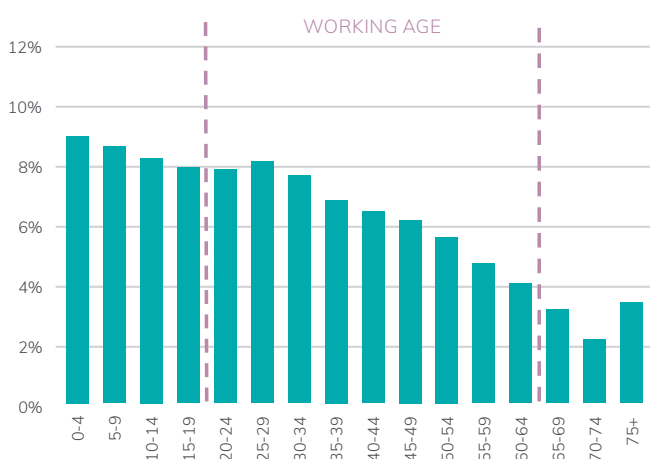
Age distribution of total global migrant population, 2017
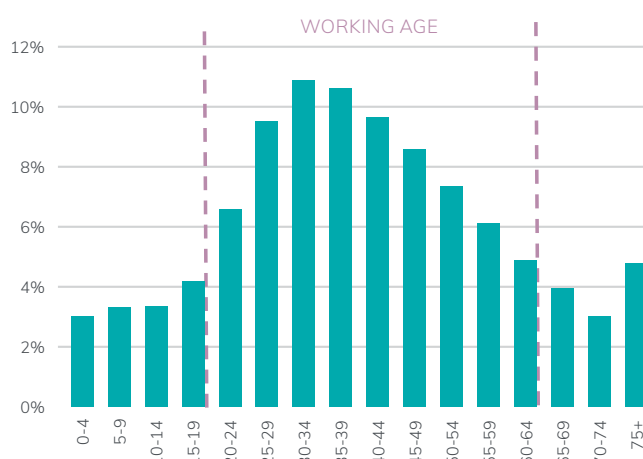
Africa's growing youth bulge has led one analyst to insist that a "scramble for Europe will become as inexorable as

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25 Murray, C. et al., op. cit.
26 Goldstone, J. (2019) *Africa 2050: Demographic Truth and Consequences* Hoover Institution
27 Clemens,M. (2014) *Does Development Reduce Migration?* IZA Discussion Paper Series.

the 'scramble for Africa' was at the end of the nineteenth century ... [with] young Africans seeking a better life on the Old Continent, the island of prosperity within their reach."[28] Europe's most prudent response to this, the analyst argued, ought to consist of "migratory policies of 'good neighbourhood' equidistant from guilt-ridden self-denial and nativist egoism."[29]

Another recent study, by the EU, pointed to similar correlations but was more cautious in its conclusions:

> "...at the moment there are no signs of an imminent exodus [from Africa] but [...] in a medium-term perspective both development and demographic factors are likely to determine an increase of migratory pressure from Africa. What is not known is if this migratory pressure will manifest itself mostly within Africa or whether it will 'spill over' in international migrations directed in particular towards Europe due to geographical proximity and existing economic and migration ties."[30]

One statistician-demographer went even further, dismissing the idea of the "scramble for Europe" as "an exercise in economic speculation and sensationalist communication, rather than a demographic demonstration." Moreover, some see its very geographic focus to be misplaced:

> "...the largest emigration flows towards rich countries tend to be from middle-sized, middle-income nations such as Mexico and Turkey, or the countries of North Africa, the Balkans or Central Asia. And above all, from countries where fertility is already falling rapidly – which is certainly not the case in sub-Saharan Africa."[31]

And despite the doubling of Africa's population since the late 1980s, monthly Mediterranean crossings were "never more than a few thousand" outside of exceptional years such as 2014-2017. "The image of millions of Africans sitting on their suitcases is not serious."[32]

Nevertheless, the failure of African governments and economies to provide jobs for their growing working-age

populations creates potentially dangerous dynamics that could exacerbate extremism, militancy, and civil conflict, which also serve as migration drivers.[33] In Tunisia, for example, high youth unemployment has resulted in a very high rate of emigration aspirations and outcomes but also the highest rate of people joining Islamic State.[34] In Mali, those aged between 18-35 dominate the ranks of the county's many armed groups, to which they are drawn due to a broad range of "deteriorating circumstances", including unemployment, governance vacuums, and widespread insecurity.[35] Similarly, in northern Cameroon, lack of development and joblessness have served as a boon for Boko Haram's recruitment of young citizens.[36]

Rapidly rising population numbers could therefore contribute, under certain conditions, to the fomenting of social unrest, resource competition, and greater conflicts resulting in yet higher numbers of refugees from Africa (and the Middle East). In the absence of durable solutions, this could result in humanitarian crises and further regional social tensions. Unless these growing populations and disproportionately large youth cohorts find work and security they are also likely to swell the numbers in mixed irregular flows – a view shared by some of those interviewed and featured in this report.

The impact of global imbalances

As we have seen, global imbalances in the short and medium term might increase demand for labour migrants in countries with declining working-age populations. Equally, the economic value of refugees might be better recognised, leading to increased resettlement and integration. However, those impatient to move, or those excluded from any new labour migration quotas or refugee resettlement schemes, are likely to continue to attempt to move irregularly in mixed flows, not least as the diasporas – who are important enablers of migration – of particular nationalities increase. Alternatively, if openness to migration and refugee integration increases significantly, there could be a spontaneous reduction in irregular mixed migration. Conversely, the policy compromise (similar to Australia's position in recent times) could be that as legal migration expands, unwanted irregular movements could face tighter restrictions almost to the point of elimination. This could entail a withering away of mixed migration, or at least push the phenomenon even further underground

28 Smith, S. (2018) *Scramble for Europe* Cambridge: Polity Books
29 Ibid.
30 European Commission (2018) *Many more to come? Migration from and within Africa* Joint Research Centre. See also: Loren, B., Landau, L., & Wanjiku Kihato, C. (2018) *The future of mobility and migration within and from Sub-Saharan Africa* European Strategy Policy Analysis System. This paper argues that "the growing number of people entering the labour force will greatly increase the number of migrants even if the percentage of people moving remains constant."
31   Héran, F. (2018) op. cit.
32 Interview with Gerald Knaus published in Horwood, C., Forin, R. & Frouws, B. (eds) (2018) *Mixed Migration Review 2018*
33 Goldstone, J. (2019) op. cit.
34 Bendermel, R. (2015) *Why are so many Tunisians joining IS?* Middle East Eye
35 Morland, A. (2018) *Why some Malians join armed groups* The New Humanitarian
36 Sixtus, M. (2018) *Development deficit feeds Boko Haram in northern Cameroon* The New Humanitarian

to more dangerous routes and circumstances for people on the move.

These imbalances will be stark, potentially offering opportunities to populations with surfeit labour. Labour force growth in sub-Saharan Africa will occur much faster and more substantially than in any other region of the world, including China and India. By 2040, based on current estimates, working-age groups will be shrinking everywhere in the world, except in sub-Saharan Africa. High fertility and falling infant mortality rates mean the additions to Africa's total population are and will continue to be overwhelmingly young people, long after rates of other regions start to decline. One of Africa's greatest comparative advantages will therefore be a surfeit of an increasingly rare global commodity: young workers.

The implications for potential migration are clear: the surfeit of young labour could be sucked up by economies with shrinking workforces, particularly if African states fail to accommodate all the young people entering the labour markets. While migration from North African countries has been relatively high, sub-Saharan Africa has so far been a modest contributor to global labour migration, and only a few countries there have played a part. Although the number of sub-Saharan Africans seeking to move to the United States and Europe has been steadily rising, the demographic predictions show the potential for substantial increase in the future.

Will global ageing favour migration?

The share of demographic dividend that is due to Africa and other populous regions will doubtless include benefits accrued from supplying a significant part of the future labour force to countries with ageing populations, particularly in sectors where robots and AI are slow to replace humans.

The ageing trend is global, and migration will play an increasingly vital role in coping with the transition to ageing societies and easing the burden on care and social security systems. If governments continue to limit regular channels for migration in a context of increased border control we can expect irregular markets to remain active, with smugglers facilitating mixed migration flows to meet demand. As countries age, "the economic

imperatives for migration may be expected to become more significant although, [...] there currently appears to be very little correlation with public attitudes; some of the countries with the lowest fertility rates in the world being among the most opposed to migration."[37]

One reason Japan is a global pioneer in developing robots designed to care for the elderly is that for every Japanese citizen over the age of 65, there are only two aged between 15 and 64: its potential support ratio of 2:1 is the lowest in the world, yet Japan remains fiercely resistant to immigrant labour that could ease the burden of elderly care.[38]

To fully offset the effect of population ageing in developed, low-fertility states, the scale of international "replacement migration" would need to be unprecedently and unfeasibly high.[39] From the point of view of destination states, such migration would at best mitigate the ageing problem and simply buy governments time (because migrants also age and benefit from increased health, etc.) to explore other policies and reforms.[40] From the migrants' point of view, because ageing will affect so many countries, increasing demand for migrant labour, migrants may find themselves in a seller's market, with multiple options. This also implies migration policies would change to allow more regular migrants and this in turn may reduce the pressure to migrate irregularly in mixed flows.[41]

The anticipated economic reversal

Another scenario (envisaged by the IMF – see above) is that population decline in the global North causes substantial economic slow-down, which, coupled with increased automation of jobs across a wide range of sectors, could reduce demand for certain labour migrants. In this scenario, the appetite to resettle and integrate greater number of refugees could also diminish, creating severe problems for refugees in terms of protection and durable solutions. The subsequent restrictions on legal pathways for migrants and refugees could significantly swell the rank of those using irregular pathways in mixed flows.

37 Goldin, I. et al (2018) *Migration and the Economy - Economic Realities, Social Impacts & Political Choices* Citi GPS: Global Perspectives & Solutions
38 Scarr, S. et al. (2019) *Going Grey* Reuters Graphics; Foster, M. (2019) *Aging Japan: Robots may have role in future of elder care* Reuters
39 UNDESA (2001) *Replacement Migration: Is It a Solution to Declining and Ageing Populations?*
40 Clements, B. et al. op. cit.
41 De Haas, H. (2017) *Much of What We Think We Know Is Wrong* Der Spiegel

Managed migration and an uncertain prognosis

As we have seen, there is a correlation between population growth and migration aspiration, but it is not necessarily direct or proportional. Additionally, greater pressure on natural resources such as land and water could lead to more displacement and/or conflict and therefore more refugees. If legal pathways are further restricted for migrants and refugees, irregular migration using smugglers would logically grow, but, again, it cannot be assumed that the correlation would be linear.

Demographic changes have "shaped the modern world" and there is no reason to believe their influence will wane in the future.[42] Dealing with population decline will be a central policy challenge for a substantial number of countries over the next few decades. One policy solution is to import replacements and regularise the irregular.

Many have argued that if future migration is controlled in an orderly manner and supplemented by investment and specific training suited to host country needs, the potential number of migrants would be manageable and desirable economically in destination countries. Such an "immigration dividend" consists not only of economic prosperity, but also national security, technological progress and cultural diversity.[43] The 59 million people who migrated to the United States over the last 50 years have profoundly and dynamically benefitted the economy and transformed its demographics, and will continue to do so up to 2065.[44] Indeed, as mentioned, there may be intense global competition for talented migrants as emerging economies outbid OECD countries to attract migrant workers, both regular or irregular. Countries that are more socio-politically averse to migrants while urgently needing their labour risk missing out on economic opportunities.

Other research suggests that regular and expanded migration could also offer a democratic dividend for departure countries, as migrants' "political remittances" of democratic ideas, knowledge, values and expectations contribute to development and stability.[45] Provisions for access to high-skilled migrant labour are already being made by most countries of the global North and this is likely to continue, contributing to "brain drain" and creating an imbalance between increasingly useful high-skilled migrants and less sought-after low-skilled would-be migrants. How will these trends affect mixed migration and what will be the future role of smugglers and opportunities for human traffickers in

such scenarios? Generally, liberal immigration policies have been effective in sustaining population numbers in the US and UK for example, among others, but such policies have been accompanied by significant social and political challenges as currently witnessed dramatically in Europe, the US and Australia.

To combat depopulation, then, "nations must embrace both immigration and multiculturalism. The first is hard. The second, for some, may prove impossible".[46] Still, demographic change seems bound to soften attitudes to migration at the national, regional and global level, setting the scene for – but not necessarily delivering – substantial population movements, including mixed flows.[47]

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42 Morland, P. (2019) The Human Tide: How Population Shaped the Modern World New York: Public Affairs
43 Widmer, T. op. cit.
44 Pew Research Centre (2015) *Modern Immigration Wave Brings 59 Million to U.S., Driving Population Growth and Change Through 2065.*
45 Rapaport, H. (2016) *A democratic dividend from emigration?* Migration Policy Centre
46 Ibbitson, J. & Bricker, D., op. cit.
47 Héran, F., op cit.

Interview

AI's rewards and risks

We may be several decades off from extremely advanced and all-pervasive multi-tasking forms of AI, but narrower types of the technology are set to spread exponentially over the next few years, says **Jonathan Ledgard**. That's good news for pretty much everyone in countries both rich and poor, except migrants and refugees.

Jonathan Ledgard is the founder of the Red Line project for droneports and is Director of the Afrotech initiative at the Ecole Polytechnique Federale in Lausanne. He is currently the Linnaeus, Visiting Professor at the Czech Technical University in Prague. He was a long-time Africa correspondent for The Economist. His second novel, Submergence, *(written as J.M. Ledgard) was a New York Times book of the year and has been adapted for the screen by Wim Wenders.*

Where are we with AI and are we close to General AI or even 'superintelligence'?

General artificial intelligence? Not in our lifetime, not in any meaningful way. But what you will see within the next five to 10 years is pervasive narrow artificial intelligence. So, thousands of narrow AIs, and we already have many of them, but within the next decade they will be very pervasive. It could be energy efficiency or cancer detection or meteorology prediction, and indeed then you end up with these merging into the sensory systems, both natural and tech-based. So, for example, smartphones become empowered, and have already started to become empowered by these narrow AIs, and the way that they see and the way that they listen becomes very different.

In the context of a migration discussion, we have to accept that facial recognition will be pervasive, even on smartphones. So the poor and the vulnerable will be tracked. Even if we don't know their names, even if we don't know where they came from, or we're not quite sure where they're going, they will have an identity, and they will be plugged into the system. AI will give us the possibility of curing diseases and the possibilities of optimising almost everything, but then also the possibilities of a police state too.

In the AI technology race, will the winner take all and cause significant disadvantage to developing economies which may not have an initial stake? Will it lead to further global inequality?

I'm more optimistic. My personal view is that the lower down you are on the spectrum, the more positive the influence of both artificial intelligence and robotics can be in your life, because you do not have access and you're not able to afford access to how markets function normally. You don't have the ability to go to a bookshop or a library and so on and so forth, you don't

> **AI will give us the possibility of curing diseases and the possibilities of optimising almost everything, but then also the possibilities of a police state too.**

have the ability to have pretty high-end healthcare. Then I think you will see that artificial intelligence can be a significant improver in quality of life in many ways, in sub-Saharan or South Asian environments.

For example, we could talk about intelligent drip-feed irrigation, which can turn a hosepipe into something quite sophisticated using simple AI or a smartphone, or we could talk about recognition of disease, early warning of cancers. Now, of course, there's no real cancer care in most African countries, but I think it's going to improve, dental care will improve, eye care will improve. In terms of the use of energy, agriculture, healthcare, also, optimisation of transport in cities, I think artificial intelligence can really be a point of play.

It's a complex and subtle subject to unpack completely in a short time, but on balance, I think it's going to be a net gain for poorer countries, not a net loss.

> **Artificial intelligence is going to be a net gain for poorer countries, not a net loss. In Rwanda, over half the blood in the country is flown by drones.**

What is your vision for and of drones in the future?

I see drones only as the first accessible scalable robots. I'm interested in drones as a robotic platform in which forms of AI can empower them. We have drone legislation in six African countries. And now in Rwanda, over half the blood in the country is flown by drones. You will see that 3%, 5% of high-value goods will go in the sky and that, especially for secondary towns, can be quite a useful addition for them and for the healthcare sector, especially, we'll probably see some improvements in the supply chain. We are now exploring with the World Bank and others whether we can actually start building droneports in the next two or three years.

What exactly is a droneport, and how do you see its role evolving?

The key rationale for a droneport is that we don't think it's credible or safe in any way to have drones just flying willy-nilly without any oversight from the government. Militaries, intelligence services and the general public

won't accept that. And therefore, the cargo drones, which will be relatively large, will be carrying small suitcase-size loads through the sky. They should be known to the government, and therefore they need a safe place to land and take off. That will be the droneport, situated right in communities, and part of community life. And that's the first stage. In order to have a scalable system, that system has to operate within some parameters. And that probably means you're going to have fixed routes in the sky.

They are not going to replace all other forms of transportation, but they just add something very cheaply and tangibly. The retail sector, the shopping sector in Africa will not be built out the way it has been built out in Europe or in the US or in Japan. There will be some high street shops, but people who want a choice of valuable goods are likely to access that choice on the internet. And because they access it on the internet, the supply chain can optimise for drone delivery, but not last-mile. Last-mile should be human, motorbike and so on. This is how droneports are currently envisaged. There's a regulatory hurdle, but the main hurdle is the battery technology.

Can you see any benefits for migrants and refugees from AI and drones? Or are they most likely going to be used to keep them out?

On this I'm much more pessimistic, unfortunately. In general, I think, for anyone who is genuinely displaced or a refugee, they're going to be deeply damaged by this technology.

As much as we can imagine a lot of positive upsides, in a civilian environment where people are on the move from where they're very vulnerable… I think politics around migration will push the militarisation and securitisation deeper into the Sahara, for example, through every bottleneck that there possibly is, and it would be very cheap and easy for governments to do that.

> **Anyone who is genuinely displaced or a refugee is going to be deeply damaged by this technology.**

There is a paradoxical element here insofar that you may not know who a particular woman on the move is, and you may not care in any way who she is, but she will be in your database very quickly, and AI is not helpful in that sense.

How do you see AI affecting demand for labour with regard to migrants and refugees?

On this, I'm a little bit more optimistic. I do think that there will be greatly increased demand for more skilled agricultural labour, and more skilled healthcare sector labour. Those are the things which AI and robotics won't get into in a meaningful way. Robots are already pushing hospital beds around in Japan, but they won't be able to lift a patient, and change the sheets, and comfort people, and so on. I can really imagine on the semi-skilled to skilled side of both the agriculture and caring industries there will continue to be quite a lot of opportunities. Where it obviously gets difficult to predict and very multi-dimensional is the issue of job displacement of middle-class jobs in wealthier industrial countries. It's going to be very combustible, and it's hard to play out all the scenarios.

What about the longer term implications of AI?

Most of my work on AI is to do with AI and perception of nature, or how AI perceives other life forms. What does artificial intelligence look like if it has no imagination

about the living world at all, or things which are living in this world which have no utility to the human economy? And I think it's deeply alarming and worrying that artificial intelligence in the moment is evolving, and the architects of AI are evolving it, without real context of being on a living planet.

Now, having said that, I definitely believe that, say

> **I'd be really surprised if Homo sapiens is around in two centuries' time. I would be really surprised if we exist in our present form. It's just simple mathematics.**

by 2060, 2070, that Homo sapiens as a species will have meshed, to some degree, with forms of artificial intelligence. Whether they subsume those forms to increase longevity, intelligence and sensory perception

or whether they merge into a new species, which is probably what I believe. I'd be really surprised if Homo sapiens is around in two centuries' time. I would be really surprised if we exist in our present form. It's just simple mathematics. The AI programs are operating 16,000 times faster than the human brain can operate. And as much as the human brain has this plasticity and this incredible breadth of mobility, that's not going to be enough. And so I think we're definitely living in really profound, historic times.

> **" The thing I learnt from living in Africa was that pessimism is a waste of energy and a waste of time. "**

How do you view the future? Are you pessimistic, optimistic, dystopian or utopian?

The thing I learnt from living in Africa was that pessimism is a waste of time. It's a waste of energy and a waste of time. I'm optimistic, I probably should be more realistic. Concerning the changing nature of Homo sapiens, I'm not particularly alarmed by that. I think there are many reasons to think this might be a more benign future as well.

> **" The lower down you are on the socio-economic spectrum, the more positive the influence of both artificial intelligence and robotics can be in your life, because you do not have access to how markets function normally. "**

Artificial intelligence and radical technical innovation
The impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution on mixed migration

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a major feature of the nascent Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), or "second machine age", which is predicted to have major impact on the way humans live, work, play and interact with each other, as well as on the environment and technology itself.[1]

This essay explores the current and possible future influence of AI on refugees, immigration and mobility.

> "We stand on the brink of a technological revolution that will fundamentally alter the way we live, work, and relate to one another. In its scale, scope, and complexity, the transformation will be unlike anything humankind has experienced before."[2]
>
> Klaus Schwab
> Founder and Executive Chairman, World Economic Forum

The Fourth Industrial Revolution and artificial intelligence

Beginning in the late 18th century, the First Industrial Revolution harnessed water and steam to bring mechanisation to manufacturing; electricity powered mass production in the Second; electronics and information technology delivered the Third through increased automation. "Now a Fourth Industrial Revolution is building on the Third, the digital revolution that has been occurring since the middle of the last century. It is characterized by a fusion of technologies that is blurring the lines between the physical, digital, and biological spheres."[3]

The 4IR is both an extension of previous revolutions and a new era in its own right, one that is "disrupting almost every industry in every country and creating massive change in a non-linear way at unprecedented speed."[4] This is the future environment in which the causes and conditions of and responses to mixed migration will take place.

AI encompasses computerised processes that mimic human intelligence, such as image recognition, translation, and decision-making. Impressive progress has been made in AI in recent years thanks to the exponential growth of computing power and the generation and availability of ever-increasing amounts of data, driven by the subfield of machine learning.[5]

According to one estimate, AI is expected to add $15.7 trillion to the global economy and to boost local economies by 26 percent by 2030.[6] But, as we shall see, the benefits will not be evenly spread across the world.

AI anxiety
The accelerating pace of AI development is generating a high degree of anxiety and excitement. While AI already outperforms humans in a limited range of activities, before long it is expected to do better than us in almost all cognitive tasks. Debates about the threats of "super-intelligent" forms of AI, the advancement towards killer robots, or even sexbots, have received wide coverage.[7] Many are wary of the dangers of AI: avowed futurist entrepreneur Elon Musk described it as having the potential to be an "immortal dictator from which we

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1   Brynjolfsson, E. & McAfee, A. (2014) *The Second Machine Age: Work, Progress, and Prosperity in a Time of Brilliant Technologies* New York: W. W. Norton & Company
2   Schwab, K. (2016) *The Fourth Industrial Revolution: what it means, how to respond* World Economic Forum
3   Ibid.
4   Marr, B. (2018) *The Fourth Industrial Revolution Is Here - Are You Ready?* Forbes
5   *Machine learning* is an AI application that enables systems to automatically learn and improve from experience without being explicitly programmed. Machine learning focuses on the development of computer programs that can access data and use it learn for themselves.
6   PwC (2019) *Sizing the prize PwC's Global Artificial Intelligence Study: Exploiting the AI Revolution What's the real value of AI for your business and how can you capitalise?*
7   See, for example: Chivers, T. (2014) *Superintelligence by Nick Bostrom, review: 'a hard read'* The Telegraph; Human Rights Watch (2018) *Heed the Call, A Moral and Legal Imperative to Ban Killer Robots*; Wagner, C. (2018) *Sexbots: The Ethical Ramifications of Social Robotics' Dark Side* AI Matters; Future of Life Institute (2019) *Benefits & Risks Of Artificial Intelligence*

can never escape."[8] The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and others are already warning of the potential human rights risks of AI.[9]

Whatever the verdict, AI is already widely in use every day and has become so ubiquitous that we barely notice its presence and spread, from voice-activated computer characters such as Siri (Apple) and Alexa (Amazon), through driverless cars, drones and weapons systems, to software used to discover new drugs, and algorithms that predict our cultural interests and home heating requirements. Machine learning is already overtaking humans in predicting deaths and heart attacks.[10] This is just the start, we are assured, and already AI is having some initial application in relation to mixed migration, and to refugees in particular.

AI applications

Refugees and asylum seekers

Just as the number of displaced people is at a historic high (more than 70 million as of June 2019[11]), so is the level of technology that can help refugees and displaced people increase their opportunities and quality of life. AI is poised to change the ways the world engages with refugees (and vice versa) at a time when durable solutions are scarce and problematic. Of course, the critical political issues of burden sharing, support and resettlement are not solved by technology alone, but an increasing number of applications have already been developed to assist refugees and migrants, some of which explicitly use machine learning and AI.[12] Here is a selection:

- **Free robot lawyers and information providers**
  DoNotPay is a UK-based chatbot initiative that provides free legal advice to refugees through intelligent algorithms and offers customized legal help, including guidance through the UK asylum application process.[13] **Refugee Text** taps into mobile networks to provide crucial information to refugees via automated SMS messages.[14]

- **Matching refugees with jobs**
  Stanford University's Immigration Policy Lab has developed a machine learning algorithm to help governments and resettlement agencies find the best places for refugees to relocate to in terms of matching their skills, education, language levels, etc. Switzerland pioneered the use of this algorithm in late 2018.[15] The algorithm is predicted to increase employment of refugees by between 40 and 70 percent.[16]

- **Optimising integration**
  Using machine learning, optimization algorithms and complex computation of data to improve refugee integration, an award-winning initiative named **Annie MOORE** (Matching Outcome Optimization for Refugee Empowerment) matches refugees to communities where they will find resources appropriate to their needs and preferences, including employment opportunities.[17] **Rafiqi** is an interactive online AI tool that connects refugees to mentors and opportunities, also with the goal of accelerating and easing integration. It has been available to a group of refugees in London and Berlin since 2018 and the company is planning to extend around Europe.[18]

- **Psychological support**
  Many refugee camps have limited or no mental health services even though refugees are at a higher risk of mental health disorders, including post-traumatic stress, depression, and psychosis.[19] Responding to this need, Silicon Valley start-up X2AI, developed Karim, an intelligent chatbot that has personalized text message conversations for emotional support in Arabic, one of the most commonly-spoken languages among refugees.[20]

- **Machine learning and remote sensing data**
  Conducting on-the-ground surveys of settlements including structures, can be labour-intensive, time-consuming, costly and dangerous. A 2018 review of refugee and IDP settlement mapping indicated that machine learning autocoding technologies may offer important help to humanitarian organisations.[21] Although these efforts are still ongoing, the use

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8   Browne, R. (2018) *Elon Musk warns A.I. could create an 'immortal dictator from which we can never escape'* CNBC
9   European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2019) *Artificial Intelligence, Big Data and Fundamental Rights*; Cullen, D. (2018) *Why Artificial Intelligence is Already a Human Rights Issue* Oxford Human Rights Hub
10 European Society of Cardiology (2019) *Machine learning overtakes humans in predicting early death or heart attack* Science Daily
11 UNHCR (2019) *Trends at a Glance, 2018 in review*
12 Butcher, M. (2018) *Here are 25 of the most innovative new projects using tech to help refugees and NGOs* Tech Crunch
13 For details of DoNotPay, see *here*
14 For details of Refugee Text, see *here*
15 Immigration Policy Lab (2018) *Switzerland Launches Program to Test IPL Algorithm for Refugee Integration*
16 Bansak, K. et al (2018) *Improving refugee integration through data-driven algorithmic assignment* Science
17 University of Oxford (2018) *Using AI to improve refugee integration*
18 Ibrahim, G. (2018) *Introducing Rafiqi 2.0: How artificial intelligence can be key to refugee integration?* Blog published on Medium. The tool itself can be found *here*
19 WHO (2017) *Migrant populations, including children, at higher risk of mental health disorders*
20 Romeo, N. (2016) *The Chatbot Will See You Now* The New Yorker
21 Quinn, J. et al (2018) *Humanitarian Applications of Machine Learning with Remote Sensing Data: Review and Case Study in Refugee Settlement Mapping* Philosophical Transactions of The Royal Society A Mathematical Physical and Engineering Sciences

of machine learning and remote sensing data, including satellite high-resolution imagery, promises to improve efficiency.

- **Tracking flows**
  Big data and data science are used to track the flows of refugees and displaced people. In mid-2017 the United Nations announced that the Data For Democracy team had won the Unite Ideas Internal Displacement Event Tagging and Extraction Clustering Tool challenge, by "building a tool capable of tracking and analysing refugees and other people forced to flee from or evacuate their homes."[22] The **IBM Watson News Explorer** searches the web continually to isolate all news articles relating to refugees.[23]

  UN Global Pulse, through its lab in Kampala, has been working with the UN and the government on a **Radio Content Analysis Tool** to "explore how insights from public talk radio can provide real-time information on what is happening on the ground".[24]

- **Machine learning and potential bias in asylum adjudications**
  In a recently multi-country study, researchers used machine learning to analyse almost half a million asylum hearings in 336 locations, rendered by 441 judges between 1981 and 2013.[25] They developed a predictive model based on case data that proved to be 82 percent accurate in refugee cases when tested against actual judicial outcomes. They found that "extraneous factors" may be influencing decisions resulting in potentially "unfair" decisions or at least showed that adjudications were subject to bias.

- **Paying refugees to boost AI development**
  REFUNITE, a nonprofit set up to help refugees reconnect with their families, has developed a mobile phone app called **LevelApp**, which allows refugees to earn money by "training" algorithms for AI and gaining a foothold in the "global gig economy" while helping AI companies dramatically reduce costs.[26] The 5,000 refugees in Uganda involved in the pilot

programme are mainly from South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. REFUNITE hopes to increase involvement to 25,000 refugees by 2020.

Migrants and immigration

In relation to migrants and immigration the three main areas of AI being piloted are processing, prediction and prevention. Compared to the above list of examples of refugee-oriented AI innovations, those relating to migration are arguable more controversial insofar as processing, prediction and prevention are closely associated with control and the potential preparation of restrictions.

Processing migration

For over a decade, Hong Kong's Immigration Department has been using **eBrains**, an award-winning AI technology that uses "business rules, data mining, machine learning [and] AI clustering" to process visa applications.[27] AI technology provides "decision support" for millions of annual visa applications.

According to a report released in late 2018, the Canadian federal ministry responsible for immigration has been experimenting with AI since at least 2014.[28] The ministry argues that the system is primarily used by immigration officers as a sorting mechanism to quickly separate complex visitor visa applications from standard ones. However, some human rights experts have concerns about how AI will change the immigration system, and about what it will mean if computers ultimately make some decisions autonomously.[29] Some argue that the nuanced and complex nature of many refugee and immigration claims mean they are ill-suited to "technological experiments" and time-saving automation. "These systems will have life-and-death ramifications for ordinary people, many of whom are fleeing for their lives."[30] This report's analysis echoes global human rights concerns when it states "...immigration and refugee law [are] a high-risk laboratory for experiments in automated decision-making."[31]

22 Bedford, S. (2018) *Tracking the Flow of Refugees Using Data Science* Data for Democracy; find out more about the tool *here*
23 *IBM Watson News explorer*
24 Quinn, J. & Hidalgo-Sanchis, P. (2017) *Using Machine Learning To Analyse Radio Content In Uganda* Global Pulse/Pulse Lab Kampala
25 Chen, D. & Eagel, J. (2018) *Can Machine Learning Help Predict the Outcome of Asylum Adjudications?* Proceedings of the Association for Computing Machinery Conference on AI and the Law
26 Batha, E. (2018) *Mobile app pays refugees to boost artificial intelligence* Reuters
27 Chun, A. (undated) *AI Success Stories ImmD: Decision Support* City University of Hong Kong; see also: Chun, H. (2017) Using AI for e-Government Automatic Assessment of Immigration Application Forms Proceedings of the 19th Conference on Innovative Applications of Artificial Intelligence, Vancouver
28 Molnar, P. & Gill, L. (2018) *Bots at the Gate: A Human Rights Analysis of Automated Decision-Making in Canada's Immigration and Refugee System* The Citizen Lab/University of Toronto Faculty of Law
29 CBC (2018) *How artificial intelligence could change Canada's immigration and refugee system*
30 Molnar, P. & Gill, L. op. cit.
31 Ibid.

Predicting migration

Migration forecasting is "notoriously difficult and unreliable".[32] Despite more sophisticated techniques, more reliable data and the contemporary use of big data and machine learning, there is little evidence we are significantly closer to finding methods of prediction more reliable than those E.G. Ravenstein attempted in the late 1880s.[33]

A recent comparative analysis of international migration in population projections developed by the **Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development** (KNOMAD), highlights some consensus, but also a "considerable amount of disagreement about the size and direction of actual migration flows between major sending and receiving countries. Basic assumptions about future flows also significantly diverge." [34]

Traditional human mobility models, such as gravity and radiation models, offer some predictive capacity based on population and distance features. What is needed for predictive capacities to be useful and more reliable is a model that captures more complicated migration dynamics. Although successful machine learning models that incorporate a variety of exogenous features to predict origin/destination migration flows remain elusive, some data scientists are currently attempting exactly that.[35] Some experts claim that their "machine learning models outperform traditional human mobility models on a variety of evaluation metrics..." [36] The aim is to model human migration under different what-if conditions, such as "potential sea level rise or population growth scenarios".[37]

Some experts are more optimistic about the powers of predictive analysis to forecast humanitarian crises as well as about how AI can be used to "predict Africa's next migrant crisis".[38] Additionally, some NGOs are working with data scientists and the private sector to attempt predictive programmes for mixed migration and internal displacement, but to date AI's use in this area is limited and successful implementation continues to elude modellers.[39]

Preventing irregular migration

There is evidence of a growing capacity to use AI in border control and border management as part of an expanding security market that in Europe alone is predicted to be worth $146bn by 2020.[40]

In October 2018, the European Union announced it was funding a new automated border control system to be piloted in Hungary, Greece and Latvia.[41] The system, called **iBorderCtrl**, uses "smart lie-detecting avitars" to question travellers seeking to cross borders.

ROBORDER, a consortium of research institutions, law enforcement agencies and tech firms, is already testing its systems. According to its own publicity ROBORDER "aims at developing and demonstrating a fully-functional autonomous border surveillance system with unmanned mobile robots including aerial, water surface, underwater and ground vehicles which will incorporate multimodal sensors as part of an interoperable network."[42] Its intention is to implement a "heterogenous robot system" and enhance it with detection capabilities for early identification of criminal activities at border and coastal areas."

Concerns have been raised over the emergence of such "techno-solutionism in border monitoring systems" and the potential for further human rights violations as "swarms of robots" patrol the EU's land, air and sea borders and as promotors of such methods conflate security and terrorist threats with irregular migration.[43]

One futurist has proposed replacing border controls and an expensive and inefficient wall between Mexico and the US (estimated cost: $25 billion) with thousands of drones for a fraction of the cost. These drones would monitor the borders day and night, "with loud bilingual speakers to talk to illegal immigrants trying to cross into America, and they can also have facial recognition software to see if immigrants are on criminal lists."[44] This proposal goes further than border controls, advocating for "very authoritarian measures such as tracking refugees and

32 Bijak, J. (2016) _Migration forecasting: Beyond the limits of uncertainty_ IOM (GMDAC)
33 Migration Data Portal (2018) _Big Data, Migration and Human Mobility_. In 2018, IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC) and the European Commission Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography (KCMD) launched the _Big Data for Migration Alliance_ (BD4M); Corbett, J (2003) _Ernest George Ravenstein, The Laws of Migration, 1885_ CSISS Classics
34 Buettner, T. & Muenz, R. (2016) _Comparative Analysis of International Migration in Population Projections_ KNOMAD
35 Fecht, S. (2018) _Where will future migrants come from?_ Earth Institute/Columbia University
36 Robinson, C. & Dilkina, B. (2017) _A Machine Learning Approach to Modelling Human Migration_. Cornell University
37 Ibid.
38 Nyoni, B. (2017) _How artificial intelligence can be used to predict Africa's next migration crisis_ UNHCR Innovation Centre.
39 For example, since 2017/2018 the _Danish Refugee Council (DRC) has been working with IBM using machine learning to trial a predictive model for mixed migration_. Save the Children International and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre have been working towards other predictive models also related to displacement and mobility.
40 European Commission (2018) _Smart lie-detection system to tighten EU's busy borders_
41 Ibid.
42 The ROBORDER website can be found _here_
43 Begault, L. (2019) _Automated technologies at EU borders and the future of Fortress Europe | View_. Euronews.
44 Istvan, Z. (2016) _How Technology Could Facilitate and then Destroy Legal Immigration_ Vice

migrants (particularly those from the Middle East) for years after they entered the country and until they have proven not to be a danger to society."[45]

There is little doubt that AI and robotics will become integral to future security systems and therefore to border control and preventing irregular migration, not least because technology can significantly enhance current systems that struggle to deal with large numbers of people crossing multiple borders and lengthy distances, frequently in remote or harsh areas. As other essays in this Mixed Migration Review explain, the likely impact of demographic changes and environmental stressors amongst other future changes will lead the number of migrants and refugees in the world to increase significantly. With asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, travelling together in mixed irregular flows, often in vulnerable situations, this raises serious.

'Creative destruction'

Creative destruction is an oxymoronic term introduced to economic theory in 1942 by the Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter. He used it to describe the special form of economic growth that entrepreneurs bring to the capitalist system through radical innovations.

Despite the destruction of older industries and economies, the real force that has sustained long-term economic growth recently has, wrote Schumpeter, been the "perennial gale of creative destruction" powered by the technical innovation and industrial mutation that continuously revolutionise the economic structure from within, "incessantly destroying the old one, incessantly creating a new one".[46] The 4IR is one such transformation that many believe will affect all aspects of society and will bring about the innovation of entire systems. "The business models of each and every industry will be restructured" and with it the impact on all aspects of the labour market.[47]

Refugees and migrants are likely to be among the demographic groups most affected by this anticipated global disruption of skills and jobs, not only in terms of their prospects of finding employment in destination countries but also in terms of root causes and drivers of conflicts, displacement, and mobility in the first place.

Exacerbating inequalities

According to World Economic Forum Executive Chairman Klaus Schwab, "In addition to being a key economic concern, inequality represents the greatest societal concern associated with the Fourth Industrial Revolution."[48] Such speculation is perhaps hazardous as no one can be sure how these seismic transformations will unfold in the coming decades. Meanwhile, the debate rages on.

Societies and economies have adapted well to earlier technological innovations and pessimistic predictions have sometimes proven to be exaggerated. However, what many analysts coalesce around is the notion that any economic disruption will favour early adaptors and innovators, meaning those already investing in the 4IR – those providing the intellect and physical capital – will be the initial winners as they concentrate and accumulate technical advances and therefore economic power.[49] One source estimates that by 2025 global annual revenues from the AI software market alone will be worth $118.6 billion.[50]

Of course, if early adaptors or AI businesses are based in less-developed countries, global inequalities may actually decline. Further, innovative producers do tend to get wealthy but they also pass cost-savings on to consumers, who as a whole benefit quantitatively far more, and far more equitably too: when cheaper goods are made we all have access to them as prices fall, as they do over time for new technology. Televisions, personal computers and mobile phones are cases in point. It has been argued that as global productivity rises rapidly, so will wages.[51]

The future of work

The nature of AI's future impact on the labour market is the subject of particularly fierce debate, and while previous technical revolutions have, after challenging transition years, led to the creation of new kinds of jobs, there is no guarantee, or consensus, that such history will repeat itself.

Optimists speak of AI creating millions more jobs than it will eliminate, or of eliminating just a small fraction of current jobs in the world's wealthiest countries: "there are not a fixed number of jobs that automation steals one by one, resulting in progressively more unemployment. There are as many jobs in the world as there are buyers and sellers of labor."[52]

45   Hanke, P. (2017) *Artificial Intelligence and Big Data – An Uncharted Territory for Migration Studies?* National Center for Competence in Research
46   Schumpeter, J. (1942) Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy Routledge, London.
47   Schwab, K. (2018) *Will the Fourth Industrial Revolution have a human heart?* World Economic Forum
48   Schwab, K. (2016) op. cit.
49   Marr, B. (2018) op. cit.
50   Statistica (2018) *Revenues from the artificial intelligence (AI) software market worldwide from 2018 to 2025 (in billion U.S. dollars)*
51   Worstall, T. (2017) *Getting Capitalism Wrong - AI Will Reduce Economic Inequality, Not Increase It* Forbes
52   Reese, B. (2019) *AI Will Create Millions More Jobs Than It Will Destroy. Here's How* SingularityHub; Arntz, M., Gregory, T., & Zierahn, U. (2016) *The risk of automation for jobs in OECD countries: A comparative analysis* OECD

Some pessimists, on the other hand, predict computerisation puts almost half of current US employment at risk.[53] Others have warned of a similar impact in Europe.[54] Even the human medical profession is said to be susceptible to large-scale obsolescence.[55]

It's still not clear how the current changes will affect job availability for migrants. What is safe to say is that the rewards of the second machine age will be predominantly reaped by the small minority of people and companies that own the machines, and who are unlikely to be located in or benefit countries where mixed flows of migrants and refugees originate. A transition period may be problematic, but in the longer term the impact of technology on migration could equally be positive, rather than negative.

Labour market polarisation and the Global South

As automation replaces human labour across entire national economies, thereby impacting the international economy, the net displacement of workers by machines might exacerbate the gap between returns to capital and returns to labour.[56] Schwab and others see an increasing segregation, or polarisation, of the job market into low-skill/low-pay and high-skill/high-pay sectors, and a deeper "hollowing out" of middle-income jobs.[57]

Winners and losers

In a more winner-takes-all economic system at national and international levels there are strong possibilities that social tensions will increase as the divergence between 4IR winners and losers becomes starker. Countries in the Global South therefore risk being left behind in the 4IR and their inability to be ready to take up AI in time. "Not only will they not reap the potential benefits of AI, but there is also the danger that unequal implementation widens global inequalities."[58]

In countries where the price of labour is very low and education outcomes are also low the uptake of AI will most likely be slowest.[59] The Government Artificial Intelligence Readiness Index illustrates that many refugee and migrant countries of origin are ill-equipped to make changes towards AI. [60] For example, Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo are all countries that produce both migrants and refugees, are at the very bottom (last 10) of the index, and also in the lowest decile of most human development rankings. By contrast the most preferred countries of destination for migrants and refugees are those with the highest AI readiness ranking.[61]

Nevertheless, the economies of Asia and, increasingly, those of several African states, have shown a fast uptake of and adaptation to technology, often leapfrogging regions in advanced economies. Given good levels of education, investment and vision, it is by no means pre-determined that the Global South will be left behind.[62]

Driven harder to uncertain futures

Still, at regional and global levels these divisions could create yet stronger drivers (unemployment, stagnant economies, poor governance and conflicts – all interlinked) for people in countries of mixed migration origin to move to where they believe they will have better opportunities. But will there be jobs, and will they be accepted or given access?

Many jobs taken up by refugees and migrants in destination countries are low-skilled ones, such as transportation (particularly taxi and delivery drivers) which may be increasingly automated in the future, with the proliferation of driverless trucks, public transport services and cars, and drones.

However, lower-skilled jobs such a domestic workers, and jobs in the hospitality industry as well as the care and health sectors, absorb many refugees and migrants globally, and will continue to be needed and are more resistant to AI substitution.[63]

Room at the top

AI also has applications in a variety of highly educated, well-paid, and predominantly urban industries, including medicine, finance, and information technology.[64] When studies suggest AI could create millions of new jobs, it may be assumed that the majority of these will be high-skilled or specialist positions, especially in the longer term.[65] At one level this means talent, skills and education will have a high premium in tomorrow's workplace, and where migrant workers are needed, only the high-skilled

53 Frey, C. & Osborne, M. (2013) *Future of Employment: How susceptible are jobs to computerisation*? Oxford University; see also: Daugherty, P. & Wilson, J. (2018) *Human + Machine: Reimagining Work in the Age of AI* Harvard Business Review Press
54 Bowles J (2014) *The computerisation of European jobs* Bruegel
55 Khosla, V. (2012) *Do We Need Doctors or Algorithms?* Tech Crunch
56   Brynjolfsson, E. & McAfee, A. op. cit.
57 Schwab, K. (2016) op. cit. See also: Frey, C. & Osborne, M. (2013) op. cit. and West, D. (2018) *Brookings survey finds worries over AI impact on jobs and personal privacy, concern U.S. will fall behind China* Brookings
58 Oxford Insights (2019) *Government Artificial Intelligence Readiness Index 2019*.
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
62 Kemboi, L. (2019) *Kenya to establish a university at the Konza technology city* Construction Review Online
63 Owen, J. (2015) *Migrant Workers could solve UK's crippling shortage of care workers, report says* The Telegraph
64 Morgan, R. et al. (2019) *Toward understanding the impact of artificial intelligence on labor* Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America
65 Chowdhry, A. (2019) *Artificial Intelligence To Create 58 Million New Jobs By 2022, Says Report* World Economic Forum

will gain access. This trend is already happening, with various OECD countries only selecting high-skilled and specialised migrants.

Most governments "either seek to raise (44 percent) or maintain (41 percent) current levels of immigration of highly skilled workers", while only four percent of governments have implemented policies to reduce the inflow of highly skilled workers into their country.[66] The share of governments with immigration policies focussed on highly-skilled workers doubled from 22 percent in 2005 to 44 percent in 2015.[67] Furthermore, between 2005 and 2015, policies to encourage immigration of highly skilled workers increased across nearly all regions.[68]

Impact on flows

Irregular mixed flows of refugees and migrants comprise many unskilled and partially skilled workers but few highly skilled workers. Immigration policies of destination countries tend to discriminate against low-skilled workers, despite economic demand for them (albeit in the grey economy). This disconnect is likely to boost irregular migration, as it already has for many years in Saudi Arabia for Ethiopians who are deported en mass on a regular basis but repeatedly return irregularly to fill hundreds of thousands of low skilled positions.

Regular pathways, meanwhile, may end up being almost entirely blocked by the effects of AI: "Labour migration, with the exception of certain very highly skilled professions, could soon be a thing of the past. Sooner or later we might face the situation that humans will be subject to immigration laws, whereas non-human systems able to perform the same tasks as humans will only be subject to certain product certification requirements, but not to migration restrictions."[69]

Will universal basic income close borders further?

Direr – some would say more realistic – predictions of AI's impact on work often lead to discussions, in the Global North at least, of how to deal with large numbers of jobless citizens and the need for a universal basic income (UBI) to prevent poverty and increase equality.

If wealth gaps between countries continue to widen, UBI might attract irregular migration and, in turn, incentivise greater restrictions in destination states ever more suspicious that outsiders are relocating simply for their social welfare benefits.[70] However, several studies show that the welfare state is not a major pull factor in migration determination. The results of one "reveal no evidence for a magnet effect to the most generous welfare states in the

world net of other recognized factors, and even suggest a negative influence linked to the region's high cost of living."[71] In any case, it would be very easy for states to exclude recently arrived migrants from UBI schemes, or to have a graduated system depending on duration of presence in the country, accumulation of taxes paid, etc. Similar systems already exist in relation to social benefits in some countries.

Conclusion

Inevitably, mixed migration will be affected in different ways by the radical innovations brought about by 4IR. While some changes may benefit migrants and refugees, others might not. To date, it is hard to see any balance between the advantages and disadvantages; instead, as global and regional inequalities widen, marginalised and vulnerable groups will come under increasing pressure. In turn, growing demand for irregular mobility is likely to occur in a context of diminishing opportunities and more restrictive borders – many of which may be protected by AI technology.

66   UNDESA (2017) *International Migration Policies: Data Booklet*
67   Ibid.
68   Ibid.
69   Hanke, P. (2017) op. cit.
70   Ibid.
71   Ponce, A. (2018) *Is Welfare a Magnet for Migration? Examining Universal Welfare Institutions and Migration Flows* Social Forces

Interview

Brace yourselves

Within a decade, machines are likely to be well over 100 times faster than they are today, and a million times faster 30 years from now, knocking humans off our most-intelligent-species pedestal and rendering half of us unemployable, predicts **Calum Chace**. The long term outcome could be either utopia, or extinction. In the meantime, artificial intelligence (AI) might well lead to less migration.
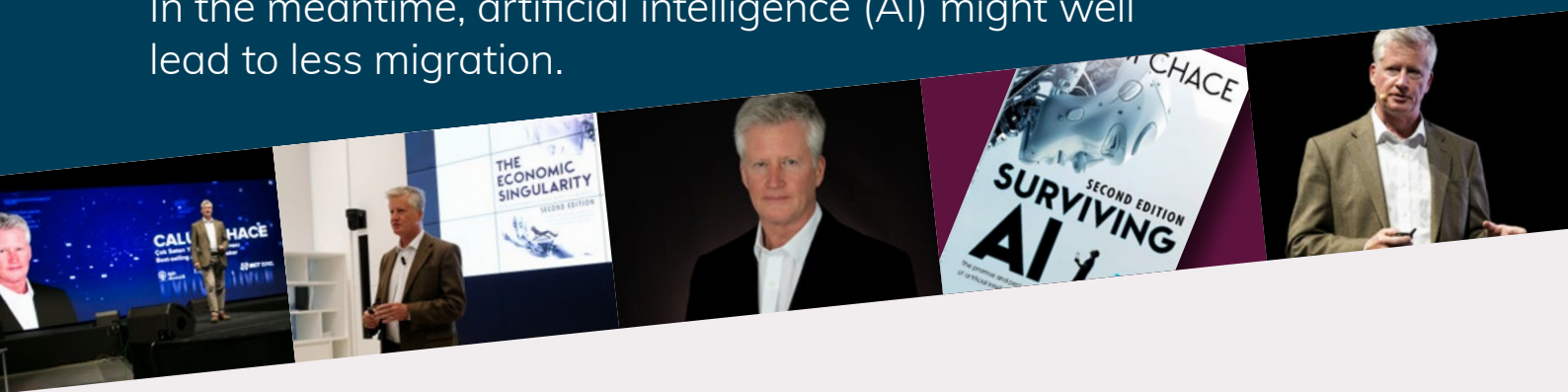
Calum Chace is an English writer and speaker focusing on the likely future impact of AI on people and societies. He became a full-time writer in 2012, after a 30-year career in business. He has published five books on artificial intelligence, including Surviving AI, The Economic Singularity, *and the philosophical science fiction novel* Pandora's Brain. *He is co-founder of the Economic Singularity Club, which in January 2019 published* Stories from 2045, *a collection of short stories by some of its members speculating on what the world might look like in 2045.*

What will AI look like? Is it going to be ethereal? Ubiquitous? Where will it be situated?

The short answer is, yes, it will be ethereal. It will mostly be inside computers: it's software. If software is eating the world, now AI is eating software.

Artificial intelligence mostly lives inside computers, and because you need vast computer power to develop or to deploy cutting-edge AI, those computers are usually in huge server banks somewhere with a lot of cheap power available, and somewhere cold as well because they get very hot. Advanced robots should be thought of as kind of the arms and legs and the eyes and ears of AI.

It is said that when "superintelligence" is developed, it will take off with exponential growth, doubling its capacity in shorter and shorter times. If and when

this happens, will *all* the computers at that level you're talking about be doing that at the same time, or will there be a monopoly somewhere?

We don't know, but it's important to realise that the exponential improvement in the power of computers is already happening. It's been going on for a long time and it will continue for a long time. It's very likely that we will develop machines which are as smart as we are, which have all the cognitive abilities of an adult human. Human-equivalent intelligence is called AGI, artificial general intelligence. Because machines can be improved, doubling their speed every 18 months, then they will go on to become superintelligent, and we will become the second smartest species on the planet, which is an uncomfortable position currently held by chimpanzees, who have the good fortune not to know about it. We will know about it.

> ❝ It's very likely that we will develop machines which are as smart as we are, which have all the cognitive abilities of an adult human. ❞

As for whether that will happen in a lot of machines at the same time, or one machine, depends probably mostly on the way it's created. If it is still the case that you need cutting-edge, Google-scale computing power to create a superintelligence, then there'll probably be one which arrives first, and then another one fairly shortly afterwards, and then a few.

But it might happen that there's a huge amount of very powerful computers in the world, and somebody invents a clever trick which uses that computer power much more efficiently than was possible the day before. If that happens, we might get superintelligence appearing all over the place very quickly.

Could you describe the concept of "singularity"?

I think that in the next century, we'll get two singularities. One of them is the technological singularity, that's when you develop an AGI, and it goes on to become super-intelligent. But I think well before then, there'll be another event, a hugely transformational event, which I call the economic singularity.

The word "singularity" comes from maths and physics, where it means a point in a process where a variable becomes infinite. The classic example is a black hole. At the centre of a black hole, the gravitational field becomes infinite. What happens is that the rules break down, everything changes. When applied to human affairs, it's just a metaphor for the biggest kind of change you can have. It's much bigger than disruption, it's much bigger than a revolution.

> ❝ When applied to human affairs, it's just a metaphor for the biggest kind of change you can have. It's much bigger than disruption, it's much bigger than a revolution. ❞

The further out singularity is the technological one, the nearer one is the economic singularity. I don't know if this is going to happen, I think it's very likely. I also don't know when it's going to happen, but I think maybe in 30 years. We have to accept that half the population or more is perpetually unemployable. There is nothing that we can do for money, this half of us, which a machine can't do cheaper, better and faster. The reason why I think that's going to happen is because, assuming Moore's law or something like it continues, the machines we will have in 10 years' time will be 128 times more

powerful than they are today. In 20 years' time, they'll be 8,000 times more powerful than they are today. In 30 years' time, they'll be a million times more powerful.

> ❝ We have to accept that half the population or more is perpetually unemployable. There is nothing that we can do for money, this half of us, which a machine can't do cheaper, better and faster. ❞

How will this impact employment and work in the future?

In the past, the automation of agriculture was mechanization: the machines took over muscle jobs. What we've got coming next is cognitive automation, where machines take over our intellectual jobs.

I think it's a matter of time before AI replaces humans in virtually all of the jobs we currently do. Humans will have to retrain and re-skill more and more often, and more and more radically. We're not currently good at that, we need to get much better at it.

But this business of technological unemployment isn't going to happen tomorrow, it's not going to happen in 10 years. As I say, it's probably 30 years. There's going to be a need for humans to make the ultimate decisions in governments and in companies for a long time, probably until we get to AGI.

But won't AI also open up employment opportunities for humans?

We don't know whether this AI revolution will go on to create all sorts of new jobs which for some reason even a machine a million times smarter than today's ones would never be able to do. That's not impossible, it's not conceptually impossible. It seems to me very unlikely.

I think that probably in about 30 years' time, we will need an economy which does very well for half the population or more who can never do a job again, they can't get paid for doing anything. But it doesn't mean that they're irrelevant as human beings. We will still at that point presumably be the only conscious entities on the planet, and that's valuable. The economic singularity is this point or this journey towards mass unemployability, technological unemployment, and how we reshape our economy to cope with that.

In terms of existential threat to human life, which do you think is greater, AI or climate change?

AI. I think we shouldn't be wary of using the word "existential risk." If we create a superintelligence which doesn't like us, or doesn't understand us, or doesn't

give a damn about us, we'll probably go extinct. If we didn't care anything about chimpanzees, they would go extinct because their future depends entirely on us.

> ❝ **If we create a superintelligence which doesn't like us, or doesn't understand us, or doesn't give a damn about us, we'll probably go extinct.** ❞

If there's a superintelligence on this planet, unless it leaves, and there's no reason to think it just would leave, then our future could be very perilous if we... If it doesn't like us, or if it doesn't understand us very well. The biggest job for humanity this century is to make sure the first superintelligence does like us a lot, and understand us very well.

Do you think we're sleepwalking into this future, this inevitable future, as you and many other people say? Sam Harris calls our fearlessness of AI our "failure of intuition".

I think most humans are blithely unaware of what's going on. What is worrying is that our political leaders have no clue what's happening. But collectively there's quite a lot of people who are aware of it, and there's quite a lot of people who are working on how to make sure we get a good outcome. The people we need working on that problem are very smart people who understand AI very well, and have the time and resources to figure out a good solution. That is happening, there's a decent number of organisations working on it. It's also quite a few decades away. We've got time to solve this problem.

> ❝ **I think most humans are blithely unaware of what's going on. What is worrying is that our political leaders have no clue what's happening.** ❞

Many are saying the most viable harnessing of AI for good is the technical and biological merging, sort of a cyborg future civilisation. Can you elaborate on this?

That is something which I think is most likely to happen after the technological singularity. I think the technology to enable really pervasive and intimate brain-computer interface is going to be so complex and so hard to achieve, we're probably going to need superintelligence to help us do it. I don't think we're likely to get that in the next 10, 20, 30, even 50 years.

But once we have a superintelligence on this planet, humans can either watch this thing become more and more powerful, more and more impressive, and

we can get more and more depressed by our relative puniness as we watch this god evolving, or we can join it. To me, the second option is infinitely better. I think it's probably the only survivable option as well. Now that means uploading our minds into computers, and merging with the computers. I think it is our best option once superintelligence arrives. But that's a long way in the future. Most AI researchers think it will happen sometime this century, or next century. Perhaps in 70 years. It's a long way off.

> ❝ **...Once we have a superintelligence on this planet, humans can either watch this thing become more and more powerful, more and more impressive, and we can get more and more depressed by our relative puniness as we watch this god evolving, or we can join it.** ❞

Do you think global inequality may be increased by AI?

First of all, I would make a controversial observation, which is that inequality is not worse today than it was 20 years ago, or 30 years ago, or 50 years ago. Essentially, if you were a king or a baron, you lived okay. Everybody else was dirt poor throughout human history, until the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. The Gini coefficient, which is the best measure for inequality in society, has actually remained reasonably stable over the last 20 or 30 years. That's not what the conventional wisdom is, but it's what the data shows.

I don't think we're in a world where the tech giants are hoovering up all the money, and everybody else is getting poor. That is simply not happening, and I don't think it will happen either, partly because that's not what technology does. What technology does is to make labour-saving devices, and devices and software which improve our lives, cheaper and cheaper, and available to everybody.

If you go to a train station in Kampala or Buenos Aires, people are glued to their smartphones just like they are in London and New York. Technology does disseminate around the world surprisingly fast.

Will the roll-out of AI cause more migration?

I think there's a good chance it will lead to less migration. The reason for that if countries are on the whole well-governed, it should make everybody richer. Generally speaking, people migrate when they're desperate, and it is the people with the most intelligence, the people with most resources, the people with most drive who migrate, which is bad news for

the country they leave, good news for the country they arrive in.

If in the society that they're leaving, it's possible to get rich, it's possible to do interesting things with your life, then they don't leave. AI should make that more possible. AI successfully deployed in countries where governance is not disastrously bad should lead to less migration, not more.

> **AI successfully deployed in countries where governance is not disastrously bad should lead to less migration, not more.**

When we get to the economic singularity, the issue of migration becomes slightly moot because what's the point of going from one place where there's no jobs to another one where there's no jobs, and you're rich in either place anyway?

In the meantime, with the churn, things could get very hairy. But this anti-immigration sentiment comes and goes in cycles, it's not a straight-line curve from one place to another.

What about AI's involvement with the securitisation of borders? Can you envisage a greater role for AI in that, preventing people moving?

Absolutely. Face recognition technology, and the ability to track where migration flows are happening, and to predict where people will try to cross borders, should make the border controls job easier. It would be nice if AI also improved the science of economics, and made it easier for people to understand how beneficial immigration is for the new host country. Maybe that could happen too. Then it wouldn't be so resisted.

Can you see applications of AI to assist refugees?

For sure, AI can improve any process. Knowing where the refugees are going to turn up, working out how to get to them the resources that they need, that can all be enormously enhanced by AI. Of course, it would be much better to stop the problem which turns people into refugees in the first place.

Are you a pessimist, an optimist, dystopian, or a utopian?

A very wise man said that both optimism and pessimism are forms of bias. They are deliberately not accepting reality. So you should try and not be either, but I think that's very boring. I'm an optimist. I am actually temperamentally an optimist. I think technology carries enormous dangers, but overall, it produces great benefits. I can see a possibility of a world as a result of these two singularities, individually and together, that is absolutely wonderful. A world in which humans don't have to work, and we can do whatever we want to do. We can all be like comfortably-off retired people, or we can all be like aristocrats and have a really great life.

Then in the future, we can merge with the superintelligence and become god-like. These are almost unbelievably wonderful outcomes. I think they're possible. There are possible outcomes which are disastrous. If we mess up either of the singularities, it could go very badly wrong for us, and the technological singularity, in particular, could make us go extinct if we mess it up.

The 'inconvenient truth' of future mixed migration
Climate change, mobility and legal voids

When considering the future, the nexus between the environment and mixed migration demands attention for two primary reasons. First, climate change and environmental stressors affecting human populations and mobility are unquestionably already well underway and set to intensify.

Second, the designation, legal status, and rights of those displaced by environmental factors are so unclear and contested that this lack of status and poverty of options will force many into mixed migratory irregularity and increased vulnerability, while potentially creating significant humanitarian crises for those displaced, without affording access to international protection.

The story so far

Climatic events and changes can affect human mobility either directly or, more commonly, in combination with other factors. Changes may be acute or gradual and may result in temporary or permanent migration, normally within affected countries, but also internationally.[1]

Growing vulnerability

In many parts of the world, migration, displacement, and organised relocation are increasingly affected by environmental processes including climatic variability (storms, drought, and other kinds of weather shocks such as heatwaves, floods, and cyclones), and shifts in climate patterns associated with glacial melt, sea-level rise and desertification. Communities living in low-lying islands and deltas, coastal zones, glacial-fed water systems, and regions subject to persistent drought are particularly vulnerable.

Almost 30 years ago, in 1990, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) noted that the greatest single impact of climate change might be on human migration, with millions of people displaced by shoreline erosion, coastal flooding and agricultural disruption.[2]

A background paper for the UN's 2007 Human Development Report pointed to a growing body of opinion that "environmental degradation, and in particular climate change, is poised to become a major driver of population displacement."[3] Of course, it was already such a driver at the time, and now, in 2019, evidence of climate-induced mobility, be it forced or voluntarily, can be found in regions and communities all over the world. The critical finding of various recent studies is that global environmental change affects the main drivers of migration.[4] This will be discussed in more detail below.

Major driver

In one recent study, where 16 destination and 198 origin countries were analysed for migration correlations over a 34-year period (1980-2014), academics from New Zealand found that climate change was a more important mobility driver than income and political freedom combined.[5] They also found that a long timeframe is key to understanding the effects of climate change, and described their findings as "just the tip of the iceberg" given that climate-induced movement (internal and external) is often not documented or recognised as such.

Other studies report less conclusive evidence about the effect of climate on international migration.[6] But there is a broad consensus that environmental factors are and will continue to be a major contributing factor in internal migration and internal displacement. This usual takes the form of rural-to-urban movement, but can also take place from one rural area to another, particularly in developing countries. The World Bank's recent *Groundswell* report focuses on internal displacement in detail and is an important reference in this essay.[7]

Disasters displace millions

Disasters triggered by natural hazards are the leading cause of environment-induced internal and international displacement.[8] The impact of climate and sudden environmental stressors and shocks is clear: the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) estimates that

1   Rigaud, K. et al. (2018) *Groundswell: Preparing for Internal Climate Migration* World Bank Group
2   Brown, O. (2007) *Climate change and forced migration: Observations, projections and implications* UNDP
3   Ibid.
4   For example: Foresight (2011) *Migration and Global Environmental Change Final Project Report* The [UK] Government Office for Science
5   Aburn, A. & Wesselbaum, D. (2017) *Gone with the Wind: International Migration* University of Otago
6   Waldinger, M. and Fankhauser, S. (2015) *Climate change and migration in developing countries: evidence and implications for PRISE Countries* Centre For Climate Change Economics and Policy & Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment
7   Rigaud, K. et al. (2018) , *op. cit.*
8   Warner, K. et al. (2013) *Changing climates, moving people: Framing migration, displacement and planned relocation* United Nations University

17.2 million people were displaced by such hazards and extreme weather in 2018 – that's more than 47,000 per day or almost 2,000 every hour of that year.[9] In 2015, IDMC calculated that in each of the preceding six years, an average of 26.4 million people were displaced from their homes by disasters brought on by natural hazards.[10]

Based on current measurable trends, primarily in the most impoverished countries, there are five patterns of displacement: temporary; permanent local; permanent internal; permanent regional and permanent inter-continental.[11] The last two patterns are relevant to mixed migration flows, although the other forms of internal displacement (which accounts for most environment-induced displacement) can lead to subsequent regional and inter-continental movement.

Looking ahead: the next few decades

Although the relationship between climate and migration has been well established, it is unpredictable: "the science of climate change is complex enough – let alone its impact on societies of differing resources and varied capacity to adapt to external shocks."[12] Nevertheless, the inertia in the climate system means that climate change over the next few decades at least is fairly predictable, notwithstanding issues around tipping points, discussed below. "The extent and nature of climate change after 2050 is therefore predicated on current emissions. Consequently, many analysts think that it is highly speculative to try to push predictions past 2050."[13]

In 2011, the UK government's Foresight project predicted in a major report that the impact of environmental change on migration, specifically through its influence on a range of persistent economic, social, and political drivers, would in increase, and said this had "potentially grave implications […] for individuals and policy makers alike."[14]

Estimates of the numbers who will migrate within or across borders because of climate change by 2050 range from 25 million to one billion.[15] This is explored in greater detail below.

Involuntary immobility

An important finding, echoed by the more recent World Bank report, is while that environmental change is likely to make migration more probable, it could also make it less possible. Migrating can be expensive, and people lacking capital, in the form of financial, social, political or physical assets, as a direct or indirect consequence of climate change, may be unable to move away from locations where they are extremely vulnerable to environmental change. A more likely response to slow-onset environmental stress is not to immediately migrate far away, but to first try other coping mechanisms, such as moving to a nearby location (perhaps an urban area), or taking on an extra job or a loan. Once other options have run out, people may wish to migrate but find they then lack the resources to do so. In other cases, involuntary immobility may occur in the event of sudden hazards, such as major floods affecting large populations, as happened in Mozambique this year and in New Orleans in 2005 after Hurricane Katrina.

The Foresight report warned of millions being potentially "trapped" and facing "double jeopardy: they will be unable to move away from danger because of a lack of assets, and it is this very feature which will make them even more vulnerable to environmental change." To the international community, such people represent "just as important a policy concern as those who do migrate," not least due to the humanitarian crises this may cause.[16]

The report's authors conclude that preventing or constraining migration carries risks: "Doing so will lead to increased impoverishment, displacement and irregular migration in many settings, particularly in low elevation coastal zones, drylands and mountain regions."[17]

Climate change as a threat multiplier

In recent years, analysis has increasingly framed climate change as a threat or stress multiplier that exacerbates complex and location-specific conditions, sometimes to a tipping point that leads to migration. This is because climate change has an impact on the political, demographic, economic, social, and environmental factors that can drive migration.[18] Drivers are interconnected, their categories "permeable" and climate

9   IDMC (2019) *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2019*
10   IDMC (2016) *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2016*
11   Ibid.
12   Brown, O. (2007) op. cit.
13   Ibid.
14   Foresight (2011) , op. cit.
15   IOM (2019) *Migration and Climate Change*
16   Foresight (2011) , op. cit.
17   Ibid.
18   Foresight (2011) op cit.

change may have a greater impact on some drivers than others: one "may cause the other or, more likely, each drives the other in a vicious cycle of reinforcing degradations".[19]

The diagram below, adapted from the Foresight report, illustrates how "global environmental change affects the drivers of migration."[20]

A catalyst for conflict

With respect to forced displacement, flight, and irregular movement, the issue of conflict and its relationship to climate change is sobering. The potential impact of climate change on natural resources, livelihoods, impoverishment, and inequality contributing to mass mobility "is why military minds around the world take climate change very seriously indeed as a threat multiplier with direct consequences for peace and security."[21] Climate change can exacerbate a wide range of existing, interrelated, non-climate threats, including security, and serve as a catalyst for conflict.[22] The world's development and sustainability trajectory is expected to significantly influence how climate will actually influence conflict drivers and risks. There is no separating of the issues. These cascading impacts linked to climate change are already shifting patterns of migration and "will increasingly do so."[23]

Looking forward, the growing impact of climate change – as a future catalyst – is therefore set to "threaten livelihoods, increase competition, intensify cleavages, reduce state capability and legitimacy, trigger poorly designed climate action with unintended consequences, and lead to large movements of people..."[24] *Groundswell's* analysis of cross-case quantitative studies finds significant statistical correlations between climate change and violence or conflict in scenarios where needy people move into areas where competition for scarce resources may already be strained. "If human responses to climate change remain unchanged, climate change has the potential to increase violence and conflict causing migration and flight."[25]

Resistance to mixed flows

Even if the primary impact of future environmental stress is high levels of internal displacement, the numbers in irregular mixed migration flows of people seeking alternative homes, livelihoods and refuge would inevitably grow, as the global appetite to absorb refugees and irregular migrants in their millions will be meagre at best. If numbers in such flows are large and are perceived as threatening, future mixed migration flows may face harsh responses and determined resistance. This is already happening, despite international agreements such as the global compacts on migration and refugees promoting a less restrictive approach.

Migration drivers and environmental change
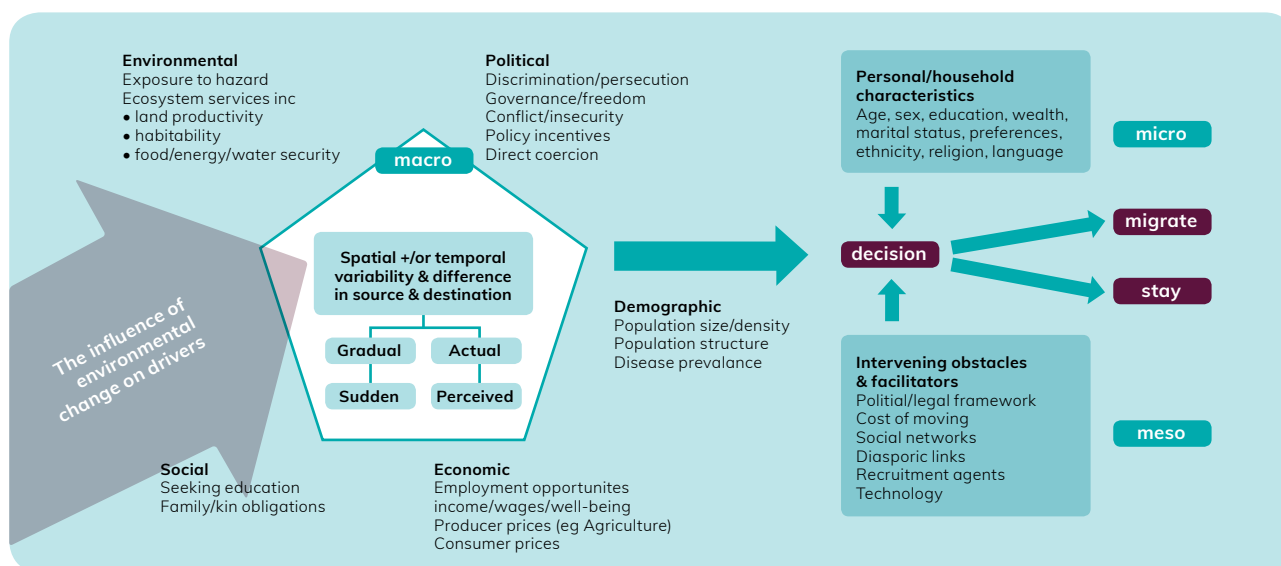
Source: Foresight (2011) Migration and Global Environmental Change Final Project Report

19   Goffman, E. (2006) *Environmental refugees: How many, How bad?* CSA Discovery Guides
20   Foresight (2011) op cit.
21   Guterres, A. (2017) *Calling Climate Change Direct Threat, Multiplier of Many Others at General Assembly Event, Secretary-General Stresses Need for Urgent, Decisive Action* United Nations
22   Steffen, W. (2015) *Climate change: the ultimate threat multiplier* Australian Strategic Policy Institute
23   Rigaud, K. et al. , op. cit.
24   Ibid.
25   Ibid.

Migration as adaptation

Human movement is widely recognised as an adaption strategy in response to the direct or indirect impact of climate change.[26] The IPCC defines adaptation as the process in human systems "of adjustment to actual or expected climate [change] and its effects, which seeks to moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities."[27] Migration is a common coping, income diversification, risk management, and adaptation strategy for people facing economic stress and adverse climatic conditions.[28] It is also a strategy of last resort.[29] As such, climate migration is a critical response that is neither inherently good nor bad, despite some prevalent negative narratives and efforts to prevent internal or international movement: "The cost-benefit calculus is heavily dependent on perspective."[30] It is generally accepted that climate change will hit poorer countries and communities disproportionately, and vulnerable people often have the least opportunity to move, or do so only under distress conditions.

Better than staying put

Migration may increase adaptive capacities, defined as the "abilities of people and societies to transform structure, function, or organisation to manage better their response to weather hazards and other negative changes."[31] Migration at the household level may not be the first or only adaptive strategy chosen or, indeed, the most appropriate, but the evidence for many decades has shown that in fragile environments "migration is essential in preserving life and satisfying basic needs."[32]

Studies from various countries indicate that those who migrate internally with more assets and capabilities tend to do better than those do not migrate, and the outcomes of both those who migrate with assets and those migrate without are better than those who did not migrate from the same conditions of stress.

The bulk of climate-induced migration over future decades is expected to be internal. Internal migration and rural-to-urban movement on a mass scale in recent decades has been shown to be a clear adaptation strategy, with *Groundswell* citing at least three times more people having migrated within countries than across borders in 2013, and about twice as many people displaced internally than across borders in 2016.[33]

Time to plan

The report adds that by 2050, two-thirds of the global population is expected to be living in urban areas. Even without climate change impacts, rising internal migration from population increases and urbanisation "means that effective management strategies [in terms of urban planning and management policies] are indispensable."[34]

What happens in the second half of the 21st century depends to a great extent on what we do today and have done in the last decade. It is worth noting that most recent IPCC reports indicate that the situation is deteriorating faster than expected.[35]

Impossible to count

Consensus continues to elude estimates of the number people expected to be displaced by environmental changes: these range from 150 million to 300 million by the middle of this century.[36] The figure that has gained the most traction in the media and key publications such IPCC reports and the landmark Stern Review is Oxford University's Professor Norman Myers' 2005 prediction that there will be 200 million "environmental refugees" by 2050.[37] By that year, warned Myers,

162 million people in Bangladesh, Egypt, China, India and other parts of the world, including small island states, will be vulnerable to sea-level rise and another 50 million to desertification.[38]

More recently, Myers has suggested that the figure by 2050 might be as high as 250 million.[39] These figures surpass many times over those of conventional refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs – currently numbering over 70 million, according to UNHCR) both now and those expected in the future. Meanwhile, the *Groundswell* report estimates with painstaking methodological detail that there will be more than 143

26   Randall, A. (2019) *Migration is a successful climate adaptation strategy* Climate and Migration Coalition
27   IPPC (2014) *Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report*
28   Rigaud, K. et al., op. cit.
29   Gemene, F. & Blocher, J. (2017) *How can migration serve adaptation to climate change? Challenges to fleshing out a policy ideal* The Geographical Journal
30   Ibid.
31   Ibid.
32   Ibid.
33   Rigaud, K. et al., op. cit.
34   Ibid.
35   IPCC (2019) *Various reports*
36   Azhar, G. (2017) *Climate change will displace millions in coming decades. Nations should prepare now to help them* The Conversation. See also: Gemenneab, F. (2011) *Why the numbers don't add up: A review of estimates and predictions of people displaced by environmental changes* Global Environmental Change
37   Myers, N. (2005) *Environmental Refugees: An emergent security issue* Paper delivered at 13th OSCE Economic Forum. See also: Stern, N. (ed.) (2006) *The Economics of Climate change: the Stern review*. Cambridge University Press
38   Myers, N., op. cit.
39   Quoted in: Baird, R. et al. (2007) *Human Tide: The Real Migration Crisis* Christian Aid

million internal climate-induced migrants in Asia, Latin America and Africa by 2050.[40]

Estimates challenged

Some researchers and analysts regard Myers' figures as unfeasibly high and produced as grist for "maximalist" side of the debate.[41] Critics point out that past predictions of vast numbers of environmental migrants have not come true and that the larger estimates are usually based on the number of people living in regions at risk, rather than of those expected to actually migrate. Such estimates do not account for adaptation strategies and alternatives to migration, or the issue of trapped, or involuntarily mobile, populations.

Foresight, for its part, found that such estimates are somewhat dubious as it is almost impossible to distinguish environmental migrants from others on the move "either now or in the future, as migration is a multi-causal phenomenon and it is problematic to assign a proportion of the actual or predicted number of migrants as moving as a direct result of environmental change."[42]

Considering the UN's (also contested) estimate that the global population will reach 9.7 billion by 2050, Myers' higher estimate of 250 million climate-induced migrants and *Groundswell*'s estimate of 143 million internal migrants represent approximately 2.5 percent and 1.5 of the global population respectively. Given the severity of the predicted impacts of climate change globally it could be argued that these are relatively modest numbers to be managed. On the other hand, refugees as defined by the 1951 Convention, who now make up under 0.3 per cent of the current (undisputed) global population, already seem to present a seemingly intractable challenge at the political and societal level, with most living in dire, protracted situations with no durable solutions in sight.

Lost in law: The definition dilemma

What one analyst wrote in 2007 is equally true today: "so far there is no 'home' for forced climate migrants in the international community, both literally and figuratively."[43]

Terminology trouble

Different terms are applied to those moving for environmental reasons, including environmental or climate refugee and environmental or climate migrant.[44] From a legal perspective the term "environmental refugee" is a misnomer and today most literature avoids the expression.[45]

In international law, the status of people leaving their place of residency for environmental reasons remains undefined, mainly due to the aforementioned difficulty of isolating environmental factors from other, often related, drivers of migration and because such people are not covered by the 1951 Refugee Convention.[46] Forced climate migrants therefore fall through the cracks of international refugee and immigration policy, presenting a potentially huge dilemma for agencies and governments while "protection for the people affected remains inadequate."[47]

According to the Environmental Justice Foundation, a UK-based nonprofit, "climate refugees" outnumber refugees fleeing persecution and violence by more than three to one.[48] A recent European Parliament briefing paper cites the examples of "the estimated 200,000 Bangladeshis, who become homeless each year due to river-bank erosion, and cannot appeal for resettlement in another country, [and of] the residents of the small islands of Kiribati, Nauru and Tuvalu, where one in ten persons has migrated within the past decade, [but] cannot be classified as refugees, even though those who remain are 'trapped' in worsening environmental conditions."[49]

The need for recognition and protection

Some experts have called for formal recognition of climate-induced displacement, noting that the distinction between forced and voluntary movements of people is a cornerstone of legal regimes at international and domestic levels, and arguing that, when return is not permissible, feasible or cannot be reasonably expected,

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40   Rigaud, K. et al., *op. cit.*
41   For example: Brown, O., *op. cit.*
42   Foresight, *op. cit.*
43   Brown, O., *op. cit.*
44   Related terms include: ecological refugee, forced environmental migrant, environmentally motivated migrant, climate change refugee, environmentally displaced person, disaster refugee, environmental displacee, eco-refugee, ecologically displaced person, or environmental-refugee-to-be. See: Boano, C., Zetter, R., & Morris, T. (2008) *Environmentally Displaced People: Understanding the linkages between environmental change, livelihoods and forced migration* Refugees Studies Centre
45   Warner, K., *op. cit.*
46   Waldinger, M. & Fankhauser, S., *op. cit.*
47   Apap, J. (2019) *The concept of 'climate refugee' Towards a possible definition* European Parliamentary Research Service
48   Environmental Justice Foundation (2012) *The Big Give 2012*
49   Apap, J., *op. cit.*

protection and assistance must be offered.[50] The same experts recommend that climate IDPs should be treated according to the 1998 UN **Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement** and relevant domestic and regional law. In the case of international migrants, they should be admitted and granted at least temporary stay in the country where they have found refuge until the conditions for their return in safety and dignity are fulfilled.[51]

New instruments

This legal void in which climate-displaced people find themselves gave rise to calls for a new, binding international instrument.[52] The **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration**, adopted in late 2018, was the first international agreement to specifically recognise migration's links with climate change and natural hazards.[53] It advocates various international cooperative responses or solidarity, but still avoids offering those displaced by the environment any special protection through legal status. Meanwhile, the **Global Compact on Refugees** stopped even shorter, only mentioning climate as one of many factors that "may interact with the drivers of refugee movements."[54] Both compacts are voluntary.

The **Platform on Disaster Displacement**, launched in 2016 (previously the **Nansen Initiative**) by a coalition of national governments, tries to fill the void. It encourages countries to assist climate induced migrants despite the lack of legal recognition of their plight. It builds on a **Protection Agenda** that 109 countries endorsed in 2015, and aims to integrate its principles into national laws.[55]

But because of the potentially huge numbers involved, most governments are fearful of setting precedents by granting asylum on account of climate change. In 2017, New Zealand contemplated offering experimental humanitarian visas to people displaced from Pacific Islands by climate change after a tribunal denied refugee status to two such families from Tuvalu, but the idea did not translate into action.[56]

Kenya arguable offers a precedent of people escaping weather shocks in one country attaining refugee status in another, but it is somewhat tenuous: in 1992 hundreds of thousands of people fled civil war and famine in Somalia for Kenya. The numbers were too large for each to be assessed individually, so Kenya grudgingly granted them group prima facie refugee status, a category that restricted their movement and rights, but which endured, amid intermittent drought and conflict in Somalia, until 2016.[57]

Why definitions will be critical

From a legal perspective, how will the world respond to potentially tens of millions of climate-induced migrants and asylum seekers when they have no official status? Those that can cross borders and seek work and new lives in a regular manner may only be a small, or minute, proportion of the total number. Others, if they have the means to do so, will move irregularly, probably with brokers and facilitators – human smugglers – and the risks of human trafficking are likely to rise. Those feeling compelled to leave their home as forced climate-induced migrants may seek to apply for asylum in countries that do not recognise their predicament as deserving refugee status. Most will be rejected and may be detained and deported or halted in their journeys before they arrive at their preferred destination country or region's border. This in turn could lead to increased application of the restrictive policies currently implemented in Africa and Mexico under the instigation and insistence of the EU and the United States through local governments.

The question of return is critical here and a major dilemma for countries that do not accept environment-induced displaced people as refugees but which at the same time cannot return people to places suffering drought, famine, food security crises compounded by conflict or human insecurity.

Internal climate-induced migrants may be assisted as IDPs but will most probably continue joining urban populations and swelling cities' ranks of urban poor in line with current trends. But those who cross borders, leaving rural areas or overcrowded, climate-vulnerable cities of the future will de facto join mixed migration flows, entering and transiting countries irregularly, often facing right abuses and security risks as they travel.

50   Warner, K., op. cit.
51   Ibid.
52   Environmental Justice Foundation (2012) *No Place Like Home - Securing recognition, protection and assistance for climate refugees*
53   IOM (2018) *The Global Compact for Migration*; Beeler, C. (2018) *UN compact recognizes climate change as driver of migration for first time* PRI
54   UNHCR (2018) *Global Compact on Refugees*
55   The Platform on Disaster Displacement website can be found here
56   Manch, T. (2018) *Humanitarian visa proposed for climate change refugees dead in the water* Stuff; Bonnett, G. (2017) *Climate change refugee cases rejected* RNZ
57   Hyndman, J. & Nyland, B. (1998) *UNHCR and the Status of Prima Facie Refugees in Kenya* International Journal of Refugee Law

Recognition and responsibility

Without official status and given the numbers predicted to be displaced by climate change, it's difficult to see how climate-induced migrants will not, quite rapidly, become a major social, political and humanitarian issue in some regions. How will the world deal with and categorise them? Will they be shunned and marginalised, will they be criminalised, arrested and deported or imprisoned? Agreement on their legal categorisation is urgently needed, but as long as recognition confers responsibility, the process is fraught with dilemmas for authorities reluctant to take on such responsibility.

The Nansen Initiative and the Platform on Disaster Displacement have warned of this dilemma with efforts to alert policy-makers of the legal gaps and risks.[58] For the Executive Director of the Environmental Justice Foundation, "the situation and scope of this problem is entirely new, and of biblical proportions. It demands an entirely new legal convention. The global compacts are a start, but it's clear that they're not enough."[59]

A future world of uncertainties

Predicting future outcomes on most subjects is a precarious exercise in a rapidly changing world. Not least with the environment, where the issue of tipping points is so relevant. Tipping points exist because of nonlinearity – the fact that there is no simple proportional relationship between cause and effect concerning climate change. "A tipping point is a particular moment at which a component of the earth's system enters into a qualitatively different mode of operation, as a result of a small perturbation. Abrupt climate change occurs when the system crosses this tipping point, triggering a transition to a new state at a faster rate."[60]

No choice but mixed migration?

For those who wish to travel out of their region, either willingly or compelled by necessity, will the world be a more open and welcoming place than it is today? If solutions cannot be found for 98 percent of today's Convention refugees, what choice will far larger numbers of status-less people have but resort to travel in mixed and irregular migration flows or remain stranded? The numbers of people attempting to move in mixed migratory flows, crossing borders and transiting countries irregularly, will very likely be high. Other key drivers, such as demographics, politics and socioeconomics, are expected to intensify in coming decades, and act as stressors on mobility in their own right. As a result, distinctions between political and climate-induced asylum seekers, economic migrants, and others on the move will potentially be more blurred as different stressors interact, reinforcing and exacerbating conditions and

The relative influences of environmental change on the drivers of migration
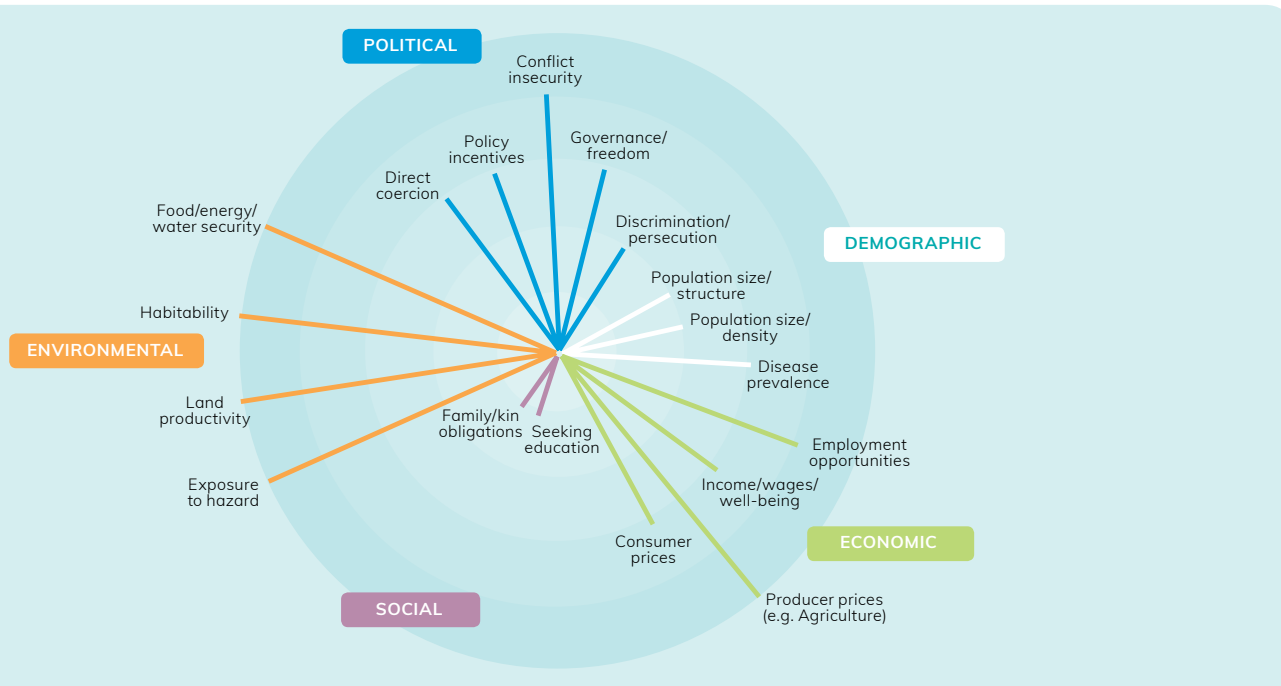
Length of line represents influence of environmental change on the driver; the longer the line, the greater the influence.
Source: Foresight (2011) *Migration and Global Environmental Change Final Project Report*

58 Kälin, W. & Schrepfer, N. (2012) *Protecting People Crossing Borders in the Context of Climate Change Normative Gaps and Possible Approaches* UNHCR
59 McDonnell, T. (2018) *The Refugees The World Barely Pays Attention To* NPR
60 Rigaud, K. et al., op. cit.

making it harder to isolate individual drivers. The diagram on the previous page illustrates the links between migration drivers and environmental change.

Without channels for regular migration or prospects of being accepted as refugees with status and entitled to international protection, millions of people may be stranded and helpless, leading to frequent destitution and humanitarian crises. Ironically, in the more globalised and technologically connected world of the future, the conditions are likely – without a dramatic change in policy and attitudes – to be more inhospitable for those crossing borders uninvited, unmanaged or undocumented.

The number of people who will be forced into mixed migration in the coming decades is unknown, of course, but given the expected impact of climate change and other related drivers it is unlikely to be insignificant. Climate-induced migration and displacement is falling into policy gaps. "Existing international frameworks and national policies are yet to make the crucial link between climate change impact on the frequency and intensity of extreme climate events, environmental degradation and human mobility."[61] Political obstacles are significant. Governments prefer bilateral solutions to cross-border migration and displacement, and tend to discourage internal rural-to-urban migration. Governments also often fail to understand that people will migrate, even if a safe, legal option doesn't exist. "Governments have a stark choice ahead of them. They can either facilitate safe, legal migration. Or they can attempt to stop people moving and create crises."[62]

61   Wilkinson, E. et al. (2014) _Climate-induced migration and displacement: closing the policy gap_ ODI
62   Randall, A., _op. cit._

Interview

Not whether, but when

Environmental change has always played a part in human mobility, explains **Alex Randall**. What's new is that the science has advanced to a point where specific weather events can be credibly attributed to global warming. This should erode any doubts that climate change is and will remain an important driver of migration, even if often hidden behind more visible economic factors.

Alex Randall is Project Manager of the Climate and Migration Coalition, a network of refugee and migration NGOs working together on issues around climate change, and a Programme Manager at Climate Outreach. He is the author of several of the Coalition's reports, as well as numerous blogs and comment pieces. He also writes regularly for a number of media outlets on issues around migration and climate.

Do potential "tipping points" and the non-linearity of causal relationships make it harder to predict how climate change will affect migration?

Yes, and I think there were two really interesting things there. The first one is the way that the climate system itself may have tipping points or tipping elements, where our emissions may be related to climate change impacts in a non-linear and in a complex way. But then of course, because we're working on migration, displacement and the movement of people, we're then also adding a second incredibly complicated non-linear system on to the other side of that equation as well. We're first trying to understand an extraordinarily complex system which is the climate, and how our emissions and the warming of the planet will result in new and different patterns of climate change impacts, droughts, typhoon and hurricane strikes, desertification. And then on top of that, we're saying "Well, the other

thing we know is that human beings, societies and economies don't always respond to those impacts in straightforward, linear ways either".

Furthermore, the way that humans react to those issues is complex too. So you're absolutely right. Prediction is very difficult. We can say, though, that the physical science predictive element, the understanding that we have of how the climate is going to respond to our emissions, is probably further along than our understanding of how human societies are going to respond to those impacts as they unfold. And that's especially the case when it comes to human movement. So yes, we're dealing with several enormous and complex sets of circumstances. So yes, making predictions is very, very hard.

The UN 2007 Human Development Report pointed to a growing body of opinion that environmental stress,

> **We're dealing with several enormous and complex sets of circumstances, so making predictions is very, very hard.**

especially climate change, was poised to become a major driver of displacement. Twelve years on, are we seeing their claims borne out?

Yes, I think we are and for a number of years now. Actually, we shouldn't be surprised when it turns out the environmental changes are a driver for human mobility. Even before human activity – or, more specifically, carbon emissions – began to alter the environment around us, we saw human mobility resulting from other environmental changes. That's exactly what we saw in the 1920s and '30s in the United States: huge migration across the US, essentially as a result of changes in the environment brought about by changing farming practices resulting in desertification. That's what the Dust Bowl was. And that was an enormous episode of human mobility with an environmental driver at its base.

> **Environmental change always has been a driver of human mobility and it always will be.**

Environmental change always has been a driver of human mobility and it always will be. And the new part of the equation is we're now in a period of global history where we are bringing about unprecedented global change to our environment as a result of our activities and specifically as a result of the warming produced by the emission of greenhouse gases by human societies. And the question is not whether that is going to alter patterns of human movement, the question is when and how.

Since the publication of that initial piece of evidence back in 2007, we've reached a point where two things have happened. The first one is the science around extreme weather attribution has come on a long way and it's now much more possible to look at particular extreme weather events, whether those are typhoon strikes or droughts or heatwaves, and see the fingerprints of climate change. That means that when we look at the displacement that results from one of those events, we can begin to say with a higher degree of certainty than we used to that those people have a climate change driver to their mobility.

That should not detract from all the other reasons that those people may be on the move. It doesn't mean that suddenly their existing vulnerability, or their ability to find work, or existing patterns of migration and displacement suddenly don't matter. It doesn't mean that we're throwing out all of that existing understanding of why and when people move, but what we can say is that into that mix, and with an ever-increasing degree of certainty, is that there is a climate change dimension to them.

A 2017 study from New Zealand which looked at 16 destinations and 198 origin countries over a 34-year period found that climate change was a more important mobility driver than income and political freedom combined.[1] This is very striking in terms of your science of attribution.

Yes, it is. And I think what we're increasingly seeing is evidence for this dynamic existing, evidence for a relationship between climate change and human mobility. Importantly, people experience the economy via the labour market. So, for a lot of people, if you ask them, "Why did you move from a farming setting in the countryside into a city?" they're not going say, "Oh, because of climate change," they're going to say, "Well, it became harder to find labouring jobs on the farms in the area." And if you pushed them a bit further, they would say, "Well, they weren't hiring as many people because of the droughts." So you have these complex chains of globalisation. Yes, there are lots and lots of people who we would describe as economic migrants or people who've moved to find work, who are actually motivated by environmental factors.

The World Bank's Groundswell report asserts that that most migration will initially be internal, and if that turns out to be unsatisfactory, international migration emerges as a viable option.[2] Does one lead to the other?

I think we can predict that that is probably going to be the case, but I'm not sure that there is evidence at the moment that backs that up. So I think you can absolutely say that, yes, the first stage in someone's migration might be that they move from a rural area into a city within their country to find work, and we can then predict that having arrived in that city and perhaps found work, perhaps kind of secured a bit more of a livelihood for themselves, they then may consider an international move afterwards.

The UK government's Foresight report from 2011 predicted that the impact of environmental change on migration was a "threat multiplier" that was set to increase, particularly through its influence on a

1   Aburn, A. & Wesselbaum, D. (2017) *Gone with the Wind: International Migration* University of Otago
2   Rigaud, K. et al (2018) *Groundswell: Preparing for Internal Climate Migration* The World Bank

range of persistent economic social and political drivers.[3] Do you agree?

Yes, but I don't use the threat multiplier language, because, to me, it feels like something that very much came by adapting a military concept. Also, the question I always ask when people say that something is a threat multiplier, is, a threat to who? Who's being threatened? Who's the threat? I think bringing that language into the discussion about migration is probably unhelpful, because it becomes very easy then to cast the migrants themselves as the threat.

> " I think bringing language like 'threat multiplier' into the discussion about migration is probably unhelpful, because it becomes very easy then to cast migrants themselves as the threat. "

Some argue that people facing environmental stress can become trapped, unable to move, facing what Groundswell calls "double jeopardy", which can result in humanitarian crises equal, or more important than, a political crisis that migration could cause.

I think that's undoubtedly true. I think we've tended to look at environmental forces as a driver of mobility, but in that sense, when we look at the humanitarian crises that we see across the world, many of them are the result of people moving, but lots of them are the problem of people being trapped, not being able to move and suffering the consequences of various changes in their environment, whether that's drought, or sudden onset events like typhoon and hurricane strikes. The prospect of people being stuck somewhere and not being able to get out of harm's way should give us huge cause for concern, as much as people moving. Because of poverty, because of disability, because of a border that they are not allowed to cross, [people] are trapped somewhere where it is becoming increasingly dangerous as a result of climate change impacts. Yes, that's very, very concerning.

To what extent does climate change have the potential to increase violence and conflict, causing migration and flight? Will climate change serve as a catalyst for future conflict?
So I think, again, we have to be careful about making absolute statements here. I think on one level, we can say that the causes of armed violence, the causes of

conflict, will always have a political force behind them. People don't just pick up a gun because of a drought. We should not be worried that climate change is going to just kick off a whole load of new global wars.

Norman Myers predicted in 2005 that 200 million people would be displaced for environmental reasons by 2050.[4] More recently, he suggested that the figure might be as high as 250 million.[5] Your thoughts?

Basically, I don't use the numbers. I've found using those figures to be unhelpful in framing what climate-linked migration is as an issue. I've equally found them to be unhelpful in assisting organisations think about what they might do operationally.

In terms of management and operations, if you take the UN's estimate of global population being around 9.7 or 10 billion by 2050, and take Myers' higher estimate of 250 million climate-induced migrants, it still only represents 2.5% of the global population, and it's not going to happen all at once.

On the one hand, Myers' predictions sound incredibly dramatic. Because 250 million people is a figure greater than the population of many, many countries. But then you look at it as a percentage of total world population and they seem, as you suggest, to be quite low. The figures that I think are much more useful are, for example, localised figures to the extent that we can try and make predictions about a specific area.

Refugees as defined by the 1951 Convention, who now make up under a third of one percent of the current global population, already seem to present an intractable challenge at the political and societal level.

Yes, if we look at the international community's response to the existing numbers of refugees we can ask the question, have we managed to provide them all with durable solutions? No, of course not. Have we even managed to provide them with adequate temporary solutions, basic healthcare and shelter in spite of our best efforts? No, not really either. So yes, in terms of a percentage of the global population who might be on the move as a result of climate change impacts, governments have a stark choice ahead of them. They can either facilitate safe, legal migration or they can attempt to stop people moving and create crises.

3   Foresight (2011) *Migration and Global Environmental Change Final Project Report* The Government Office for Science, London
4   Myers, N. (2005) *Environmental Refugees: An emergent security issue* Paper delivered at 13th OSCE Economic Forum, Prague
5   Quoted in: Baird, R. et al. (2007) *Human Tide: The Real Migration Crisis* Christian Aid

What kind of crises?

There are two iconic migration and refugee crises at the moment. One is at Europe's border in the Mediterranean, and the other is at the US border with Mexico. And I think what we're seeing is they are often framed in the media as migration crises, or refugee crises, whereas actually they're not: they're border crises. They only take on the nature of a humanitarian emergency because we are trying to stop people from moving. Like people cross the Mediterranean in rubber boats because they are not allowed to travel from north Africa into Europe by ordinary means: they're prevented from doing that. Similarly, you have what looks like a humanitarian crisis at the US border because people are being prevented from crossing the border safely, and they're being detained once they have crossed it. So it's our attempts to stop migration, to stop people moving into the EU, and into the United States that are creating a humanitarian crisis.

Are sovereign nations not allowed to define their own border policies and immigration policies?

Yes, but we believe our role is to try and help them produce more sensible border policies. Every country can define its own border policy, but there is a responsibility from citizens and civil society to ask if there is a better way, especially by creating an option for people to move legally.

Do you think countries are very hesitant about accepting the concept of "environmental refugee" and creating a legal precedent by accepting some people in that category?

Yes, I think they are worried. I think lots of governments basically think that it's politically unpalatable to create any option, and I think they're worried that they could potentially create a new route that would increase migration into their country. I would say to governments in an era of climate change where we are going to have more people on the move, you've got two options. On one hand you can continue to prevent people from moving, trying to prevent people from crossing borders, and essentially then dealing with a humanitarian crisis of sorts at your border, and having that chaotic, dangerous situation. Or, you could create safe legal routes for people to enter your country and you can then manage that process.

Looking ahead, do you think mixed migration flows will be increasingly filled with people who are motivated by climate-related drivers?

Yes, I think so. And I think it's exactly in those mixed flows that we are going to see the fingerprint of climate change. It's in those kind of already-mixed, complex flows of people that we will first see, in my view, an increase in people who have that climate dimension to their mobility.

The Sustainable Development Goals and the global compacts on migration and refugees have many aspects relating to the role of migration, of course, and increasing mobility, but very little, if anything, on environmental-induced movement. Was this deliberate or a missed opportunity in your view?

I don't know whether that aspect was deliberately left out or whether it was just an opportunity that wasn't seized. However, what I would say is that both of those things, the development goals and the compacts, present us with some opportunities. I view them both as sort of potential political levers. With the right kind of advocacy, you can use those international agreements - to some extent - to hold a government's feet close to the fire on this issue.

> **The wave of populist politics in Europe and the US is rising, and that fills me with despair. But the raw anger, especially amongst the youth [in Europe about the effects of climate change] gives me hope that there may be real change in the future.**

How do you see the future? Are you pessimistic or optimistic, dystopian or utopian?

I don't have a straightforward answer to that, but I can tell you the things that bring me hope and the things that fill me with fear. I'll start with the things that fill me with fear. I think if you look across Europe and the US there is a new wave of anti-migrant and anti-refugee populist politics. That's undeniable and very worrying. And it's very difficult to see how that's going to change, and it feels to me like that wave of populist politics is rising and, to be honest, that fills me with despair. However, on the other hand, one of the things that fills me with some hope, is if you look across Europe at the moment, it feels to me like they're seeing the consequences of climate change that they will bear the brunt of, and there's a kind of raw anger especially amongst the youth. That gives me hope that there may be real change in the future.

Photo credit: Vlad Sokhin / Shutterstock

Betio, the largest township in Tarawa, the capital of Kiribati. Betio is the most populated place in Kiribati with about 16,000 people living in slum-like conditions within an area of 1.54 square km. It is regularly threatened by rising sea levels and king tides. Because of the population density of almost 10,000 per square kilometre, which is among the highest in Oceania, the atoll is sometimes referred as "Hell in the Pacific". Ioane Teitiota caught the world's attention in 2015 when he fought to become the world's first climate refugee. He desperately tried to keep his family in New Zealand and applied for refugee status "on the basis of changes to his environment in Kiribati caused by sea-level-rise associated with climate change". That fight was unsuccessful, and he was forced to return to Kiribati. However, in the near future, the international community will need to work out how exactly it will treat the expected increasing numbers of "climate refugees" and what status they will be given.

Photo credit: Pascal Maitre / Panos

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. A crowd of onlookers forms around a robot manufactured by ICog-Labs, a technology company working with artificial intelligence, on display at a trade fair organised by the government to celebrate its 25-year rule in 2016. "I think it's a matter of time before AI replaces humans in virtually all of the jobs we currently do. Humans will have to retrain and re-skill more and more often, and more and more radically. We're not currently good at that, we need to get much better at it. But this business of technological unemployment isn't going to happen tomorrow, it's not going to happen in 10 years. As I say, it's probably 30 years. We have to accept that half the population or more will be perpetually unemployable. There will be nothing that we can do for money, this half of us, which a machine can't do cheaper, better and faster." (See full interview with Calum Chace on page 134 of this publication.)

Section 4

Policy and politics

An exploration of the responses of governments and other stakeholders to mixed migration

This section starts with **Managing flow**, a global overview of recent policy changes and other developments related to mixed migration. The subsequent essays, interviews, and reports explore a range of topical issues, including multilateralism, the rise of populism and nationalism, the increasing securitisation of migration and asylum-seeking, and the progress made towards implementing the Global Compact for Migration almost a year after it was adopted. This section also includes a sobering summary of various policy changes and interventions that together herald a "normalisation" of immigration approaches and refugee policies that would previously have been considered extreme.

Managing flow
An overview of legal and policy developments around the world

Summary

The global response to the increasingly politicised debate surrounding mixed migration has been to further protect borders, restrict asylum space, and limit opportunities for irregular movement. At the regional level, there have been various new developments in Europe, the Middle East, the Americas, Asia, and Africa, including agreements and joint accords to deal with migration and the right to seek asylum in a coordinated and multinational manner.

At the global level, governments worldwide adopted the Global Compact for Safe Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees in 2018. Although neither agreement is legally binding upon states, and despite the controversy surrounding their adoption in some countries,[1] they both represent important commitments by governments to work together towards respecting the human rights of people on the move and to provide the conditions for them to move and live in safety and dignity.[2]

In Africa, the African Union (AU) and Morocco signed a hosting agreement to operationalise the African Observatory for Migration and Development and the assembly of the AU endorsed a proposal to set up a Continental Operational Centre in Sudan, as a specialised technical office to combat irregular migration, human trafficking, and migrant smuggling.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) launched a Safe Migration Campaign, as part of the implementation of the 2017 ASEAN Consensus on the Rights of Migrant Workers.

In Europe, following EU parliamentary elections, the president-elect of the EU Commission promised a "fresh approach" to migration through a New Pact on Migration and Asylum. The Commission reflected on progress made and outstanding challenges under the EU Agenda on Migration, and Italy introduced new legislation restricting access to protection for asylum seekers.

In the Americas, countries in Latin America agreed on a regional response to the Venezuela crisis that included commitments to continue to provide humanitarian assistance and access to residency mechanisms, even as countries began restricting access to their territory for Venezuelan migrants and refugees.

The United States continued to restrict access to their asylum system for those fleeing persecution and violence in Central America, putting significant pressure on neighbouring countries.

In the Middle East, countries in the Gulf continued to take steps to nationalise their labour markets and made limited steps towards better protection for migrant workers in the region.

Global

Global Compact on Refugees

In December 2018, the UN General Assembly adopted the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), with 181 countries voting for its adoption, three abstaining (Eritrea, Liberia and Libya) and two voting against (Hungary and the United States).[3]

The GCR, developed through a consultative process led by UNHCR, sets out a "framework for greater responsibility sharing" with countries hosting the largest number of refugees, building upon the existing international law and policy structures.[4] It aims to strengthen the resilience of refugees and host communities through greater assistance to neighbouring countries hosting refugees and affirms the need for a multi-stakeholder approach to refugee situations in order to ease the pressure on host countries and achieve a more sustainable approach to displacement.[5]

1 Newland, K. (2018) *An Overheated Narrative Unanswered: How the Global Compact for Migration Become Controversial* Migration Policy Institute; see also; Vera Espinoza, M. et al. (2019) *Global Compact for Migration: What is it and why are countries opposing it?* The Conversation
2 McAdam, J. (2018) *The Global Compacts on Refugees and Migration: A New Era for International Protection?* International Journal of Refugee Law, Volume 30, Issue 4
3 Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law (2019) *The Global Compacts on Refugees and Migration: Factsheet*
4 Turk, V. (2018) *The Promise and Potential of the Global Compact on Refugees* International Journal of Refugee Law Vol. 30 (4)
5 Ibid. See also; Aleinikoff, A. (2019) *The Unfinished Work of the Global Compact on Refugees* International Journal of Refugee Law Vol. 30 (4)

An important precursor and companion of the GCR is the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (both arose from the landmark 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants), which focuses on developing alternatives to encampment and parallel systems for refugees by strengthening national and local infrastructures to meet the needs of both refugees and host communities, and enabling the economic and social inclusion of refugees.[6] Lessons from the Framework's rollout across dozens of countries were central to the consultations that led to the GCR.[7]

UNHCR has welcomed the adoption of the GCR, calling it the most significant agreement in international refugee protection since the 1951 Refugee Convention.[8] UNHCR has noted that in the current global context, with unprecedented numbers of displaced persons and increasingly restrictive immigration and asylum policies in the global North, the endorsement of the principles of refugee protection and responsibility sharing that the GCR represents is a significant achievement, something that has also been emphasised by commentators.[9]

However, while the GCR is undoubtedly a step forward in the "rhetoric of responsibility sharing",[10] it does not seek to fundamentally reform the current refugee protection regime, nor address the associated crucial law and policy challenges.[11] Instead it relies on a series of new structures, meetings, and consultations to induce states into voluntarily committing resources and resettlement places into the existing refugee system.[12]

Global Compact for Migration

Also in December 2018, the UN General Assembly officially adopted the GCM, with 152 countries voting in favour of adoption, 12 abstaining (Algeria, Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Chile, Italy, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Romania, Singapore and Switzerland) and five voting against (Czech Republic, Hungary, Israel, Poland and the US).[13]

In contrast to the GCR, which explicitly aimed to build on a well-established body of international refugee law and policy,[14] the GCM is the first comprehensive international agreement to holistically cover migration.[15] Developed over two years through state-led intergovernmental negotiations, the GCM is broad in scope, with 23 objectives and associated commitments.[16] Although certain issues have not been fully resolved in the GCM, in particular the relationship between irregular migration and diminishing legal pathways[17] and ending the detention of children,[18] the agreement has been welcomed as a significant achievement in the current international political climate[19] with the potential to provide a basis for new forms of much-needed international cooperation around migration.[20]

Much of the controversy surrounding the signing of the GCM revolved around its legal status and its implications for the sovereignty of states in relation to their treatment of migrants.[21] The GCM has its basis in the existing obligations of states under human rights law and, while it does not create any new rights, it brings together existing rights into a cooperative framework specifically concerning their better implementation in relation to migrants.[22] Although not legally binding, by setting out common "principles, commitments and understandings", the compact may come to have a norm-setting role in regard to the interpretation of existing rules in areas of international law and does represent commitments made at an international level that states have pledged to respect.[23]

6   Turk, V. (2018) op.cit.
7   UNHCR *Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework*
8   Aleinikoff, A. (2019) op. cit.
9   Ibid. See also Betts, A. (2018) *The Global Compact on Refugees: Towards a Theory of Change?* International Journal of Refugee Law Vol. 30 (4)
10   Doyle, M. (2019) *Responsibility Sharing: From Principle to Policy* International Journal of Refugee Law Vol. 30 (4)
11   Hathaway, J. (2018) *The Global Cop-out on Refugees* International Journal of Refugee Law Vol. 30 (4) Aleinikoff, A. (2018) *The Unfinished Work of the Global Compact on Refugees* International Journal of Refugee Law Vol. 30 (4)
12   Betts, A (2018) op. cit.
13   Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law (2019) *The Global Compacts on Refugees and Migration: Factsheet*
14   McAdam, J. (2018) op. cit.
15   Allison, K. (2019) *GCM Commentary: The Legal Status of the UN's Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Refugee Migration in International and UK Law* Refugee Law Initiative; Klein Solomon, M. Sheldon, S. (2018) *The Global Compact for Migration: For the Sustainable Development Goals to a Comprehensive Agreement on Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration* International Journal of Refugee Law Vol. 30 (4);
16   Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law (2019) *The Global Compacts on Refugees and Migration: Factsheet*
17   Foresti, M. (2018) *Long Live Multilateralism: Why the Global Compact for Migration Matters* Refugees Deeply
18   Crépeau, F (2018) *Towards a Mobile and Diverse World: 'Facilitating Mobility' as a Central Objective of the Global Compact for Migration* International Journal of Refugee Law Vol. 30 (4)
19   Newland, K. (2018) *The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration: An Unlikely Achievement* International Journal of Refugee Law Vol. 30 (4)
20   Ibid.; Foresti, M. (2018) op. cit.
21   See for instance, re Australia; Dastyari, A. (2018) *Explainer: Why is Australia adopting the global refugee compact but not the migration compact* The Conversation; re the US; Lederer, E. (2018) *US intensifies opposition to UN Global Compact for Migration* Associated Press; and more generally: Vera Espinoza, M. et al. (2019) *Global Compact for Migration: What is it and why are countries opposing it?* The Conversation
22   Allison, K. (2019) *GCM Commentary: The Legal Status of the UN's Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Refugee Migration in International and UK Law* Refugee Law Initiative
23   Allison, K. (2019) Op. Cit.

The summary report 'Wheels in motion' on page 208 of this Mixed Migration Review describes the progress towards implementation of the GCM one year after its adoption.

Global Forum on Migration and Development, Ecuador

The 2019 Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) will take place in Ecuador in November 2019 under the theme "Sustainable approaches to human mobility: upholding rights, strengthening state agency, and advancing development through partnerships and collective action".[24] Under this theme, the Ecuadorian chairmanship has identified "Joint responses to mixed migration flows: Partnerships and collective action to protect rights" as the first of three substantives areas of focus for the forum.[25] This area of focus aims to stimulate exchange on innovative approaches and lessons learned in dealing with situations of mixed movements in a manner that upholds and protects the safety, dignity and human rights of those on the move.[26]

Africa

AU focus on refugees, returnees, and IDPs

Fifty years since the adoption of the 1969 Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Refugee Convention[27] and 10 years since the adoption of the 2009 Kampala Convention[28] the AU (which replaced the OAU in 2001) declared 2019 as the Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions for Forced Displacement in Africa.[29] In collaboration with UNHCR, the AU hosts a series of continental consultative meetings addressing issues relevant to the theme, including the mixed movement of refugees and migrants.[30] The Concept Note for this year's theme references the challenges associated with the scale of displacement and the mixed movement of migrants and refugees in regions across Africa.[31]

Migration observatory planned in Morocco

On the sidelines of the UN Inter-governmental Conference on Migration in Marrakesh, Morocco and the AU Commission signed a host agreement to operationalize the African Observatory for Migration and Development.[32] The observatory will be headquartered in Rabat and aims to support the existing continental initiatives on migration and the implementation of the GCM through the collection, exchange, analysis and sharing of data.[33]

Continental Operational Centre

In January 2019, the Assembly of the African Union endorsed the creation of a Continental Operational Centre in Khartoum for combating irregular migration.[34] Although details on the centre are limited, it is intended as a specialised technical office of the AU for combating irregular migration with a particular focus on human trafficking and migrant smuggling in Africa.[35] During the 5th Pan African Forum on Migration in Cairo in September 2019, the Director of the Social Affairs Department for the African Union Commission stated that the AU would operationalise the proposed Continental Operational Centre as soon as possible.[36]

ECOWAS workshop to review strategy on mixed migration

In June 2019, the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS), in collaboration with IOM, hosted a workshop with representatives from the Migration Dialogue for West Africa's technical working group on mixed migration. The workshop reviewed ECOWAS's strategy on mixed migration and offered a platform to define priorities to strengthen the regional protection environment for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants within and outside the region.[37]

IGAD promotes Free Movement of Persons protocol

Throughout 2018 and 2019, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) held a series of meetings to discuss the terms of the rollout of the "Draft Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and Its Road Map for Negotiation and Implementation".[38] The protocol will set assurances that citizens of IGAD member states will

24 Global Forum on Migration & Development (2019) *The 2019 Ecuador Chairmanship*
25 Ibid.
26 Global Forum on Migration & Development (2019) *GFMD 2019 - Concept Paper*
27 *Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa*
28 African Union *African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa*
29 African Union (2019) *Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa at center of 32nd AU Summit Opening of the 37th Ordinary Session of the PRC*
30 Ibid.
31 African Union (2019) *Concept note on the theme of the year: 'Refugees and Returnees and Internally Displacement Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa*
32 Africa Union (2019) *Key Decisions of the 32nd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union (January 2019)*
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
36 African Union (2019) *Strengthening migration data & research at the center of PAFOM discussions*
37 IOM (2019) *IOM, ECOWAS Take Steps Towards Establishing Regional Strategy on Mixed Migration*
38 IGAD (2019) *IGAD Engages in Regional Discussions of Free Movement of Persons*

have the right to enter, stay, move freely and exit other member states.[39] This is linked to the Regional Migration Policy Framework adopted by IGAD in 2012 and the IGAD-Migration Action Plan (2015-2020).[40]

Middle East

Labour policy reform in the Gulf

Over the past several years, countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have been pursuing policies to nationalise their labour industries, replacing foreign workers with local citizens.[41] In July 2019, Saudi Arabia announced plans to ban foreign workers from certain jobs in the hospitality sector, the latest in a series of bans on foreign workers in certain private sector industries.[42]

Host to 23.8 million migrant workers – some 14.5 percent of the global migrant workforce – the GCC countries have come under sustained criticism for the role their labour policies play in enabling the abuse of migrants workers, due in part to the kafala (sponsorship) systems prevalent throughout the region.[43] However, several countries in the region have made some positive legislative changes toward migrant workers in recent years:[44]

- **Bahrain** launched a flexible work permit system in 2017. The Flexi Permit allows foreign workers with terminated or expired work permits to regularise their status without a sponsor and receive a two-year work permit.[45] In 2018, Bahrain introduced the Wage Protection System, obliging employers to pay their workers via bank accounts so as to protect workers from the risk of employers withholding payments.[46] However, the implementation of the system has been repeatedly delayed.[47] In 2018, Bahrain released a standardised "Tripartite Domestic Contract" to be signed by workers, recruitment agencies, and employers, which outlines the rights and obligations of each party, including duties, working hours, and leave days. Bahrain's parliament also voted to extend free healthcare to all domestic workers in 2018.[48]

- **Qatar** adopted a new labour law partially removing the exit permit requirement for migrant workers in 2018.[49] The exit permit requirement obliged migrant workers to obtain the permission of their employers in order to leave the country.[50] However, the new law does cover all types of migrant worker; domestic staff, for example, are excluded from its remit.[51] In May 2019, public institutions in Qatar pledged to ensure the fair recruitment of migrant workers in Qatar.[52]

- In 2018, the **United Arab Emirates** introduced labour reforms to better regulate the recruitment of domestic workers, allow workers to work for multiple employers, and introduced a new insurance policy to protect private sector employees' benefits.[53]

- In December 2018, **Kuwait** and the International Labour Organization signed the first Kuwait Decent Work Programme.[54] The programme focuses on enhancing the skills of foreign workers, improving the governance of foreign labour and strengthening social dialogue and tripartism.[55] In May 2018 Kuwait and the Philippines agreed on additional legal protections for Filipino workers in Kuwait[56] after the Philippines temporally banned migration to Kuwait after the deaths of seven Filipino domestic workers.[57]

EU-Arab Summit

In February 2019, the first EU-Arab Summit was hosted in Egypt by the League of Arab States (LAS) and the European Union. Marking the start of a new dialogue between the LAS and the EU, the aim of the summit was to boost cooperation in security, conflict resolution and socio-economic development throughout the region.[58] The summit resulted in the Sharm El Sheikh Declaration. The declaration covered migration through: regional cooperation between the LAS, EU, the UN and the African Union AU; commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; protection of and support to refugees in accordance with international

39 New Vision (2019) *IGAD debuts protocol on free movement of persons, labour.*
40 IGAD (2014) *IGAD-Migration Action Plan*
41 Middle-East Monitor (2019) *GCC employment policies threaten livlihoods of 25m expats*
42 World Politics Review (2019) *What's Behind Saudi Arabia's Pivot Away from Foreign Workers*
43 Atong, K. et al. (2018) *Africa Labour Migration to the GCC States: The case of Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda* African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation; Faragues, P. & Shah, M. (2017) *Skilful Survivals: Irregular Migration to the Gulf* Gulf Research Centre Cambridge
44 Amnesty International (2019) *Human Rights in the Middle East and North Africa: Review of 2018*
45 Bahrain Labour Market Regulatory Authority *Flexi Permit*
46 Migrant Rights (2019) *Bahrain yet again postpones the implementation of the Wage-Protection System*
47 Ibid.
48 Migrant Rights (2018) *Bahrain may provide free healthcare for domestic workers*
49 Ratcliffe, R. (2018) *Qatar law change hailed as milestone for migrant workers in World Cup run-up* The Guardian
50 Ibid.
51 Ibid.
52 Mixed Migration Centre (2019) *Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: Middle-East Quarter 2*
53 Ibid.
54 ILO (2018) *Kuwait and ILO sign the country's first Decent Work Programme*
55 Ibid.
56 De Vera, A. (2018) *PH, Kuwait sign agreement to 'provide legal protection' to Filipino workers in the Gulf state* Manila Bulletin
57 Human Rights Watch (2019) *Kuwait: Events of 2018*
58 EU Council (2019) *EU-League of Arab States Summit in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt*

law; and combatting irregular migration, smuggling and trafficking.

Syria conference

In March 2019, the EU and UN hosted the Third Conference on "Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region". Participants announced pledges for Syria and region amounting to $7 billion in 2019 and $20.7 billion in concessional loans.[59] In 2019, needs for the Humanitarian Response Plan for Syria amounted to $3.3 billion and those for the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan amounted to $5.5 billion.[60]

Americas

Working together on Venezuela

In September 2018, the governments of 13 Latin America countries[61] met in Peru to coordinate the regional response to the Venezuelan mixed migration situation. At the end of the meeting 11 of the 13 countries[62] adopted the Declaration of Quito on Human Mobility of Venezuelan Citizens in the Region.[63] In doing so, countries agreed to: continue to provide humanitarian assistance and access to regular residency mechanisms for Venezuelan migrants and refugees; accept expired travel documents as evidence of identity; fight against discrimination and xenophobia; and, to the extent possible, give Venezuelan refugees and migration access to healthcare, education and employment opportunities.[64]

In November 2018, during a second meeting, governments[65] adopted the Quito Action Plan on Human Mobility of Venezuelan Citizens in the Region, covering three thematic areas: regularisation of Venezuelan nationals; regional cooperation with Venezuela; and international cooperation with states in the region.[66]

In a series of subsequent meetings in April and July 2019 regional governments reported on progress under the Action Plan, adopted subsequent road maps, and urged the international community to allocate more funding to the plan's implementation.[67]

Regional plan for refugees and migrants

In December 2018, the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform adopted a Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan to support and complement national authorities across Latin America and the Caribbean.[68] The plan aims to provide holistic, integrated and comprehensive responses to the needs of refugees and migrants from Venezuela in countries across Latin America and the Caribbean, and will be implemented through regional and national interagency coordination platforms.[69]

The regional response is structured around providing direct emergency assistance, protecting the rights of refugee and migrants, socio-economic integration, and strengthening the capacity of host governments.[70]

The Regional Platform has 40 participating organisations, including 17 UN agencies, 14 NGOs, five donors and two international financial institutions, and has country-level coordination platforms in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and other impacted countries.[71] In late October 2019, the EU, together with UNHCR and IOM, was due to co-host an International Solidarity Conference on the Venezuelan refugee and migrant crisis in Brussels.[72] The conference aims to raise awareness about the crisis, reaffirming political support and calling for increased international assistance.[73]

59 Council of Europe (2019) *Brussels III Conference on 'Supporting the future of Syria and the region'; co-chairs declaration*
60 *Syrian Arab Republic: 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan (January - December 2019)*
61 Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.
62 Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay
63 *Declaration of Quito on Human Mobility of Venezuelan Citizens in the Region*
64 MMC (2019) *Waning welcome: the growing challenges facing mixed migration flows from Venezuela*
65 Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay
66 Ibid.; *Plan de Acción sobre Movilidad humana de ciudadanos venezolanos en la region (Plan de Acción de Quito) (2018)*
67 Ibid.
68 Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (2019) *Regional Refugee and Migrants Response Plan for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela: January – December 2019*
69 MMC (2019) *Waning welcome: the growing challenges facing mixed migration flows from Venezuela*
70 Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (2019) op. cit.
71 Ibid.
72 EU (2019) *Mogherini announces Solidarity Conference on Venezuelan refugee and migrants crisis*
73 Ibid.

US seeks to limit right to asylum at its southern border

In November 2018, President Trump issued Proclamation 9822 "Addressing Mass Migration through the Southern Border of the United States", barring entry to anyone crossing the southern border from Mexico outside official ports of entry for 90 days.[74] In conjunction with this proclamation, the Departments of Homeland Security and Justice adopted an interim final rule declaring that those who contravened the presidential proclamation after it came into effect would not be eligible to apply for asylum, effectively preventing anyone crossing the border outside of official ports of entry from claiming asylum.[75] In November, a federal district court judge issued a temporary restraining order, and in December, a preliminary injunction blocking the change for taking effect.[76]

In July 2019, the Trump administration issued a joint interim final rule that made individuals entering the US across the southern border with Mexico ineligible for asylum if they had passed through another country in which they did not attempt to seek asylum.[77] There are exemptions for victims of "severe form[s] of trafficking in persons" and those who have transited through countries that are not party to the 1951 Refugee Convention.[78] Although the rule faced a swift preliminary injunction by the courts in July,[79] in September the US Supreme Court issued an order staying the injunction and allowing the US administration to proceed with its implementation while its legality is decided by the courts.[80] UNHCR has expressed deep concern about the new rule, stating that it will endanger vulnerable people in need of international protection from violence or persecution.[81]

Safe third countries?

The July 2019 interim rule follows several failed attempts by the US administration to sign agreements with Mexico and Guatemala designating them "safe third countries" and allowing the US to return asylum seekers to these countries to pursue asylum.

In July 2019, **Guatemala**'s Constitutional Court halted the designation of Guatemala as a safe third country as part of an agreement between the two countries, ruling that the decision needed legislative approval.[82] However, following threats from the US administration of tariffs, fees on remittances, and travel restrictions on Guatemalan citizens, the US government announced that it had signed an agreement with Guatemala on asylum, although details of the agreement remain scarce.[83]

Commentators have raised concerns with both the designation of Guatemala as a safe third country and the way in which the agreement was conducted, arguing that pressing Guatemala into this agreement threatens political stability in the country and the region, and unravels Guatemalan efforts to build judicial integrity, anti-corruption campaigns and the rule of law.[84]

Mexico has consistently refused the designation of a safe third country.[85] However, in response to threats of escalating tariffs on Mexican goods by the US administration in June 2019, Mexico signed an agreement with the US to "address the shared challenges of irregular migration" and to "take unprecedented steps to increase enforcement".[86] Following the agreement, Mexico deployed over 6,000 security force personnel to its southern border and some 15,000 to its northern border.[87] In September 2019, representatives from the US and Mexico met to review progress under the deal, citing a reduction in the number of asylum seekers, migrants, and refugees arriving at the US border since June as evidence of Mexico's successful implementation of the terms of the agreement.[88]

Returns to Mexico

In January 2019, the US administration introduced Migrant Protection Protocols whereby certain asylum seekers and undocumented migrants are returned from the US to Mexico, where they remain for the duration of their immigration proceedings, relying on Mexico for the provision of humanitarian protection and support.[89]

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74   The White House (2018) *Proclamation 9822 Addressing Mas Migration Through the Southern Border of the United States* Federal Register Vol. 82 No. 211
75   Federal Register (2018) *Aliens Subject to a Bar on Entry Under Certain Presidential Proclamations; Procedures for Protection Claims*; Pierce, S. (2019) *Immigration-Related Policy Changes in the First Two Years of the Trump Administration* Migration Policy Institute
76   Pierce, S. (2019) op. cit.
77   Dept of Homeland Security (2019) *Third Country Asylum Rule*
78   Ibid.
79   Trotta, D. (2019) *U.S judge blocks Trump's latest sweeping asylum rule* Reuters
80   Hurley, L. Trotta, D (2019) *Supreme Court allow Trump to deny asylum to many Central Americans* Reuters
81   UNHCR (2019) *UNHCR deeply concerned about the new U.S. asylum restrictions*
82   Menchu, S. (2019) *Guatemalan court halts 'safe third country' designation for asylum seekers* Reuters
83   Semple, K. (2019) *The U.S. and Guatemala Reached an Asylum Deal: Here's What it Means* The New York Times
84   Carasik, L. (2019) *Trump's Safe Third Country Agreement With Guatemala Is a Lie* Foreign Policy Argument
85   Al Jazeera (2019) *Mexico 'won't accept the US request' for safe third country agreement*
86   Stack, L. (2019) *U.S. and Mexico Issue a Joint Declaration on Migration and Tariffs* New York Times
87   Graham, D. (2019) *Mexico says it has deployed 15,000 forces in the north to halt U.S. – bound migration* Reuters
88   Alper, A. (2019) *Mexico sees decrease in U.S. – bound immigration from Central America* Reuters
89   DHS (2019) *Migrant Protection Protocols*

Under the agreement between the US and Mexico in June 2019, implementation of the Migrant Protection Protocols was expanded.[90]

Europe

EU parliamentary elections: a 'fresh' approach

Despite campaign rhetoric ahead of the EU parliamentary elections in May 2019, a number of polls before and after the elections found that, while still a central issue, migration to the EU was of diminishing importance for voters compared with previous EU elections, competing with corruption, unemployment, the cost of living, the rise of nationalism and increased concern about climate change.[91]

In September 2019, Ursula von der Leyen, the European Commission president-elect, promised a "fresh start on migration" and indicated that she would propose a New Pact on Migration and Asylum and a reform of the Dublin system of asylum rules. One of her first initiatives was to unveil a new role: vice-president for "protecting the European way of life", a title which immediately attracted much criticism for its xenophobic overtones.[92]

EU takes stock of its migration agenda

In March 2019, the European Commission reviewed the progress made under the European Agenda on Migration since 2015, highlighting achievements in border protection, the reduced level of irregular arrivals of migrants and asylum seekers in the EU, and key problems that remain unresolved, including developing an asylum system that is fit for purpose.[93]

The Agenda on Migration has involved the deployment of significant diplomatic, policy and financial resources of the EU and its member states since 2015 for initiatives including the establishment of the Hotspot approach in Greece and Italy, the launch of the EU Trust Fund for Africa and the new European and Border Coast Guard, as well as extensive work towards the reformation of the Common European Asylum System.[94] In 2019, the EU announced a significant expansion in the size and mandate of the European Border and Coast Guard (also known as Frontex), including setting up a standing corps of 10,000 border guards and greater powers for tasks relating to border control and return of rejected asylum seekers.[95]

Reflecting on this significant expansion in the EU's migration management efforts under the European Agenda on Migration, in 2018 the EU Commission proposed a 300 percent expansion in funding for migration and border management in the next EU budget (2021-27), up to 34.9 billion euros.[96]

However, many of the measures taken under the EU Agenda on Migration have often deflected rather than addressed the challenges that brought about a crisis in EU asylum and migration policy and cooperation in 2015. A lack of consensus around a reform of the Common Asylum System has contributed to the crisis in the Greek Islands and the standoffs between rescue boats and frontline EU member states refusing disembarkation to rescue asylum seekers and migrants.

Reform of the EU Common Asylum System

The programme for the reform of the Common European Asylum System, proposed by the European Commission in 2016, proved to be too ambitious to be concluded during the 2014-2019 parliamentary term, with disagreements between the EU Council and Parliament, particularly around solidarity between member states.[97] Although five of the seven Commission proposals for reform of the Asylum System have reached a late stage of negotiations between Parliament and Council, less progress has been made on the proposals around the reform of the Dublin Regulation and the Asylum Procedures Regulation.[98]

Following the EU Parliamentary Elections in 2019, it is unclear to what extent negotiations will continue on the current proposals, although the EU Commission president-elect has indicated that she will relaunch the reform of the Dublin asylum rules.[99] As noted by an analyst from the European Council of Refugees and Exiles, as a result of the stalling negotiations, member states are increasingly relying upon bilateral agreements for the disembarkation and internal transfers of asylum seekers.[100]

In July 2019, French President Emmanuel Macron announced that 14 EU member states had in principle

90 Reuters (2019) *U.S. says to expand program sending asylum seekers to Mexico*

91 European Council on Foreign Relations (2019) *A majority of Europe's voters do not consider migration to be the most important issue, according to a major new poll*; European Commission (2019) *Spring 2019 Standard Eurobarometer: Europeans upbeat about the state of the European Union – best results in 5 years*

92 Rankin, J.(2019) *Commission MEPs damn 'protecting European way of life' job title*. The Guardian.

93 European Commission (2019) *Migration: Immediate measures needed*

94 Ibid.

95 European Commission (2019) *European Border and Coast Guard: The Commission welcomes agreement on a standing corps of 10,000 border guards by 2017*

96 European Commission (2019) *A step-change in migration management and border security*

97 Pollet, K. (2019) *All in vain? The fate of EP positions on the asylum reform after the European elections* EU Migration Law Blog

98 Ibid.

99 Ibid.; See also: Von der Lyen, U. (2019) *A Union that strives for move: My agenda for Europe*

100 Ibid.; See also: Hruschka, C. (2019) *The Border Spell: Dublin arrangement or bilateral agreements? Reflections on the cooperation between Germany and Greece/Spain in the context of control at the German-Austrian border* EU Migration Law Blog

agreed to a new "solidarity mechanism" for the relocation of migrants and asylum seekers.[101] In September, the interior ministers of France, Germany, Italy and Malta announced their agreement to a new mechanism for the relocation of migrants and refugees saved in the Mediterranean.[102] In late September, State Watch released the text of the "Joint Declaration of Intent on a Controlled Emergency Procedure – Voluntary Commitments by Member States for a Predictable Temporary Solidarity Mechanism" drafted by France, Germany, Italy and Malta.[103] The scheme was scheduled to be presented to the interior ministers of the other EU member states in October.[104]

Italy's 'Security Decree'

In late 2018, Italy adopted Law no. 132, which greatly affects the legal provisions and protections for migrants in Italy, particularly those seeking asylum.[105] The new "Security Decree" abolishes humanitarian protection in Italy, replacing it with "special permits" applicable in limited circumstances, withdraws social services while asylum claims are pending, and extends the period Italian authorities can detain new arrivals for while their identities and nationalities are being verified.[106]

Although the decree was intended to facilitate the return of asylum seekers and undocumented migrants, the lack of readmission agreements between Italy and countries of origin means that many of those who lose their protection status as a result of the decree, or are found to be ineligible for protection, will be forced into an irregular situation.[107]

There has been extensive debate concerning the constitutionality of the decree, both in relation to its contents and the methods by which it was approved. With Italy getting a new left-leaning government in September 2019, in which Luciana Lamorgese, replaced far-right Matteo Salvini as interior minister, Italian migration policies are expected to change.[108]

ICC asked to prosecute EU over migration policies

In June 2019, the International Criminal Court (ICC) received a legal submission from international lawyers calling for the EU and certain members states to face prosecution for its post-2015 migration policy and the shift towards policies focusing on deterrence.[109] The submission calls for the ICC to open an investigation into EU migration policies, which the submission argues have resulted in deaths by drowning, the refoulement of tens of thousands of people attempting to flee Libya, and "complicity in the subsequent crimes of deportation, murder, imprisonment, enslavement, torture, rape, persecution and other inhuman acts, taking place in Libyan detention camps and torture houses."[110]

Asia

Thailand moves to end detention of child migrants

In January 2019, the Thai government, the ministries of Social Development and Human Security, Foreign Affairs, Interior, Health, Education, and Labour and the Royal Thai Police signed an MoU on the Determination of Measures and Approaches Alternative to Detention of Children in Immigration Detention Centres.[111] The MoU acknowledges that children should only be detained as a last resort and for as brief a period as possible. It paves the way for the establishment of detailed internal government procedures to release children and their mothers from immigration detention and into community-based alternatives.[112]

ASEAN campaign on labour migration

In December 2018, ASEAN launched the ASEAN Safe Migration Campaign to raise awareness on safe labour migration to the benefit of all.[113] The campaign contributes to the implementation of the 2017 ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrants Workers.[114] Following the launch of the campaign, ASEAN and the European Union convened the ASEAN-EU Dialogue, themed around "ASEAN and EU Labour mobility – Sharing experiences and lessons learnt."[115]

Malaysia, Nepal agree on migrant worker protection

In October 2018, the governments of Malaysia and Nepal signed an MoU to establish a framework on the recruitment, employment, and repatriation of migrant

101 Al Jazeera (2019) *Macron: EU countries agree to new migrants and refugee mechanism*
102 Scicluna, C. (2019) *Five EU States agree migration deal, look for broader backing* Reuters
103 Statewatch (2019) *The 'temporary solidarity mechanism' on relocation of people rescued at sea – what does it say?*
104 Ibid.
105 Corsi, C. (2019) *Evaluating the 'Salvini Decree': Doubts of constitutional legitimacy* Migration Policy Centre
106 Brenner, Y. & Forin, R. (2019) *Italy's New Asylum Legislation: toward a better migration management?* Mixed Migration Centre
107 Ibid.
108 Corsi, C. (2019) op. cit.; Tondo, L. (2019) *Matteo Salvini replaced by migration specialist in new Italy coalition*
109 Stierl, M. (2019) *EU sued at the International Criminal Court over Mediterranean migration policy – as more die at sea* The Conversation
110 Ibid.
111 Fortify Rights (2019) *Joint Statement on the Memorandum of Understanding on the Determination of Measures and Approaches Alternative to Detention of Children in Immigration Detention Centres*; Chew, V. (2019) *How change happened in Thailand* International Detention Coalition
112 Ibid.
113 ASEAN (2018) *ASEAN launches Safe Migration Campaign; top ASEA, EU officials discuss safe labour migration*
114 ASEAN (2018) *ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers*
115 ASEAN (2018) *ASEAN launches Safe Migration Campaign; top ASEA, EU officials discuss safe labour migration*

workers, aiming to protect both the rights of workers and employers.[116] According to the Malaysian government, there are 1,892,247 migrant workers in Malaysia, including 358,211 from Nepal.[117]

Medical evacuation law makes waves in Australia

In March 2019, the Australian parliament passed the Urgent Medical Treatment Bill (also known as the "Medevac Bill"), which allows two independent Australian doctors to recommend a refugee or asylum seeker requiring urgent medical assistance be transferred from holding facilities on Manus Island or Nauru to Australia for temporary treatment. Previously, such transfers required individual government approval, and many cases requiring emergency treatment were rejected, and/or subject to lengthy court battles.[118] The law still allows the minister of home affairs to veto the transfer on the grounds of security.[119]

The bill generated substantial opposition from the conservative government (Liberal Party), which announced it would open the Christmas Island detention centre in anticipation of an increase in the number of arrivals that it said would be triggered by the legislation, at a predicted cost to taxpayers of A$185 million ($125 million).[120] As of early October, around 130 medical evacuations have taken place, while several dozen were refused.[121] Also in October, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet urged the Australian government to abandon its plan to repeal the Medevac Bill and highlighted the "harmful effect" of Australia's prolonged mandatory detention policy.[122]

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116 Kumar Mandal, C. (2018) *Nepal and Malaysia sign labour pact* The Katmandu Post
117 Ibid.
118 Reilly, A. (2019) *Peter Dutton is whipping up fear on the medevac law, but it defies logic and compassion* The Conversation
119 Refugee Council of Australia (2019) *Medevac Bill: The Facts*
120 AFP (2019) *Australia announces reopening of offshore detention center*; Refugee Council of Australia (2019) *Offshore processing statistics*
121 Grattan, M. (2019) *Grattan on Friday: Jackie Lambie should not horse trade on medevac repeal bill* The Conversation
122 Baker, N. (2019) *UN human rights chief urges Australia to keep medevac laws, slams 'harmful' offshore sites* SBS News; Reilly, A. (2019) op. cit.; The Guardian (2019) *Medevac repeal bill: Coalition accused of trying to reinstate 'sociopathic' regime*

Interview

Safety first

In the likely absence of imminent global peace, there is little chance mixed migration flows will diminish in the foreseeable future, predicts **Alexander Aleinikoff**. This calls for an overhaul of the outdated international system for managing refugees and migrants, one with a new vision of what protection means, and seats reserved at the policy table for those on the move.

T. Alexander Aleinikoff, author of various books and journal articles on migration, is Director of the Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility at The New School in New York City and served, from 2010 to 2015, as Deputy for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), in Geneva. He hosts a podcast called Tempest Tossed that offers "conversations on immigration and refugees that go beyond the predictable soundbites". His new book (with Leah Zamore), The Arc of Protection: Reforming the International Refugee Regime was published by Stanford University Press in September October 2019.

UNHCR reported earlier this year that the number of displaced and refugees was over 70 million people – a record high. Why are the numbers so high and what will the future numbers look like?

I think there are two different causes. There is forced displacement when societies fall apart, when groups within different states take up arms against each other, and then there is displacement caused by natural disasters and the climate crisis. Combined, these send lots of people across borders.

In terms of future movement, unless peace breaks out all over the world and in every country of the world, you'll continue to see people forced from their homes because of conflict. And then on top of that, there are very few solutions, so people don't go home, so you have

new flows on top of existing displacement. In earlier times, displaced persons either returned home or were integrated into the societies that gave them safety, so the numbers didn't increase so dramatically.

In terms of migrants, people not fleeing because of violence, I think it's very likely that those numbers will go up. The World Bank has reported on the number of jobs that will be needed, employment that'll be needed in the Global South to match the increase in the size of the labour force over the next 10, 20, 30 years. And then, I think climate is going to play a major role in movement of people either whether it's what we call "slow onset" – drought over many years, or sea level rise – or more dramatic events, tsunamis and big storms and lots of rain that force people out as well. So for the future, it seems likely that both the number of people forcibly

displaced and who otherwise choose to move will continue to go up.

Existing refugee numbers already seem to present an intractable challenge at a political and societal level. What will it take to encourage people to absorb future greater numbers of displaced people and refugees? What paradigm shift is necessary here?

It's not just absorption. It's also safe return. There are lots of ways that people can move out of the status of refugee or displaced person. I think you see beginnings of that in the two Global Compacts. The problem is that there is no current structure in the refugee regime for developing comprehensive solutions. Displacement situations are handled on a case-by-case basis without learning from one situation to another and without significant resources being devoted to them. So it will require both structural change and then political will.

> " **There is no current structure in the refugee regime for comprehensive solutions ... The central failing of the system is that people do not get out of these refugee situations ... they stay refugees for decades.** "

To what extent is the current refugee regime struggling to address the international refugee situation? What are the key failings?

When the [1951] Refugee Convention was adopted and the regime was put in place, the thinking was that people would flee across borders, would be taken care of for some period of time and then they would be able to go – or actually, in the beginning, they would be absorbed into the countries that welcomed them because this was going to be a flow from Eastern Europe to Western Europe and there were political reasons to absorb the Eastern Europeans coming to the West. Over the years that gave way, and we're now in a situation where the majority of refugees are in protracted situations – they can't go home and are not offered permanent settlement elsewhere.

The central failing of the system is that people do not get out of these refugee situations. This means that the flow across the Mediterranean in 2015, which sent political shockwaves through the EU and brought the EU to its knees politically, is not the major problem. Yes, it was terribly difficult for people crossing and those thousands who lost their lives, it was a horrible tragedy, but the equally important and usually ignored issue, at least in the Global North, are these long-standing situations in the South where people are given emergency relief when they flee and allowed some kind of status across a border, but the conflicts that sent them don't get resolved, the countries into which they

fled don't absorb them, and resettlement opportunities are very slight. So that is the central failure of the current system: it does not have a structure or a set of norms for dealing with these long-standing situations, so people stay refugees for years and for decades.

Do you think there's a tailwind being built up of like-minded people like yourself, academics, activists, governments who feel the current regime is not serving the population need? Where does this put UNHCR in terms of the calls for reform?

There have been a couple of developments over last number of years that are important. One is the recognition that the development agencies need to play an active part in resolving these situations; so the role of the World Bank here really is a game changer – as are the actions of other development actors who have come in – and that is recognised in the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and in the Global Compact for Refugees.

Second, there is a recognition of the need for support platforms that would bring dedicated resources to resolve these long-standing situations. These are important changes that UNHCR supported and was behind and helped craft. So I don't think UNHCR is politically in a tough situation that way, I think that they have supported efforts that will lead us towards making progress.

I think that the hard problem is with the right wing and the populist politics in the donor states and the so-called asylum crisis in the global north. The actions of the United States in terms of how it's treating asylum seekers – which really betrays the history of the US welcome of refugees – in particular has done great damage. The 75 percent reduction in refugee [re] settlement numbers, the treatment of asylum seekers at the southwest border, all send a message of unwelcome and disdain for helping to move the system forward.

That being said, I think the New York Declaration and the Global Compact on Refugees are ways to move forward, and now that has to be built on; nations need to get behind the effort, even if the United States is not going to be a significant actor. The US funding for UNHCR, I think it's still at an all-time high now, so that has not been cut back.

It could be argued that countries and blocs such as the US, Australia, Europe and others are becoming more brazen in their breaching of the international agreements on refugees and are now doing their own thing. Do you think this is a long-term trend or a short-term trend, and what are the risks if this trend carries forward?

Yes, but I think they've always done their own thing. I think the implementation of refugee norms has always

been left to states; there's no international adjudication system or enforcement system, so UNHCR can advise but it's always left to the states as to how they choose to interpret the law. I would distinguish between rights of access and then rights once recognised as refugees; so the global northern states, for people who are recognised as refugees, still give a pretty full portfolio of rights, right to work, right to social benefits and the like. It's getting there, and getting recognised, that's become the difficulty. We see a plethora of policies in the global North to deter, to detain, to deflect people from access. And that's in part a function of people thinking, "Well, if we recognise them, they'll now have all these rights."

I think the problem in a lot of the hosting states in the global South is different. There people are welcomed in, but they're denied rights once they enter, so in many places refugees do not have the right to work, are not protected by social protection schemes, they're limited to living in camps, they're not given free movement, all of which are rights protected by the Convention. So you have different rights problems in different regions of the world.

If the assistance for millions of refugees looks like containment in the global south - and it looks like that is the best the international community can agree on - is that better than opening the whole question of refugee protection and assistance and risking a rollback where many countries might refuse to sign a newly negotiated agreement or some new compact?

I don't think we're risking more of a rollback than we've seen. I think one of the really interesting things about the New York Declaration and the Global Compact on Refugees is that they affirm the fundamental norms of the system, at a time where one might have thought there would be rollback. It was really in some ways the worst time to be writing these documents, given what was happening across the Mediterranean and elsewhere around the world, and yet they stood firm on those principles.

Refugees make up a very small proportion of the world's population and even a minority of persons who are forcibly displaced from their homes. So yes, we need to make the refugee system work better, but then there are tens of millions of people who are not receiving formal protection and other kinds of assistance outside their country, on the move, some of them forced from their homes, and that is to me, even a bigger challenge in terms of the demands on the international community.

Looking at the mixed migration flows, it's been said that governments have a stark choice ahead of them: they can either facilitate safe, legal migration or they can attempt to stop people moving and create crises where they are.

I think the southwest border of the United States makes that very clear, where President Trump has tried measure after measure to stop the flow, and it hasn't been stopped so far. But if it is stopped, it's going to be stopped with violence against the people who are fleeing violent situations, and that can't be an appropriate mix of policies.

Do you think we're seeing countries quite worried about creating a legal precedent in granting environmental-induced mobility refugee status?

Of course. I mean, the numbers here are potentially huge, and states are not interested in taking on new international obligations; even the Global Compacts on refugees and on migrants do not establish binding norms. So we're not in a position where major international treaties, conventions, norms are going to be adopted by states. We're going to have to think of other strategies of persuasion to get states to respond to what will be the coming tens of millions of people forced from their homes.

> " **We're not in a position where major international treaties are going to be adopted by states, so we're going to have to think of other strategies of persuasion to get states to respond to what will be the coming tens of millions of people forced from their homes.** "

Most persons displaced due to environmental events will stay within their countries of origin, but many – including people fleeing sinking islands – will cross international borders, and we have no international structure, no international norms, and those governance issues really need to be built over the next few years.

And there we're only at a very rudimentary stage, and we haven't decided yet whether this fits into the refugee system. Should it come within a structure of regulating migration, or does it belong under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change? Is it an aspect of climate change issues? None of those issues have been worked out. And that is the challenge I think going forward which really has to be dealt with very, very soon.

The compact on refugees doesn't mention environment-induced movement at all. Do you think this was deliberate, or a missed opportunity?

No, no, of course, it was absolutely deliberate. There's really no mention of IDPs in it either. No, the pressure UNHCR was under was not to look like they were expanding refugee norms, because once you call someone a refugee, then all the rights of the current regime come with them, which is a good thing, but it's

something states resisted. So because it wasn't put in the refugee compact, it ended up in the migration compact instead.

In your new book, *The Arc of Protection*, you outline some key protection principles that are urgently needed to meet the deficiencies of the current interpretation of the 1951 Refugee Convention. What are they?

The first and obvious principle is one of safety. You have to take the people in. Often, that's referred to in the negative, or sort of backwards: that states are not allowed to return people to places where they'll face violence and other forms of persecution. That's because that's what the legal norm says. We are not making a strictly legal argument, but one based on what we think appropriate political principles would be that would undergird a well-functioning system. So safety would be the first.

The second is an enjoyment of asylum, which is a phrase we take from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It really goes to the notion of inclusion. A well-functioning system doesn't take refugees and put them in camps, or let them live in difficult urban situations, and not find ways for them to take care of themselves through work and through access to other kinds of social protection mechanisms that would allow them to start to rebuild their lives.

The third is solutions - these people can't go on forever being refugees.

The other two that we add here is a refugee voice, the importance of refugee participation in the crafting of policies and norms. And that's beginning now with the creation of several global networks of refugees that have begun to form and seek recognition from UNHCR and the international community, which I think is a really very exciting development.

The last is mobility. This may be the hardest to sell, but to me, the most important and I think one that will become increasingly apparent as the right answer. Most people are able to flee across a border and get safety in a neighbouring country. But then they're stuck there, they can't go home. They're not incorporated into the host society, and they're not able to move onward. So all the people moving from Syria into neighbouring states who then wanted to move from, say, Jordan or Lebanon, to Germany were treated as asylum seekers in Germany or along the way, even though they had been recognised as refugees already. That's very strange. You would think that a well-functioning international system would recognise someone as a refugee and then allow them to seek their place of residence, where they could best take care of themselves.

Imagine if people had the right to travel to other states that are members of the international system of refugees: they wouldn't need assistance, they wouldn't need the forever kind of care that is given by the humanitarian system because they would take care of themselves. That's a tall order at the moment, but I think we are beginning to see that kind of movement regionally, but politically, it's going to be hard to get to, it's going to have to be done step by step.

> **" I think nearly everything Trump has done in the immigration area has been harmful, destructive, vindictive, and often vile. He has done great damage to the immigration and the refugee system in the US and around the world. "**

How damaging is the loss of moral and practical leadership on refugees by the US? How damaging will it be if the present leadership wins another term in office?

I think it's devastating. I think nearly everything Trump has done in the immigration area has been harmful, destructive, vindictive, and often vile – for no reason except to appeal to the worst instincts of the American people. That's not to say there isn't a serious situation on the southwest border. Many people coming to the country is a problem that President Obama faced as well, and other presidents too, and there are ways of addressing it. But the way is not to detain children. It's not to take away rights. It's not to vilify people and call them criminals. That's not the right way. So it's been very damaging.

I think the US is a model to the world in many ways, and it's currently a very unfortunate example. And Steve Bannon, who was responsible for a lot of early Trump policies and views, travelled through Europe and lobbied other states in Europe not to sign the Global Compact for Migration. So that's a direct impact of Trump policies. But I think Donald Trump has done great damage to the immigration system and the refugee system both in the US and around the world. One good sign is that almost all the policies that Trump has put in place are not approved by a majority of Americans, even if the president has the authority to impose them.

In your view in relation to your subject of refugees and migration, are you pessimistic, optimistic, dystopian, or utopian?

Well, I guess, I'm always optimistic, but frequently disappointed.

The politics of mixed migration

The politics around migration, especially irregular migration, has been highly dynamic in recent years in many parts of the world. Irregular mixed movements have had a major impact on domestic and international politics in the United States, Europe, Australia, Central and South America, Africa and Asia. In this new "age of migration", the saliency of migration has been giving rise to ever more robust "migration diplomacy" in the international sphere, while providing potent fuel to populist and nationalist politics.[1]

Current iterations of anti-migrant and anti-refugee politics are potent and are making significant strides in normalising politics and policies that until recently were considered extreme. But the future trajectory is uncertain, as global politics around mixed movement will be shaped by economic necessity and the continued impact of globalisation and multinationalism, potential generational differences in attitudes to multiculturalism, and the fuller impact of climate change. This essay will offer an overview of current trends relating to the politics of mobility and identify pressures and processes that may indicate where the future of migration politics is headed.

Nationalism comes out of the closet

Much has been written and spoken about the rise of nationalism and nativism in global politics. When powerful nations such as the US, China, Russia, India, Brazil, Australia, Turkey and Japan have leaders and governments with explicit nationalist agendas, people pay attention. Many member states of the EU and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are led by political parties with nationalist anti-migrant agendas (see table opposite), or at least such parties feature prominently in their political landscapes. Even if it can be argued that "there is no universal trend towards nationalism", nationalism has undoubtedly become more prevalent in global politics in recent years.[2] According to some, "this increased visibility is less attributable to a shift of global attitudes, but rather reflective of the political and social articulation of these attitudes."[3] In

other words, attitudes to migrants and refugees now occupy a critical space in political and social discourse.

The roots of anxieties about and reactions to migration and refugees may lie in economic and societal changes. In some countries they are "grounded in the resonance of anti-elite discourse and a crisis of liberal democracy", but they find ready expression through identity politics and populist nationalism.[4] These political trends often include forms of xenophobia and nativism.

Pervasive myths

"Misconceptions around migration abound."[5] Migration is widely believed to be both more extensive and less economically valuable than the evidence shows it to be in reality. "Changes in attitudes towards migration are disconnected from economics" in so far that people fail to see the considerable benefits migrants and refugees can contribute economically.[6] Such misconceptions buttress a negative narrative rather than a positive one, and so "continued rapid immigration may foster additional support for far-right parties..."[7] There are no clear relationships between changes in public attitudes towards migrants and the extent of countries' economic interest or imperative in accepting them.

The power of migration and refugee discourse to influence, shape, and lead national political agendas has been on the ascendant, irrespective of the facts and realities. The issues have acquired a force and momentum far greater than they deserve but in so far that "nationalism today works to protect against real or perceived predation," the political framing of mobility has become polemicised, if not radicalised.[8]

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1   Castles, S., de Haas, H. & Miller, M. (2014) *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World London*: Palgrave Macmillan
2   Bieber, F. (2018) *Is Nationalism on the Rise? Assessing Global Trends.*
3   Ibid.
4   Ibid.
5   Goldin, I. & Nabarro, B. (2018) *Losing it: The economics and politics of migration* VOX CEPR Policy Portal
6   Ibid.
7   Davis, L. & Deole, S. (2017) *Immigration and the Rise of Far-Right Parties in Europe* ifo Institute; MacKenzie, D. (2016) *The truth about migration: How it will reshape our world* New Scientist
8   Duara, P. (2018) *Development and the crisis of global nationalism* Brookings

Prominent anti-immigrant and far-right parties in selected European counties

Austria	Austria Freedom Party Alliance for the Future of Austria
Belgium	Flemish Interest National Front New Flemish Alliance
Denmark	Danish People's Party Hard Line
Germany	Alternative for Germany The Blue Party National Democratic Party of Germany
Finland	Finns Party Finnish People First
France	National Rally France Arise National Republican Movement
Hungary	Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Alliance Movement for a Better Hungary Our Homeland Movement
Italy	Five Star Movement Northern League Tricolour Brothers of Italy Us with Salvini
Netherlands	Party for Freedom Reformed Political Party Forum for Democracy
Norway	Progress Party The Christians Party
Portugal	National Renovator Party Enough
Sweden	Swedish Democrats Alternative for Sweden
Switzerand	Swiss People's Party Federal Democratic Union of Switzerland Swiss Democrats Swiss Nationalist Party
United Kingdom	British Nationalist Party

The disruptive impact of mixed migration

The much-publicised phenomenon of mixed migration, exemplified by media coverage of large groups of foreigners irregularly crossing seas and land borders, or being restrained by border police, has greatly disrupted political space.[9]

The disruption is disproportionate. Generally, far fewer people enter any given country using irregular channels than fall into irregularity there through visa overstays, visa fraud and other immigration infractions, let alone the millions moving through regular means. (The US/Mexico border is something of an outlier: hundreds of thousands of irregular, undocumented migrants and asylum seekers have crossed it annually for decades.) The impact of the images of and anxieties arising from the 2015 and 2016 "crisis" in Europe, for example, lives on, and is often sensationalised by the media and weaponised for political ends by far-right and populist political parties which directly feed off migration fears.

Capitalising on chaos

Even in mid-2019, when numbers crossing the Mediterranean were the lowest for five years – 90 percent lower than in 2015 – images and stories of migrant drownings, or of desperate migrants trying to swim to Lampedusa from a rescue ship stuck in limbo by international politics and squabbling, create an exaggerated sense of chaos and absence of control. This is, of course, exactly the narrative that some political groups thrive and capitalise on, as it allows them to distort the debate about migration and refugees from the rational to the irrational.

The same can be seen in the US, where migrant caravans in 2017 and 2018 were taken up by President Donald Trump and other Republican Party politicians as a cause célèbre. They invoked narratives of "invasion", "infiltration" and even terrorism, and churned out the tired canards of foreigners stealing jobs, sponging off welfare, and committing crimes.[10] Apart from the Republicans seeking to profit from the tough border approach in mid-term congressional elections in 2018, the narrative justified sending soldiers to the border, putting pressure on Mexico to restrict movement through its country, limiting asylum options, and increasing detentions and deportations – all measures designed to appeal to anti-migrant voters and boost the President's support through vociferous politicisation of migration and asylum issues.

9   Horwood, C. (2019) *It's Time for a More Honest, Less Partisan Debate on Mixed Migration* Refugees Deeply
10   On the campaign trail in 2015, Trump said, "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best… They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people." In 2018 he said of undocumented migrants, "These aren't people. These are animals." Korte, G. & Gomez, A. (2018) *Trump ramps up rhetoric on undocumented immigrants: 'These aren't people. These are animals.'* USA Today

The centre shifts to the right

This disruption and distortion can be felt throughout the body politic. In Europe and Australia for example, right-wing parties have been so effective in exploiting the migration and refugee issue to beef up electoral support that mainstream parties adopted more restrictive and anti-migrant policies in order to compete. Centrist and even left-wing parties feel they cannot afford to appear "soft" on migration or asylum for fear of being punished at the ballot box, as happened in Sweden's September 2018 elections where the anti-migration Sweden Democrats continued its rise by winning 18 percent of the vote.[11] "Faced with a pro-migration political establishment, the silent majority of voters began to feel they had no other outlet than fringe parties with racist roots."[12]

A recent instance of the salience of anti-migration attitudes taking hold in traditionally non-right-wing parties was the June 2019 general election win in Denmark by Social Democrat Mette Frederikson. She took over from a right-wing coalition government that had enacted the "most anti-immigration legislation in Danish history" and, rather than revoking it, she "has embraced much of it."[13] Frederikson was reported to have campaigned with an "unapologetically hard-line anti-immigration stance … cannibalizing the policies of the far-right Danish People's Party to win back voters anxious about immigration."[14]

Right-wing parties often attribute their popularity to their anti-migrant stance, which they claim many people share. The table opposite shows the significant rise of far-right parties in Europe between 2002 and 2017. But what it does not show is the incorporation of right-wing policies on migration and asylum into mainstream parties during the same period. Clearly, far-right parties no longer have a monopoly on restrictive, or anti-migrant and anti-refugee policies.

Moreover, such "right to exclude" advocates exist in academia too. Political philosopher David Miller, for example, justifies exclusionist immigration policies to defend community goals and preferences, and suggests (inaccurately) that irregular migrants engage in a "a form of queue-jumping with respect to all those who are attempting to enter through legal channels".[15]

In European politics, "while the Left used to be less likely than the Right to discuss immigration in negative terms, in more recent years this difference has lessened. Far from polarizing, centrist parties' treatment of the immigration issue is much closer to converging on key aspects of the debate."[16] This convergence is likely to be important in shaping the future politics of migration.

Another stark example of the normalisation of blatant anti-migrant sentiment was provided by European Commission President-Elect Ursular von der Leyen's September 2019 announcement that, as part of a "fresh start on migration", the EU's most senior official on migration issues would have the job title of "protecting our European way of life." Much criticism ensued.[17]

Migration's current position at the centre stage of politics thus stems from new forms of political competition driven by right-leaning or populist "political entrepreneurs", rather than by any significant changes in individual attitudes to migration.[18] Some argue that by "fusing culturally conservative and anti-elite messages", new life has been breathed into these populist political entities who use immigration as the central policy issue to "drive disruption and instability".[19]

Single-issue dependency

The migration and asylum agendas of some political parties are normally linked to discussions of nativism, identity, ethnicity, and a mistrust of multiculturalism and multinationalism. But the dependency on enlarging and reiterating a migration "problem" and "threat" is often so great that it overshadows the rest of a party's manifesto, which suggests that keeping the migration debate alive is essential to their own survival. Even if there is some cross-national convergence on other issues by far-right parties, the prevalence of migration in almost all public statements by leaders such as Hungary's Viktor Orban or Italy's Matteo Salvini in 2018 and 2019 is striking.

Despite such single-issue dependency, the appeal of such politicians and parties to voters is such that other political players are forced to take them seriously, leading them to become critical in coalitions and in some cases propelling them to the very top of the executive branch.

11   Cooke, P. (2018) *Sweden swings right - Swedish election sees neo-Nazi Democrats make huge gains as mass immigration leaves Sweden bitterly divided* The Sun
12   Sanandaji, D. (2018) *The cost of Sweden's silent consensus culture* Politico
13   Orange, R. (2019) *Mette Frederiksen: the anti-immigration left leader set to win power in Denmark* The Guardian
14   Hume, T. (2019) *Denmark's Elections Show How Much Europe Is Normalizing Anti-Immigrant Politics* Vice
15   Miller, D. (2016) *Strangers in Our Midst: The Political Philosophy of Immigration* Harvard University Press. For a critique of Miller, see Sager, A. *Book Review: Strangers in Our Midst: The Political Philosophy of Immigration by David Miller* LSE Review of Books
16   Dancygier, R. & Margalit, Y. (2017) *The Evolution of the Immigration Debate: A Study of Party Positions over the Last Half-Century* Princeton (working paper)
17   Rankin, J. (2019) *MEPs damn 'protecting European way of life' job title* The Guardian
18   Goldin, I. & Nabarro, B. op. cit.
19   Ibid.

At the same time, opponents of such right-wing politics may engage in their own forms of distortion, by overstating not only the extent to which hardliners exploit or exaggerate migration issues, but also the degree of public aversion to anti-migrant narratives. As the graphic overleaf shows, tolerance of non-EU immigration is growing in Europe, but only in a few countries is this attitude held by more than half of the electorate. Besides, poll responses vary greatly between questions about labour migrants, irregular migrants, and refugees, and between those about temporary work permits and full citizenship. It is disingenuous to amalgamate nuanced and granular opinions into crude pro- or anti-migration categories. Unconscious bias can easily come into play and simplifying the debate or misrepresenting polls can be useful to both sides of the debate.

Immigrant share and the far-right rising together

A recent analysis of 14 European countries with at least one far-right party found "a strong positive relationship between the immigrant population share and the propensity of individuals to vote for a far-right party".[20]

Of course, this finding does not preclude influence from far-right groups through campaigns to denigrate immigrant communities and blame them for their country's troubles or problems as a way to boost their support base. Having more immigrants in society means the target of their campaigns is larger and more visible, making it easier to persuade people that immigrants pose a (socioeconomic, political, or security) threat, even if the evidence does not support this.

According to migration expert Ian Goldin and colleagues, attitudes towards migration can be distilled down to two sets of factors.[21] The first is solidarity – characterising the degree to which people identify and empathise with people of nationalities other than their own. Second, perceptions of aggregate scarcity – the degree to which key economic resources, such as public services and jobs, are seen to be under threat or pressure. "Anti-migrant attitudes are typically greatest when concerns about scarcity complement nationally defined limits of solidarity."[22]

Normalisation of the extreme

In recent years, irrespective of the heat of the polemic surrounding refugees and migrants, and even with far-right parties unable to obtain mandates big enough to lead governments in all but a few countries, there is a new normalisation of policies and actions that would have been considered extreme a decade ago. The

Vote share of far-right parties in National Elections in Europe (2002-2017)

| Country	Election 1	Election 2	Election 3	Election 4	Election 5	Election 6
Austria	10.01	15.15	28.24	24.04	-	-
Belgium	13.57	13.96	8.27	3.67	-	-
Switzerland	27.71	29.46	26.8	29.5	-	-
Germany	0.3	1.9	1.9	3.5	-	-
Denmark	13.3	13.9	12.32	21.1	-	-
Finland	1.8	4.2	19.04	17.65	-	-
France	13.23	5.88	13.6	13.2	-	-
United Kingdom	2.9	5	12.6	1.9	-	-
Hungary	4.6	1.7	16.7	20.22	-	-
Italy	5.18	10.73	4.21		-	-
Netherlands	17	5.7	6.1	15.45	10.08	13.1
Norway	22.06	22.91	16.35		-	-
Portugal	0.09	0.16	0.2	0.31	0.5	-
Sweden	1.4	2.93	5.7	12.86	-	-

20 Goldin, I. & Nabarro, B. op. cit.
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.

Source: Goldin, I. & Nabarro, B. (2018) *Losing it: The economics and politics of migration* VOX CEPR Policy Portal.

Changing attitudes to EU immigration in Europe

Positive attitudes towards non-EU immigration in Europe
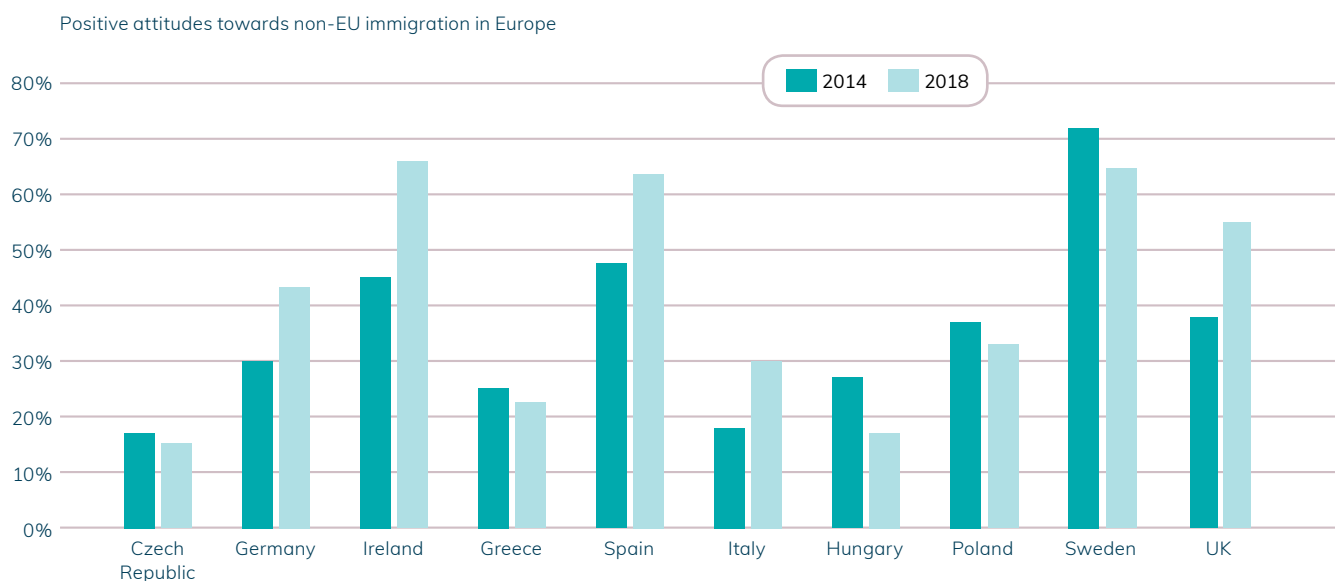
Source: Oliviero Angeli

growing prevalence of the trends listed below raises the question, what will be considered politically acceptable in 10 or 20 years' time?

• Growing prevalence of anti-immigration walls and fences between countries.

• Militarisation of border control and the deployment of soldiers or navies and externally financed coast guards to prevent mixed flows.

• Extensive use of detention – sometimes prolonged – of people on the move irregularly, including children and asylum seekers and registered refugees

• Extensive use of deportation of failed asylum seekers and "undocumented" migrants to countries where their safety cannot be assured.

• Pushbacks at land and sea borders – summarily returning refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.

• Failure to conduct appropriate search and rescue operations and preventing others doing so.

• Increased tolerance of abuse and death of migrants and asylum seekers on the move.

• Increased use of bilateral agreements with transit and origin countries to prevent mixed flows.

• Increased criminalisation of irregular migrants, human smuggling and humanitarian assistance to those on the move.

• Reduced adherence to the 1951 Refugee Convention and reduced appetite for burden-sharing of asylum seekers and refugees.

All the trends listed above are explored in greater detail, with examples drawn from across the world, in the Info Box entitled **Normalisation of the extreme** on page 177.

Talking the talk

Almost in direct contrast to these hard-line approaches, at the international level expressions of outrage at the deaths and violence that refugees and migrants face on the move, as well as of solidarity and cooperation, are not hard to find. In addition to the new focus on migration in the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals, the non-binding global compacts on migration and refugees set high standards and expectations on how the international community should address irregular migration and refugees. In December 2018, 152 countries voted in favour of the resolution to adopt the Global Compact for Migration, with the United States and Israel voting against, as did (following a "coordinated online campaign by far-right activists") Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland.[23] Twelve states abstained, including Austria, Switzerland and Italy. Meanwhile, the Global Compact on Refugees was approved by 181 states.[24]

23 Cerulus, L & Schaart, E. (2019) *How the UN migration pact got trolled* Politico. For more on how right-wing activists use the internet and social media during election campaigns and beyond, see: ISD (2019) *The Battle for Bavaria - Online information campaigns in the 2018 Bavarian State Election* Gallagher, C. & Pollack, S. (2019) *How the far-right is exploiting immigration concerns in Oughterard* Irish Times
24 UN News (2018) *UN affirms 'historic' global compact to support world's refugees*

The political zeitgeist and migration diplomacy

The above list of normalised "extremes" is not exhaustive but, seen together, it is an extraordinary testimony to recent developments that characterise the political zeitgeist and policy commitments concerning international irregular movement. In many cases these political choices have been and continue to be taken by open, democratic societies where human rights are otherwise highly valued and where the rule of law is firmly established. These are also some of the richest countries in the world, enjoying the highest human development indicators and state welfare protections.

In many cases, too, these approaches and actions are in direct opposition to the values and ethics in which the citizens of the countries involved take pride. This generalised normalisation of radical or extreme policy is a key feature of contemporary political approaches to irregular and mixed migration and, importantly, may offer clues as to how the future will look irrespective of the role of far-right politics.

The notion of migration diplomacy conceptualises a new development in interstate negotiations in which migration is a powerful bargaining tool. It highlights "the multiple effects of cross-border population mobility – not merely on numerous aspects of domestic politics but also on states' international relations."[25] For example, in September 2019, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan warned he would "open the gates" to allow Syrian refugees to leave Turkey for Europe if he did not get more international support for the creation of a "safe zone" in north-eastern Syria.[26] Another well-documented earlier example was Libyan leader Muammar Gadaffi's threat in 2010 to "turn Europe black" by lifting restrictions on African migration to Europe through Libya unless payments were received.[27] Given the likelihood that migration will only increase in its importance to states and their policymakers in the coming decades, the salience of migration diplomacy is set to increase.

The less publicised 'zeitgeist'

While many countries are busy trying to prevent irregular migrants and asylum seekers from accessing their territory and are reducing their intake of refugees for resettlement, another reality is being played out. Countries in the Middle East, South East Asia and Africa, as well as Venezuela's neighbours in South America, are accepting and hosting over 85 percent of the millions of refugees worldwide and allowing the movement of millions of irregular migrants. In the case of Colombia, over 1.4 million Venezuelan refugees have been allowed to enter the country, to work, access welfare and schools.[28] Even citizenship is being granted to tens of thousands of babies born Venezuelan refugees.[29] This is an alternative political zeitgeist that exists alongside the more publicised, global North preoccupation with and operationalisation of anti-migrant and anti-refugee efforts.

The majority of the 26 million refugees today come from six countries: Syria, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Somalia, Myanmar and Venezuela. They are hosted in countries such as Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, Pakistan, Iran, Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya, Yemen, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Bangladesh – all developing or low-to-medium income countries.

Close behind these is one European exception, Germany, that has recently taken in more than one million refugees – a unilateral political decision that is at the heart of the migrant and refugee political "crisis" of 2015 and 2016 and whose political ramifications are still being felt in terms of interstate disputes around responsibility sharing, border management and the move to the right in EU politics generally. Nevertheless, despite German Chancellor Angela Merkel's declining support and the rise of the anti-migrant AFD party, polls suggest that German popular support for a multicultural society has grown since 2015 (also see the graphic on page 175).[30]

Furthermore, in terms of irregular migrants, the volume of South-to-South movement is far greater than that testing the politicians of the global North. While many countries of the global South do not have the capacity to prevent irregular migration they also turn a blind eye to it as they benefit from the labour and entrepreneurship migrants and urban refugees bring. Countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, Kenya, and (notwithstanding sporadic bouts of xenophobic violence) South Africa are ready examples. This is, in fact, an important long-standing trend that needs to be considered when imagining the future of migration and refugee politics.

Future scenarios: a tale of two worlds?

Given how far political and practical reactions to irregular movement and asylum differ between the global North and South, their respective future trends can be discussed separately, even though their futures are, of course, inextricable entwined.

25 Adamson, F. & Tsourapas, G (2018) op. cit.
26 BBC (2019) *Syria war: Turkey warns Europe of new migrant wave*
27 Traynor, I. (2010) *EU keen to strike deal with Muammar Gaddafi on immigration* The Guardian
28 Baddour, D. (2019) *Colombia's Radical Plan to Welcome Millions of Venezuelan Migrants* The Atlantic
29 Kurmanaev, A. & Gonzales, J. (2019) *Colombia Offers Citizenship to 24,000 Children of Venezuelan Refugees* New York Times
30 DW (2018) *Germans upbeat about immigration, study finds*

The North's new normal

Concerning the global North, we can surmise that even if the far-right fails to make significant political gains, the increasingly restrictive and securitised responses to irregular mixed movement that have become part of mainstream politics and constituent expectations will become entrenched as a new normal. This is the most likely course for the short- and medium-term future, despite the international aspirations laid out in recent agreement on migrants and refugees. As noted earlier in this essay, cross-national attitudes towards migration are often unconnected to actual economic necessities and labour demand – instead they are shaped by a perception of the threats migration poses to the economy, social cohesion and cultural values. As such, attitudes are often more an expression of prejudices and imagined fears than of reality. These perceptions could generate real economic risks, while a "race to the bottom by politicians to show how tough they are on immigration could cause substantial aggregate damage."[31]

Additionally, as current contested and controversial interventions and actions continue to thwart irregular migration in many regions, they are likely to become increasingly accepted. They will become the political and operational reality for the future as they are already becoming today. Containing and warehousing irregular migrants and asylum seekers outside the global North may become increasingly expensive for the North, not least as the strength of the migration diplomacy of the South increases, but it will likely become the preferred option over relaxing borders or increasing asylum acceptance.

More of the same to come?

The uncertainty around automation and artificial intelligence and their impact on the economy and employment in the global North may intensify domestic pressure to prevent higher levels of migration, especially in the case of medium and low-skilled migrants. However, in light of declining fertility and increased ageing in the North ahead of major technological transformations springing from automation, there may eventually also be a surge in demand for labour migration. If these forces are greater than the electorate's low appetite for increased migration, future political trends may in fact reverse in the short and medium-term. An extension and continuation of the current political approach is therefore not inevitable, but according to the prognosis of this essay, more likely.

Questions of age

Generational differences could also impact future trends in the global North. Today's youth live in increasingly diverse societies and will be tomorrow's leaders and voters, and will be more multicultural and less anti-migration.[32] This could soften the current hard-line attitude towards irregular migrants and refugees in the future, although some studies contend that education, and exposure to right wing messaging, are better predictors of attitudes than age alone.[33] A recent analysis of national populism, on the other hand, suggests we cannot rely on more tolerant attitudes from the youth – who are not so much anti-immigrant but populist in inclination – as they react against traditional politics, so-called elites, and find themselves part of a larger modern trend of social fragmentation.[34] Furthermore, even if young people are less prone to anti-migrant attitudes, they also age and tend, on average, to become more conservative.[35]

Already, despite the phenomena, in Europe at least, of right wing attitudes rising as the immigrant share in a country increases (see Graphic 1), there is also evidence that attitudes can change positively towards non-EU immigrants even during a turbulent period when the issues were hotly contested.

Manufacturing rage

Graphic 2 shows findings illustrating how in most countries in Europe positive attitudes to non-EU immigration increased between 2014 and 2018, even in the UK where migration was recorded as among the most prominent issues that set the UK on a course to leave the European Union during the 2016 Brexit referendum. This may seem paradoxical given the sense of panic and crisis that the media portrays around the subject in recent years by focusing on the most dramatic and chaotic scenes and telling the most desperate stories.[36] Such coverage has helped to "manufacture rage" against migration and made good revenues too by keeping dramatic migration and refugee stories on the front pages.[37] Social media and the internet have also been key channels for propaganda on refugee and migration issues, thriving on extreme news and failing to prevent false narratives.[38]

31 Ian Goldin, I. & Nabarro, B. op. cit.
32 McLaren, L. et al. (2019) *Anti-immigration attitudes are disappearing among younger generations in Britain* King's College London
33 Mclaren, M. & Paterson, T. (2019) *Generational change and attitudes to immigration* Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies
34 Goodwin, M. (2018) *National populism is unstoppable – and the left still doesn't understand it* The Guardian
35 Tilley, J. & Evans, G. (2014) *Ageing and generational effects on vote choice: Combining cross-sectional and panel data to estimate APC effects* Electoral Studies
36 Trilling, D. (2019) *How the media contributed to the migrant crisis* The Guardian
37 Mehta, S. (2019) *Immigration panic: how the west fell for manufactured rage* The Guardian
38 Koppelman, A. (2019) *The internet is radicalizing white men. Big tech could be doing more* CNN

Immigrant population share and far right voting (average relationship between 2004-2017 using 14 EU countries)
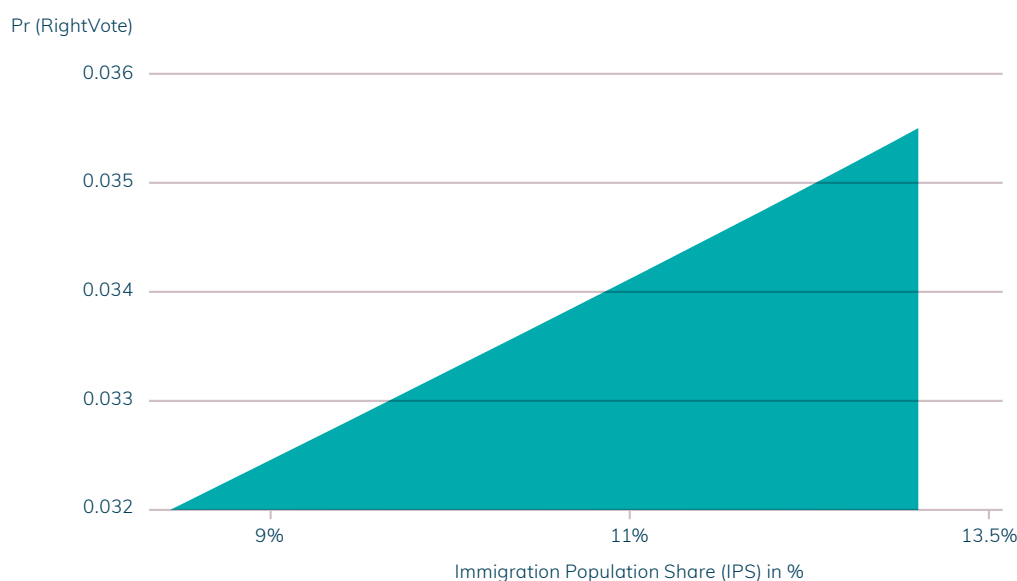
Source: Goldin, I. & Nabarro, B. (2018) Losing it: The economics and politics of migration VOX CEPR Policy Portal.

The sheer force of numbers of potential migrants and displaced people in the future could exert pressure on the global North, not least when large numbers of climate-induced migrants start to move. In tandem with the increasing strength of Southern countries' hand in migration diplomacy, this could also force the global North to adopt a softer political position in relation to mixed migration and regular labour migration. On the other hand, increased pressure and rising fear that migratory pressures will overwhelm countries in the global North are also likely to cause them to double down on restriction and preventing access.

A future with few choices in the global South

Concerning the global South, where almost all the world's internally displaced people reside, from where most irregular migrants originate, and where almost all refugees are hosted, it is hard to see how the future will offer many choices. Predictions are that millions of climate-induced migrants and displaced will originate in the global South and will initially move within their countries (mainly to cities) or move regionally before considering (if they have the capacity) to move out of their regions.

Many countries in the South – especially those with long porous borders and weak institutions, where corruption and complicity often lead state officials to prey upon those on the move – lack the capacity to prevent movement. Even if they have the requisite will, and regardless of how far countries in the global North try to co-opt or buy their

support for an anti-migration agenda, such countries may simply be unable to stop North-bound migrants transiting their territory.

As cities grow rapidly in the South, especially in Africa, they will become ever stronger magnets for the displaced and irregular migrants. This might boost their economic capacity with cheap labour, but might also cause social tensions as the growing national youth cohort competes with the newly-arrived for jobs, services and space. If the global North maintains strong barriers to migrants, and resists more equitable global burden-sharing of refugees, dynamic South-to-South movement is likely to ensue as people seek improved security and viable livelihoods. Urban refugees are more numerous than those living in camps today and this is likely to be the future trend in host countries in the South – assuming they continue to be tolerated.

Migration and populism

Some social commentators and researchers like to say immigration is a red herring. "It's not about immigration, the financial crisis, globalisation or inequality, but evidence of a broader, older social fragmentation," claims one analyst.[39] What he and others are writing about is the rise and probable future extent of populism, national populism to be specific. According to a recent book on the subject, it is not the actual number of immigrants (or the current state of the world in general), but the rate of change over time that drives support for national

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39 Goodwin, M. (2018) op. cit.

populism.[40] Populism "represents the cumulative effect of growing differences between political elites and those they represent, the death of traditional political ties and cultural responses to both globalisation and immigration."[41] The forces that have led to the recent rise in national populism are not temporary, but "part of decades-strong currents. It doesn't look like they're going anywhere anytime soon."[42] If anti-immigration sentiment becomes part of future populism, will acceptance of the "normalisation of the extreme" and reinforcement of these approaches also be considered necessary to secure perceived national interests or identity?

Conclusion

The politics of migration and refugees is set to be more hostile than accommodating. With growing economic migratory pressures and the likelihood that increased political and environmental fragility will cause higher levels of forced migration, the global North will probably double down on current efforts to restrict access and mobility towards their territories. Permitted movement will be selective (consisting predominantly of high-skilled workers) and limited. Most of the pressures of rising numbers of displaced, unemployment, overcrowded cities, resource scarcity and refugee-hosting will be faced by the global South. Will these pressures cause more intolerant and authoritarian politics in the South, leading to further fragility and insecurity and humanitarian crises? Overall, the language of international agreements, and their professed political commitment to solidarity, cooperation and responsibility-sharing, appears quixotic.

40   Eatwell, R. & Goodwin, M. (2018) *National Populism: The Revolt Against Liberal Democracy* London: Pelican Books
41   Spiro, Z. (2018) *Review: National Populism, by Roger Eatwell and Matthew Goodwin* Institute of Economic Affairs
42   Ibid.

Normalisation of the extreme

Many policies, actions, and attitudes related to mixed migration, and especially irregular migration, that were considered beyond the pale just a decade ago, are now becoming normalised. The following list does not attempt to be exhaustive but offers snapshots providing an indication of their growing prevalence and range. They also raise the question, if many of these policies and interventions were politically unacceptable just a decade ago, what will be deemed acceptable and normalised in 10 or 20 years from now?

1. Anti-immigration border walls and fences

Notable examples of countries that have recently erected such barriers specifically against immigration include: Belize, Botswana, Bulgaria, Equatorial Guinea, Hungary, India, Iran, Israel, Kenya, Mozambique, North Macedonia, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain (notably in its north African enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla), Turkey, the United States, and Uzbekistan. The list has reached unprecedented levels and continues to grow.

2. Militarisation of border control: deployment of army or navy personnel and the funding of coast guards to prevent mixed flows

The **United States** has deployed thousands of troops to its southwest border to help Customs and Border Patrol personnel deal with inward flows of migrants.[1]In late 2018 they added over 5,000 troops to the existing 2,000 deployed as part of "Operation Faithful Patriot."[2]

In 2019, and under pressure from the US, **Mexico** deployed 6,000 troops to its southern border with Guatemala specifically to deter mixed migratory flows.

Eastern European countries such as Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary and Croatia use their armed forces regularly to patrol borders to prevent mixed migration flows.

Under a bilateral arrangement with **Spain**, **Moroccan** security forces are deployed alongside their Spanish counterparts on the fences separating Morocco from Ceuta and Melilla.[3]

Several **EU** states, including **France**, **Germany**, **Italy**, and the **UK** have troops deployed in the Sahel region (as part of EU Capacity and Assistance Programme and the Common Security and Defence Policy mission, or independently) with a mandate that includes stopping irregular migration.[4] These troops support the efforts of the armies of Niger and Mali to halt human smuggling through the Sahara. The EU's border militarisation is also exemplified by the evolving role and rapid expansion of its border and coast guard agency, Frontex.[5]

Other notable examples of military forces deployed to control borders and mixed migration flows include **Sudan**'s paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (largly re-hatted Janjaweed militia); the **Australian** Defence Force in Australian waters; the **Thai** and **Bangladesh** navies in the bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea; **Turkish** and **Greek** coast guard personnel in the Aegean Sea; and the coast guard of **Somalia's Puntland** region and **Libya** (in the latter case with substantial support from the EU and Italy) intercepting refugees and migrants departing from their shores.

3. Extensive use of detention – sometimes prolonged or indefinite – of people on the move (or in a destination country) irregularly, including children and asylum seekers and registered refugees

From Afghanistan to Yemen, there are more than 2,200 detention centres for migrants and asylum seekers located in over 100 countries.[6] These include countries as divers as Mexico, Malaysia, Egypt, the Russian Federation, Greece (so-called 'Hotspots' centres), Hungary, France, and the United Kingdom. Some notable examples:

In **Libyan** detention centres, torture and other forms of abuse are well-documented, and some centres have been directly caught up in the armed conflict between rival forces.[7] Yet migrants "rescued" at sea continue to be forcibly returned to them and held indefinitely.

In August 2019, the **US** government changed the law to enable detention of child migrants indefinitely.[8] Tens of thousands of people are held in US immigration detention

1   Myers, M. (2019) *More troops are heading to the US-Mexico border* Military Times
2   Ward, A. (2018) *The US is sending 5,000 troops to the border. Here's what they can and can't do.*
3   Guerraoui, S. (2019) *Morocco, Spain reactivate border control cooperation but migrants keep trying The Arab Weekly*; AFP (2019) *Dozens of migrants force entry into Spain's Melilla enclave*
4   Lebovich, A. (2018) *Halting ambition: EU migration and security policy in the Sahel* EU Council on Foreign Relations
5   Howden, D. et al. (2019) *Once migrants on Mediterranean were saved by naval patrols. Now they have to watch as drones fly over* The Guardian
6   The Global Detention Project *Annual Report 2018*
7   MSF (2019) *Out of sight, out of mind: refugees in Libya's detention centres*
8   Aljazeera. (2019) *Trump administration moves to end limits on child detention*

centres. In many cases, children have been separated from their parents.

Israel officially has only 14 refugees, despite having over 30,000 asylum seekers from African countries, many of whom are seeking refugee status and have been in the country for many years. Since 2013, these asylum-seekers, mainly from Sudan and Eritrea, have been held in the Holot detention camp and are officially termed "infiltrators".[9]

4. Increased criminalisation of irregular migration, human smuggling and "solidarity".

Over recent decades, there has been a growing recourse, as part of efforts to control irregular migration, to criminal law rather than administrative regulations to process people who enter or stay in states without the requisite permission or documentation - notably in the **European Union**.[10] In **Saudi Arabia**, which has some 12 million migrant workers, authorities arrested more than 2.1 million foreigners between November 2017 and November 2018 for violating labour, residency and border security laws.[11]

Wherever it occurs, such criminalisation tends to lead to "human rights abuses [...] and reinforces false and xenophobic narratives that migrants are criminals or that migration itself is a threat."[12] (The use of the term "illegal immigrant" has gained currency not only in right-wing media but also in official discourse in many countries).

Human smuggling has also been vilified and securitised in all regions of the world to the extent that it is now closely associated with human trafficking, criminality, the smuggling of weapons and oil (in the case of the mandate of the EU's Operation Sophia), and even terrorism.

Even otherwise lawful citizens who show solidarity with migrants and refugees on the move by providing transport, sustenance, shelter or protection from the authorities are increasingly facing criminal prosecution. Examples are found in the **United States** as well as in various **EU** countries, such as a new law in **Italy** that prohibits civilians rescuing people at sea from bringing those saved to shore.[13]

5. Increased deportation of failed asylum seekers and undocumented migrants, sometimes to unsafe countries

Deporting people who have no right to be in a country is in itself neither new nor extreme, but the practice has taken some alarming turns of late, in terms of its scale and the risks faced by those expelled.

Germany currently has 65,000 rejected asylum seekers it wants to deport but cannot because they lack official identity papers, so their countries of origin will not accept them.[14] Hundreds of thousands of applicants are stuck in Germany's overwhelmed asylum process, many of whom will also be rejected and require deportation.[15]

The **United States** has long deported large numbers of foreigners, but recent years under both the Obama and Trump administrations have seen a dramatic escalation over previous decades: almost 410,000 people were deported in 2012 and more than a quarter of million in 2018; in 2000, fewer than 200,000 were deported and the figure for 2013 was nine times greater than that of 1993.[16]

Over the last decade or so the EU's Frontex has morphed from an "unfashionable outpost to a super agency [...] a deportation machine."[17] Its annual budget more than tripled from 2014 to 2019 and is projected to spike to over one billion euros per year in 2021 and to closer to two billion by 2025.[18] Whereas in 2007 Frontex organised one or two deportation flights per month, some months in 2018 saw it organise more than 30.[19]

Since 2013 **Saudi Arabia** has been deporting en masse various nationalities, including many tens of thousands of irregular Ethiopians. In 2017 and 2018, **Algeria** deported approximately 13,000 refugees and migrants, abandoning them in the desert, sometimes at gunpoint. Several countries in **Europe** have been deporting rejected asylum seekers on a regular basis to countries where their security and rights are uncertain, including Afghanistan and Turkey. **Turkey** itself conducted mass deportations of Afghans in 2017 and 2018. It has also been accused of forcibly returning some of the 3.6 million Syrian refugees it hosts back to Syria (a charge it rejects).[20] Since 2016, **Pakistan**, through a series of proclamations

9   Deane,Y (2019) *World Refugee Day: Israel's Contested Refugee Population* Israel Jerusalem Post
10 Provera, M. (2015) *The Criminalisation of Irregular Migration in the European Union* CEPS Papers in Liberty and Security in Europe
11 Human Rights Watch (2019) *World Report 2019: Saudi Arabia – Events of 2018*
12 OHCHR (2018) *The criminalisation of irregular migration*
13 Karas, T (2019) *Crimes of compassion: US follows Europe's lead in prosecuting those who help migrants* Public Radio International, Nabert, A. et al. (2019) *Hundreds of Europeans 'criminalised' for helping migrants – as far right aims to win big in European elections* Open Democracy; AFP/The Local (2019) *UN concerned by Italy's new law to fine migrant rescue ships up to €1m*
14 Alkousaa, R. (2018) *Germany struggles with rising number of rejected asylum seekers without papers* Reuters
15 Tondo, L. (2019) *Nearly 900,000 asylum seekers living in limbo in EU, figures show* The Guardian
16 Bever, L. & Pauld, D. (2019) *Deportations under Trump are on the rise but still lower than Obama's, ICE report show* The Washington Post; The Economist (2014) *America's deportation machine - The great expulsion*
17 Lighthouse Reports (2019) Frontex: *EU's Deportation Machine*
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
20 Human Rights Watch (2019) *Turkey Forcibly Returning Syrians to Danger*; Altun, F. (2019) *Turkey Is Helping, Not Deporting, Syrian Refugees* Foreign Policy

and ultimatums, has deported hundreds of thousands of Afghan nationals to Afghanistan, despite widespread insecurity there. More than 820,000 Afghans, including more than 15,000 registered refugees, were returned to Afghanistan from **Iran** and **Pakistan** in 2018, according to the UN.[21]

6. Pushbacks and pullbacks at land and sea borders

In many places around the world, border guards and immigration officials are increasingly pushing people in mixed flows using irregular channels back across borders. With tacit or explicit government approval, the rule of law and due process are flouted in some of these cases, notably when those pushed back report physical violence, robbery and abandonment. Pushbacks of asylum seekers or registered refugees without due process to places from where they fled violence or persecution violates the principle non-refoulement enshrined in international law.[22] Yet the practice is widespread, with recent examples found on the southern borders of **Mexico** and of the **United States**, in **Croatia**, **Greece**, **Hungary**, **Morocco**, **Sudan**, **Tanzania** and **Yemen**, and on the high seas by **Australia**, **Malaysia**, **Thailand**, and **Turkey**.

Extreme examples of "pullbacks" are found off the coast of **Libya**, where the EU-funded coast guard, with intelligence support from Italy, intercepts boat-bound migrants heading to Europe, returns them to the Libyan mainland, where they are detained in widely condemned conditions (see above). Some have described the relationship between the EU and Libya as "refoulement by proxy".[23] In **Bangladesh**, **Morocco**, and **Libya** sea patrols also intercept fleeing migrants and bring them back to shore.

7. Failure to implement, and action to impede, maritime search and rescue (SAR) operations

Examples of this can be found in the Aegean and Andaman seas and the waters around **Australia** (involving **Greek**, **Turkish**, **Thai**, and **Australian** naval assets respectively), as well as, more starkly, in the **Mediterranean**. SAR operations in the Mediterranean enjoyed significant success in rescuing migrants and refugees up to 2018. Initiatives included Italy's EU-funded Operation Mare Nostrum (2013-2014),

Frontex's Operation Triton (2014-2018) and the EU's Operation Sophia (formally termed the European Union Naval Force Mediterranean, or EU NAVFOR Med), which all worked with various NGO vessels to rescue tens of thousands of migrants and refugees. More recently the mood has changed: Operation Sophia has conducted no rescue missions since August 2018 as Frontex invests heavily in unmanned surveillance aircraft.[24] Almost, but not all, NGO vessels have stopped operating in the Mediterranean due to obstruction and legal challenges by national authorities, the criminalisation of SAR enforced by the impounding of vessels, arrests of captains and penalties for attempting to disembark migrants in **Italian**, **Spanish** or **Maltese** ports.

8. Increased tolerance of abuse and death of migrants and asylum seekers on the move

The full extent of migrant and refugee fatalities is unknown as many deaths go unrecorded and even unwitnessed in oceans, seas, lakes, mountains, and deserts. Tens of thousands have been kidnapped in Mexico alone (many subsequently do not reappear - they are presumed to have been abused, trafficked or murdered), while in **Yemen** thousands of female migrants were found to be unaccounted for in a 2014 report.[25] Groups of dead refugees and migrants have been found in the jungles of the **Thai/Malaysian** border, in the **Sahara** and **Arizona** deserts and in **Djibouti**. Shipping containers are found with bodies of migrants and refugees deep inside **Europe** and across **Africa** and **Asia**. The **Mediterranean** offers the most publicised and statistically monitored record of deaths at sea – mostly by drowning. But despite brief moments of widespread media coverage and international outrage, and even dramatic policy action, thousands of annual deaths (and notably a 2018-2019 spike in the ratio between fatalities and crossing attempts) now seem to be met with growing public indifference.[26] In warring **Libya**, 53 migrants and refugees died and 130 were wounded when the Tajoura detention centre was bombed during a military operation. This did not deter Libya's EU-funded coast guard from resuming the practice of placing migrants "rescued" at sea in the centre within days of the attack.[27]

21 IOM/UNHCR (2018) *Returns To Afghanistan Joint IOM-UNHCR Summary Report*
22 Bilgic, A. (2017) *Push-back and the violence of Frontex* Civil Society Futures
23 There is currently a call for the International Criminal Court to open an investigation into EU migration policies, which the submission argues have resulted in deaths by drowning, the refoulement of tens of thousands of people attempting to flee Libya, and "complicity in the subsequent crimes of deportation, murder, imprisonment, enslavement, torture, rape, persecution and other inhuman acts, taking place in Libyan detention camps and torture houses." See: Bowcott, O. (2019) *ICC submission calls for prosecution of EU over migrant deaths* The Guardian
24 Howden, D. et al. (2019) *Once migrants on Mediterranean were saved by naval patrols. Now they have to watch as drones fly over* The Observer
25 Fleury, A. (2016) *Fleeing to Mexico for Safety: The Perilous Journey for Migrant Women* United Nations University and RMMS (2014) *Abused & Abducted - The plight of female migrants from the Horn of Africa in Yemen*
26 The Independent (2016) *Alan Kurdi's death did change the world, if only for an all-too-brief time*. The indifference is not universal, however: see footnote 27. An internal Frontex report in 2014 acknowledged that "the withdrawal of naval assets from the area, if not properly planned and announced well in advance – would likely result in a higher number of fatalities." See Bowcott, O. op. cit.
27 Sanderson, S. (2019) *Migrants taken back to bombed Tajoura detention center in Libya* Infomigrants

Info Box - Normalisation of the extreme

9. Increased use of bilateral agreements with transit and origin countries to prevent mixed flows

In what has become a "border externalisation" or, more plainly put, an outsourcing approach, countries and blocs such as the **EU** are using bilateral agreements to persuade other states to cooperate with their efforts to halt irregular movement. This "remote control" approach has been a creeping development for some years but has accelerated rapidly since 2015.[28] It forms part of an ascendant concept of "migration diplomacy", or interstate bargaining on migration issues, where states engage in transit-migration diplomacy, usually because of their geopolitical location as part of a migrant route, or because they are a potential receiving country for rejected migrants or refugees.[29] Examples of this include the June 2019 trade deal between **Mexico and the US** requiring the deployment of 6,000 soldiers of the Mexican National Guard to keep US-bound migrant "caravans" from entering Mexico from Guatemala, and the **Jordan Compact** in 2016, through which the international community (via the World Bank) effectively paid Jordan to grant up to 200,000 Syrian refugees the right to work, the aim being to reduce onward flows to Europe.[30] A blatant example of this in October 2019 is where President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan threatened he would "open the gates" and send 3.6 million refugees to Europe if the EU tried to interfere with their military offensive in northern Syria.[31]

Australia has struck deals with **Papua New Guinea**, **Nauru**, **Malaysia** and **Cambodia** to end irregular migration completely and deal with people still detained. The **EU** made a deal with **Turkey** in early 2016 that effectively stopped the mass movements of Syrians to Europe. Deals and bilateral agreements by the EU or by individual countries that include migration management have also been reached with **Afghanistan**, **Mali**, **Niger**, **Nigeria**, **Senegal**, **Morocco**, **Libya**, **Ethiopia**, **Sudan** and **Egypt**. Most involve financial transfers from the EU directly or indirectly (via the UN and/or international and national NGOs) to the relevant countries, leading critics to characterise the new agreements as the EU paying countries off to keep migrants and asylum seekers away. Human rights groups are highly critical of these new arrangements questioning, in some cases, their morality and legality and exposing their real intent. A 2019 legal analysis notes "the intensification of this practice by multiple arrangements with unsafe third countries, exposing migrants and asylum seekers to serious human rights violations."[32]

10. Reduced adherence to the 1951 Refugee Convention

According to UNHCR, in 2020, some 1.44 million refugees around the world will meet the criteria for resettlement to third countries.[33] In 2018, less than seven percent of the 1.2 million refugees in need of this "durable solution" were actually resettled.[34] Between 2015 and 2019, the number of resettled refugees fell from just under 82,000 to fewer than 39,000.[35]

With a record 27 million refugees around the world, many countries are reducing the number they take in, and despite the widespread signing of the Global Compact on Refugees, there is a markedly lesser appetite for burden sharing.[36] In an extreme example, only two asylum seekers were allowed to enter Hungary each day of 2018.[37] The resistance to burden sharing and quotas is strong, especially with regard to people already registered in another country and who arrive by irregular channels in mixed flows. Such is the absence of solidarity and the imbalance between EU states that it can take weeks for their governments to agree to share a few dozen asylum seekers rescued in the Mediterranean.[38] The EU has been unable to enforce a contentious 2015 decision on refugee quotas under which 120,000 refugees would be shared among member states: many dragged their feet for months while others simply refused to act.[39]

As outlined above, countries across the world are increasingly breaching the 1951 Refugee Convention in their treatment of asylum seekers and refugees, whether it be detaining them without proper process, violating the principle of non-refoulement, or refusing to offer asylum or pushing them back (or supporting pullbacks) without offering them the chance to apply for asylum. Even the welcome shown by notable exceptions to this trend, Peru, Ecuador, Chile, Columbia and Brazil, which took in hundreds of thousands of fleeing Venezuelans over the past two years, is wearing thin.[40]

28 Zaioti, R. (ed) (2016) *Externalizing Migration Management: Europe, North America and the Spread of 'Remote Control' Practices* Routledge
29 Adamson, F. & Tsourapas, G (2018) *Migration Diplomacy in World Politics* International Studies Perspectives
30 Ibid.
31 Emmott,R and Irish, J. (2019) *Furious with Turkey, EU threatens sanctions, arms embargo*. Reuters.
32 Liguor, A. (2019) *Migration Law and the Externalization of Border Controls: European State Responsibility* Routledge
33 UNHCR (2019) *Projected global resettlement needs 2020*
34 Ibid.
35 UNHCR (2019) *Resettlement data*
36 The United States and certain EU countries are at decade low in terms of the numbers of refugees they are willing to take in. Parker,B. (2018) *Refugee resettlement hits 10-year low*. The New Humanitarian
37 UNHCR.(2018) *Hungary: UNHCR dismayed over further border restrictions and draft law targeting NGOs working with asylum-seekers and refugees.* UNHCR
38 Baczynska, G. & Faus, J. (2019) *Five EU states to take in Open Arms migrants, ending standoff* Reuters
39 Rankin, J. (2017) *EU could 'scrap refugee quota scheme'* The Guardian
40 Mixed Migration Centre (2019) *Waning welcome: the growing challenges facing mixed migration flows from Venezuela. A field assessment study in Colombia and Peru*

Interview

More than money

Profit isn't always the main motive of migrant smugglers, explains **Tuesday Reitano**, stressing that the term encompasses a much wider range of roles than that of the callous exploiter, as depicted by much public and political discourse.
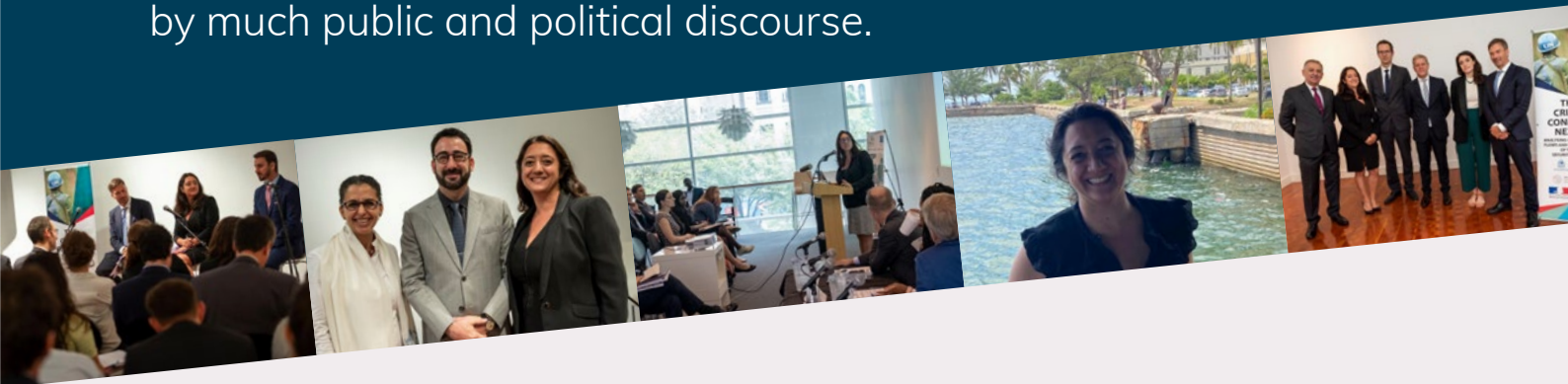
Tuesday Reitano is Deputy Director of the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC) and a senior research advisor at the Institute for Security Studies in Pretoria, where she leads the ENACT programme on behalf of the GI - TOC. Reitano was formerly the director of CT MORSE, an independent policy and monitoring unit for the EU's programmes in counter-terrorism, and for 12 years was a policy specialist in the UN system. She is author of a number of publications and co-authored Migrant, Refugee, Smuggler, Saviour.

You've written that human smuggling is a business in which "the marketplace is human aspiration". Could you elaborate, and comment on the prevalence of human smugglers globally today?

There are a growing number of people aspiring and seeking to move, find their lives in new places, seek employment, seek safety and generally with a very fair desire to craft themselves hopes and dreams with the world as their oyster. Meanwhile, they are being very much challenged or controlled by a prevailing desire to see less irregular migration, and particularly in the developed world, and across the northern hemisphere. It is very notable how the US, Australia, and the European Union are all simultaneously seeking to reduce the number of people able to enter their countries through both legal and illegal means.

Those aspirations for movement and changing lives, improving lives, are resulting in a greater wave of irregular migration. But people are having to move on their own reconnaissance without the legal protocols and supports. So what you're seeing happening is the smuggling system becoming the travel agents for

irregular migrants, in the same way that legal travel agencies would work for those who have the right to move. They do everything to support people on the move, from arranging transportation, helping them to connect with their families, to find employment, to take difficult journeys. In all of the communities where irregular migration is quite commonplace, the smuggler is ubiquitous.

> **The smuggling system is becoming the travel agents for irregular migrants, in the same way that legal travel agencies work for those who have the right to move.**

To human smugglers, it seems the categorical differences the international community applies to people who move for different reasons are irrelevant as long as they get paid. Do you agree?

Not all smugglers are equal. While it's a catch-all term, it describes an enormous number of people who

facilitate irregular migration. I don't think it is fair to universally say that to all smugglers the motivation doesn't matter. We've interviewed many smugglers who say that they are doing what they're doing because it's a humanitarian need. They know that people are vulnerable, particularly in war zones... They feel that the imperative of helping people get to safety, or get out of the situation they're in, is entirely why for them it is a necessary and rewarding profession.

And it may not be about money at all. We also see, often, smugglers who will take migrants to places because they feel that they need to help or they need to get them where they're going, particularly if there are women and children involved.

I struggle a little with the overwhelming characterisation that this is a profit-driven, exploitative, or potentially abusive business. It often really isn't. And increasingly now, we are seeing people who shouldn't be falling in the definition of smuggler and being prosecuted as such.

Are you saying smugglers differentiate more than we think and, if so, does this reflect in the pricing structure related to smuggling?

Yes. I know that most smugglers are very, very attuned to the opportunities that the migrants may or may not have and they calibrate their business accordingly. They know in detail the ins and outs of asylum policy in different places and where and when a migrant might have the best chance of making it. And I'm talking very much on a global scale here, having done interviews on what the British like to call "organised immigration crime" in Pakistan as an example. The smugglers are recommending which migrants would have the best chance of making the journey and then being given some kind of legal status at the end. It's the same reason why smugglers used to suggest to Ethiopians that they would be better off claiming to be Eritreans because of the higher rate of acceptance for Eritrean migrants than Ethiopian ones.

> **Not all smugglers are equal. While it's a catch-all term, 'smuggler' describes an enormous number of people who facilitate irregular migration.**

I think smugglers are extremely cognisant of who's making their journey and why, and what risks and benefits they may have as a result of their nationality or ethnicity or motivations. We have seen in our interviews that they do adjust their prices according to what they see as the merit of the journey and the risk, so those riskier journeys are charged more for. So not all migrants are equal to a smuggler, by any means.

A colleague of mine has just finished a study on detention in Libya and we saw that as migrants were entering a detention centre they are literally triaged by nationality, because they have the potential to pay a higher or a lower fee depending on where they're from. West Africans were the bottom of the pile, whereas East Africans were considered a good potential source of additional profits.

> **Migrants entering a detention centre in Libya are literally triaged by nationality, because they have the potential to pay higher or a lower fee depending on where they're from.**

Has a blind eye been turned to government collusion with smugglers? And do you think this will have to be addressed if any progress, however we define it, is to be made?

Smuggling is a phenomenon created by states where the harm of the irregular journeys and the potential to profit and exploit people on the move has also been created by the decisions and the framework set up by states. As a trade it is 150 percent enabled by state actors all the way along, whether it's the providing of fraudulent visas, whether it's turning a blind eye at customs or taking bribes from smugglers to allow vehicles to go on. It's only really in the few places where there's minimal state presence that a smuggling journey is completed without the complicity of state actors.

Corruption is always the elephant in the room in the conversations around international assistance, and I think it's very hard to ask a state for collaboration and at the same time accuse them or their officials of complicity. But there are many uncomfortable, unanswered compromises in the irregular migration debate; this is only just one of a long list.

What about policy makers and others who repeatedly conflate human smuggling with human trafficking? Is this deliberate? And if so, what does it serve?

I don't think it's universally deliberate. I think in many cases it's on a weak information basis and a recognition that the two are often interrelated crimes, that there is a higher risk to people on the move irregularly to be trafficked than in other contexts. And I think the largest form of human trafficking – labour exploitation – is most likely to happen in congruence with irregular mobility.

The regret in too quickly conflating them and continually putting them in one bag is that you end up then taking the steps of assuming that all smugglers should be treated like potential traffickers, which is largely

unwarranted. It ends up applying a set of criminal justice solutions, and often quite securitised criminal justice solutions, to a problem where it is neither warranted nor optimal as a response. And it does also legitimise securitisation entirely.

So, I would say there are some cynical aspects to doing so, and I've written as such, but I would say broadly, particularly in the media, the use of human trafficking/ human smuggler is a relatively common short-hand and in some cases a lazy mistake.

But with the level of premeditated exploitation and abuse that we've seen by some smugglers against certain mixed flows, do we have a problem with the definition anyway? Is it being stretched to its limit on both sides, of the smuggler and the trafficking analysis?

Yes. Where the conflation is far more realistic and relevant is in labour migration and the use of agencies who facilitate labour migration for domestic employment and for construction and other things; the trafficking and migration nexus is strongest there. But the conflation, in contemporary terms, is being used with people running across borders illegally, which I think is largely relatively nonsensical. There are exponentially more people moving with employment agencies and being exposed to risk of trafficking, than there are informal border crossers. I like the term "aggravated smuggling", to describe that exploitative industry.[1]

Overall, our definitions of human trafficking are quite weak and not very useful. They encompass too much, they're too unspecific, they tend to assume the same sets of responses regardless of the type of trafficking. So I think human trafficking needs a little bit of a reality check as a policy doctrine.

> **"Our definitions of human trafficking are quite weak and not very useful. They encompass too much, they're too unspecific, they tend to assume the same sets of responses regardless of the type of trafficking."**

Do you think since the heyday of human smuggling in 2015 and 2016 the flows have significantly reduced, and that it's looking quite different now?

I'd say those days are largely gone, but that doesn't mean the days of smugglers are over. The higher the border controls, the more securitised the discussion

becomes, the more profits the industry will be able to generate, because the desire hasn't changed, you've just made the journey harder. People still want to move, they will still seek out ways to move, they will need a smuggler more than they ever did. And those smugglers who are prepared to facilitate and who can successfully support a journey in an environment with such combative border control will be the most professional illicit border crossers, which are organised crime.

If the fight against human smugglers is successful, isn't this also going to reduce the capabilities of those with no other option to move? Is this one of the contradictions of combating human smuggling for those trying to protect the rights of those on the move?

Regardless of the motive, whether it's to understand better what's happening even for those with a strong [desire] to protect and enable irregular migration and maintain the rights, nothing of that is served by the development of highly exploitative criminal networks. And nor is it well-served, frankly, by the kinds of out-of-control levels of irregular migration where you see thousands and thousands of people on the move at the same time. That wasn't good for anybody. It was neither good for the migrants, nor was it good for the host countries, countries of transit, countries of source. I think that, for me, was something that we should be seeking to avoid.

The mass movement of irregular migrants that smuggling has facilitated has proven a gift to the right wing and populist politics, and we are in a place now where it has become abundantly clear how powerful a political instrument the control over irregular migration can be. Whereas human smuggling was just largely looked upon as an ancillary crime which was relatively irrelevant – a little sister crime in relation to human trafficking – now, it is so potent as a political and economic force for illicit actors, to just continue to treat it in that way and overlook it is naïve and quite dangerous for the public discourse and the people on the move.

How would you characterise this securitisation of migration? Is it occurring only in the global North, or are you seeing it elsewhere around the world?

I think the politicisation of migration isn't new and isn't restricted only to the North. It is a fundamental nasty, bigoted undercurrent of every society, and that you see as much across the Northern Triangle, across Latin America, and across Africa as you do everywhere else. That's the fear of foreigners and the desire that they wouldn't just keep showing up on your doorstep. The politicisation of irregular migration control is

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1   The origin of the term lies in the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime's Palermo Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, which refers to the "aggravating circumstances" that sometime accompany human smuggling.

also quite universal. Gone are the days where we felt we had an obligation to support the poor and the needy of our neighbours.

As a case in point, one of the hugest displacement phenomena of the last year has been Venezuelans coming out of Venezuela, and their neighbouring states have been so welcoming or supportive. Because the problem is that irregular migrants and asylum seekers now just overwhelm states' coping systems in a way that is very hard for many states, which are fragile or struggling to meet the needs of their own citizens, to address. The default answer to preventing irregular migration is [now] border control, it's ratcheting up the level of securitisation of borders, building more border posts, putting scarier people on them. This is the only answer that seems to be in the tool box for the majority of policy makers. They can't come up with anything else because anything else is too slow.

> **The default answer to preventing irregular migration is [now] border control, building more border posts, putting scarier people on them. This is the only answer that seems to be in the toolbox for the majority of policy makers. Anything else is too slow.**

So do you think this securitisation is set to become a long-term trend?

I suspect that like all cycles to almost all security threats, it starts with a massive ratcheting-up of militarisation, partly because it works in the short term and it puts on a good show for displeased audiences at home. We are all appeased by seeing more enforcement on the border, we're appeased by seeing warships dispatched into the Mediterranean because we feel like something is being done.

In addition, there's definitely a plentiful private sector lobby and interest group here to encourage thinking in the direction of enforcement because it profits them. But for many, life is becoming unsustainable in a lot of countries in the world, due to climate change and violence, and people are going to have to move.

If current restrictive policies against migrants and refugees continue, do you see a rising demand for smugglers and mobility?

Definitely. I think it's inevitable now. Just taking climate change alone, parts of the world in 10 years are going

to be uninhabitable. Or at least certainly very hard to sustain life. People are moving. And they'll keep moving towards the places with the highest quality of life.

You've written about the impact of the collapse of the "smuggling bubble" having much wider reverberations with economy and security. Can you elaborate?

Well, take Agadez, in Niger, where smuggling became one of the largest economic generators and a business in and of itself. People were moving to Agadez to work in the smuggling industry, and that was creating jobs and livelihoods. And at the behest of the European Union, with Niger functioning as one of the primary transit states towards Libya, all the effort was put on closing that hub down. All the efforts that were focused on promulgating a new anti-smuggling law have been applied only in Agadez. And while there is still some smuggling industry in Agadez, it's not that it's gone completely: there are still "ghettos" and meeting points and transactions taking place.[2] It has significantly quietened that down. And the people who came [to work as smugglers] have now gone elsewhere to find a living, including into artisanal mining, and they've set up shop in other places. Broadly, that whole mechanism has dispersed. We're seeing a lot of return migration from Libya as the sea routes have closed off, so there's just simply less opportunity. So people are beginning to think about going home. There is nothing there to facilitate that journey in a way that there had been before.

It's often said that it's impossible to stop irregular migration, but hasn't the experience of the last three years – with the significant reduction of new arrivals in major destinations globally, whether it be Australia, Europe, even North America – shown that to a large degree it can be stopped?

I think it can be stopped across specific border crossings. The cooperation between Mauritania and Spain to prevent what used to be quite an active far west Mediterranean route... It is pretty much gone, closed down. So you can definitely stop specific routes. I think you can reduce irregular migration down to very low levels, along specific corridors, but I don't think we can ever stop people moving irregularly and, as routes close, some will be deterred, [but] not all.

Many will look for new routes or take different alternatives. What I do see, though, is that the networks are becoming more professional, more effective, even as controls are going up. And that people are becoming more desperate and prepared to take more extreme journeys and pay large sums for them. They do not see the hardships suffered by other migrants necessarily as

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2   In the context of human smuggling, especially in Agadez, a ghetto is a compound or dwelling used to accommodate refugees and migrations between different legs of their smuggled journey.

deterrents. So I think if you take the global perspective, irregular migration can't be stopped.

According to many, the war on drugs has been spectacularly unsuccessful. Meanwhile, migrant smuggling is being increasingly criminalized as a new war on smuggling opens up. Are we on the wrong track? Should irregular migration be regularised?

I think both of these are unwinnable wars. The harm from the war on drugs came as much from very securitised responses as it did from the harm of drugs themselves. The problem is that drugs do cause harm, some of them a lot of harm. But we did not focus our

> **We are all appeased by seeing more enforcement on the border, we're appeased by seeing warships dispatched into the Mediterranean because we feel like something is being done.**

attention on the drugs that cause a lot of harm. For moralistic reasons, the original focus on the war on drugs was drugs indiscriminately. And so we securitised a debate around something that was essentially harmless, or relatively harmless, and treated all drugs as if they were the same.

And I think this is the same mistake with irregular migration, or at least the war against smuggling, in that there are irregular migration flows that we should enable and encourage in many ways, that are resilience mechanisms that allow people to circulate that don't cause any particular stress to any of the communities in that circular migration route. And I just think we should leave them alone. And the more you try and build up border controls, for fear that one micro-fraction of a percent of the people on the move might be terrorists, which is usually what begins the desire to increase border control, the more you securitise the entire migration flow. We have to be more intelligent and nuanced.

Are you an optimist or a pessimist? Do you see the future as dystopian or utopian?

I dream of an optimistic scenario. I fear that the path towards dystopia seems to be very set. And I don't see enough political will or understanding to take the difficult and long-term and massive cultural changes that would be required to prevent it. I find the way climate change is framed right now points to a very short death sentence, and we are rushing towards our execution, our arms open.

The ever-rising securitisation of mixed migration

Over the last decade there has been a surge in the securitisation of different aspects of migration, especially in relation to mixed flows, including refugees, using irregular pathways. This essay outlines what securitised and criminalised mixed migration looks like and how security concerns are used to justify and normalise what were previously exceptional policies and practices around the world. It will also while explore how these trends might change in the future.

Securitisation from start to finish

Migrants and refugees in irregular flows face securitised conditions at many stages in their journeys. Initially, such conditions in countries of origin or point of departure may be a significant mobility driver for many, particularly refugees. Then, over the course of their journey they often face securitised borders and national security apparatus designed to deter, restrict or control their movements. Indeed, their presence in certain countries can prompt a level of securitisation that in turn may make the context more insecure, such as in Niger or Sudan. They then face increasingly securitised conditions at or approaching border areas of their chosen destination countries (e.g. in Mexico or in the Mediterranean Sea) driven by policies and processes that are the focus of this essay. Finally, within destination countries they may face further securitised situations including detention and deportation, as well as a hostile environment that undermines integration and acceptance.

A new security agenda

Evidence of securitisation of migration has been with us for many decades.[1] Securitisation can be described as the repositioning of areas of regular politics into the realm of security by increasingly using narratives of threat and danger aimed at justifying the adoption of extraordinary measures.[2] The last decade has seen a significant expansion of these narratives, backed by a normalisation of measures, operations, laws and policies that were once regarded as extreme. Many continue to regard them as extreme, making the nexus between security and migrants/refugees highly contentious.

In the post-Cold War era of neoliberal globalisation and the end of the bi-polar geopolitical stand-off, the new security threats took the form of rogue and fragile states, and terrorists. We have seen a conceptual shift from personal security to national security. Some argue this is one of the pressing contradictions of globalisation, where despite greater political and economic integration, insecurity continues to be present and reveals itself in new forms.[3] The "new security agenda" encompasses issues such as ethnic conflict, environmental degradation, violent extremism, resource scarcity, weapons proliferation, uncontrolled migration, and organized crime.[4] The erection of a record number of border fences and walls globally is emblematic of this paradox in an increasingly globalised world. Securitisation also has a "mass psychological dimension" insofar as it activates fear of migration through perceived existential threats and specifically cultural, social and political concerns.[5]

State sovereignty & political expediency

The most common arguments used by securitising actors, including states, relate to economic factors, social cohesion (identity) and political stability. Such arguments attempt to link migration with dangers relating to the economy, health, and crime, including terrorism. Although other types of migration (including tourism, student visas, etc.) and integration show signs of increased securitisation, the main target is irregular migration.

Controlling borders and registering those within a territory is seen by governments, particularly their security sectors, as critical and an inherent part of national sovereignty and security. In a time of increased transnational crime, violent extremism, and potentially life-threatening contagions such as Ebola or swine flu (H1N1), border control is seen as non-negotiable and many citizens share their governments' concerns.

In what some refer to as "hyper-securitization" following the 9/11 attacks in the US, securitisation of migration was not only stepped up considerably but developed the key new dynamic of "blurring" the lines between counter-terrorism and immigration policy. At the same time, the perceived threat of Islam arising from increased numbers of Muslims coming via regular or irregular channels was constructed and kept alive during the so-called "war on terror", and still continues.[6]

1   Huysmans, J. (2000) *The European Union and the Securitization of Migration* Journal of Common Market Studies
2   Ibid.
3   Castles, S. (2010) *Globalization and migration: some pressing contradictions* New York: Routledge
4   Riordan S. (2008) *The New International Security Agenda and the Practice of Diplomacy* in Cooper A., Hocking B., & Maley, W. (eds) *Global Governance and Diplomacy. Studies in Diplomacy and International Relations* London: Palgrave Macmillan
5   Castles, S. et al. (2013) *Age of Migration* (5th Edition) London: Palgrave Books
6   Ibid.

In democracies where migration and asylum space has become politicised to the degree that policymakers and other politicians understand their future depends on their electorates' perspective, the securitisation of migration also becomes politically expedient.

Despite a paucity of supporting evidence, the old myths are strong and alive: migrants take jobs, reduce wages, overburden public services, bring crime, terrorism and disease, and threaten social cohesion and national values.[7] When linked to existing xenophobic and racist tendencies, these perceptions make it easy for political parties and governments to frame migrants and refugees as a threat, and thereby exacerbate those tendencies in a vicious cycle.

This is the political and cultural reality in which politicians and states operate. The gradual securitisation of migration allows measures to be implemented that restrict, control, and ultimately curtail uncontrolled and especially irregular movement.

Legitimising increased securitisation

The size and nature of uncontrolled arrivals into Europe in 2015 and 2016 was a cautionary shock to many about the disruptive impact of irregular mixed flows. The more extreme anti-migrant and anti-refugee measures taken at that time and since were not only legitimised by securitising irregular movement but soon became normalised and more tolerated as practice, no matter how many complaints publically made by advocates such as human rights organisations, other NGOs or multilateral global agencies such as the UNHCR.[8] "In the name of urgency and survival, these measures often reach above and beyond the law and the ordinary political process."[9]

A blatant illustration of such overreach is the EU's training, funding and partnering with the Libyan coast guard, who intercept departing migrants and refugees and take them to detention centres where they face well-documented risks of severe human rights abuses, including death.[10] The arrest and detention of thousands of migrants in Libya has been justified by security concerns at the national level. Another example is Hungary, which in 2016 built border fences and recruited several thousand armed police auxiliaries colloquially

known as "border hunters", in an "increasingly hostile State-led approach to migration."[11] An ominous public information film produced by the Hungarian authorities was a stark illustration of how a member state of the EU and its Schengen area unilaterally criminalised migration and migrants while demonising smugglers by referring to them as "lying human traffickers".[12]

Political dramas, such as the European migration/refugee "crisis" of 2015/16, and the large-scale human caravans approaching the Mexican-US border, provide policymakers and ideologues with easy fuel to increase the securitised narrative around supposed existential threats and to implement action that would otherwise be less acceptable. In the process, if part of such politicians' appeal to voters derives from anti-migrant rhetoric, such events offer strong ammunition for rallying support, even when the rhetoric is counter-factual. Hungary's prime minister Viktor Orbán offered a vivid example in 2016, at the height of the migrant influx into Europe (through Hungary), by saying, "every single migrant poses a public security and terror risk. For us migration is not a solution but a problem… not medicine but a poison, we don't need it and won't swallow it."[13]

Smuggling & trafficking instrumentalised

The role of human smuggling and human trafficking – both illegal under international law – is important in the process of securitising migrants and refugees in mixed flows. A large percentage of those on the move use smugglers, who are well-documented as leading perpetrators of many rights abuses, including deaths.[14] They are sometimes in close contact with traffickers and often conduct trafficking-like practices, such as kidnapping for ransom. Securitising mobility and militarising frontiers are therefore easily linked to the fight against international crime, where curtailing irregular movement is framed within efforts to disrupt criminal networks.

Conflating trafficking and smuggling further serves as a useful cover for those looking for a more palatable justification for restricting migrants and refugees, and criminalising the whole activity of irregular mobility.[15] This criminalisation extends beyond smugglers and those on the move to include citizens attempting to assist migrants and refugees (discussed in more detail below).[16]

7   Chebel d'Appollonia, A. (2017) *Xenophobia, racism and the securitization of immigration* in Bourbeau, P. (ed) (2017) *Handbook on Migration and Security* New York: Routledge
8   Human Rights Watch (2018) *Towards an Effective and Principled EU Migration Policy - Recommendations for Reform*
9   Atak, I., & Crepeau, F. (2013) The Securitization of Asylum and Human Rights in Canada and the European Union in Juss, S. & Harvey, C. (eds.) *Contemporary Issues in Refugee Law* Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing
10 United Nations Support Mission in Libya/Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2018) *Desperate and Dangerous: Report on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees in Libya*
11 Daniels-Sword, G. & Leach, H. (2018) *Policing the Other* Mixed Migration Centre
12 The film can be viewed *here*
13 The Guardian (2016) *Hungarian prime minister says migrants are 'poison' and 'not needed'*
14 MMC (2017) *Human Smuggling – no victimless crime: A compilation of quotes and stories from migrants and refugees migrating out of the Horn of Africa*
15 Paszkiewicz, N. (2015) *The danger of conflating migrant smuggling with human trafficking* Middle East Eye
16 European Parliament (2018) *Fit for purpose? The Facilitation Directive and the criminalisation of humanitarian assistance to irregular migrants: 2018 Update*

Protection push-back

Resistance to the securitisation of migration is particularly strong amongst academics, activists, and practitioners in the field of refugee protection and migrant rights. There is a sense of harsh irony that many of those in mixed migration flows are themselves fleeing insecurity, and exist in a precarious and insecure space, and yet are increasingly characterised as the cause of insecurity in transit and destination countries.

So despite the fact that insecurity is a leading mobility driver for many migrants and refugees, some fear that a security perspective on migration "threats" has overridden human rights and humanitarian values.[17] Increasingly, we note that the ethics of solidarity around refugees is at odds with actual appetite to provide resettlement to more of them.

Examples that illustrate these fears and contradictions can be found in the treatment of search and rescue in the Mediterranean as well as in waters off Australia. In both cases search and rescue has become militarised and focused on inhibiting movement.[18]

Advocates for refugees and migrants emphasise moral imperatives and duty of care while playing down the legal ramifications – and in some jurisdictions, the illegality – of crossing borders irregularly. (The 1951 Refugee Convention allows for irregular entry to another country to claim asylum.) They view the securitisation of refugees and migrants as a cynical mechanism that allows states to implement what they deem to be reprehensible, convention-breaching and in some cases illegal activities.[19] These activities include: legislating to criminalise irregular migrants, arrests, detention, deportation, refoulement, separation of parents from children, preventing family reunification, failing to rescue people at risk, allowing those stranded to live in dire conditions, destroying make-shift shelters, failing to share the burden of refugees, cooperating with states with poor human rights records, and turning a blind eye to severe human rights abuses of cooperating partners.

The ramifications of such ideological clashes are profound. When such activities take place on the doorstep of relief agencies who oppose them on humanitarian grounds, those agencies inevitably take on a political stance and are thereby forced to jettison some sacrosanct principles:

"The 'neutrality' and 'impartiality' to which relief groups could lay claim in the Global South makes neither moral nor operational sense now that the crisis has come home... the choice they face is politics or irrelevance."[20]

Even the humanitarian activities of individual citizens in some destination and transit states have been outlawed. In the United States people have been prosecuted for leaving water for migrants in the Arizona desert and accused of harbouring felons when assisting migrants.[21] In Europe – especially in Italy and France – hundreds of people, including priests and the elderly, have been arrested, investigated, or threatened with prison or fines over the past five years in an attempt to criminalise "solidarity" with migrants.[22]

Militarising frontiers

The current scale of the securitisation of mobility and displacement, particularly of vulnerable people in mixed flows or in refugee situations, is widespread and increasing. Some well-documented examples of the militarisation of border security as part of a wider securitisation of mixed migration illustrate this aspect of the global trend:

- In early 2019, the **United States** beefed up the number of troops (to over 4,000) guarding its border with Mexico, specifically against "caravans" of irregular migrants and asylum seekers. There was precedent for this move: a decade earlier President George W. Bush had 6,000 troops along the border to stop irregular movement.[23]

- In June 2019, in an attempt to avert punitive US trade tariffs, **Mexico** deployed 6,000 soldiers to its border with Guatemala to curtail the influx of Central American migrants and asylum seekers heading to the US through its territory.[24]

17 Hammerstadt, A. (2014) *The Securitization of Forced Migration* in Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. et al. (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies*
18 Ghezelbash, D. et al. (2018) *Securitization Of Search And Rescue At Sea: The Response To Boat Migration In The Mediterranean And Offshore Australia* International and Comparative Law Quarterly; Vimard, A. (2018) *Search and rescue in the Med: "lives are used as bargaining chips in political games"* New Statesman
19 Frelick, B. et al. (2016) *The Impact of Externalization of Migration Controls on the Rights of Asylum Seekers and Other Migrants* Journal on Migration and Human Security
20 Rieff, D. (2019) *The migrant crisis on our doorstep* UnHerd
21 Matalon, L. (2019) *Extending 'Zero Tolerance' To People Who Help Migrants Along The Border* NPR
22 Nabert, A. et al. (2019) *Hundreds of Europeans 'criminalised' for helping migrants – as far right aims to win big in European elections* Open Democracy
23 BBC (2019) *US-Mexico border: Pentagon to deploy an extra 2,000 troops*
24 Gagliardo-Silver, V. (2019) *Mexico sends troops to Guatemala border in an attempt to dodge Trump's migration tariffs* The Independent

- Having forced out virtually all non-government search and rescue efforts from the Mediterranean Sea, even previously deployed **European Union** naval vessels (under Operation Sophia) have now been replaced by air surveillance assets, including drones, to save costs.[25] The bloc has resolved to disrupt the business model of migrant smugglers and human traffickers, especially in the southern central Mediterranean. Arrivals in the first half of 2019 were approximately 3,500, fewer than 17 per day.

- Meanwhile, the size of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (**Frontex**) is being increased to 10,000 officers. This is occurring in a context where fencing and national military forces already augment local police guarding EU borders against asylum seekers and irregular migrants using approximately 100,000 officers.[26] The agency's budget reportedly increased 3,688 percent between 2005 and 2016 (from 6.3 to 238.7 million euros).[27]

- In **Australia**, Operation Sovereign Borders, the military-led manifestation of a 2013 election campaign pledge to "stop the boats" laden with asylum seekers, has effectively ended irregular sea arrivals.[28] More than 1,000 refugees and asylum seekers who attempted to reach Australia irregularly by sea have been held for several years in detention centres on the islands of Manus and Nauru in conditions widely condemned by human rights organisations.[29]

- **Thailand**'s navy continues to prevent Rohingya asylum seekers from Myanmar landing on its territory and implements tough anti-refugee policies including "push backs" of any vessel attempting to land.[30] **Malaysia** uses a similar approach (also detaining intercepted refugees), while the navy of **Bangladesh** is regularly used to prevent refugees leaving its territory by boat (with smugglers, allegedly).[31]

- In 2017, **South Africa**'s National Assembly passed legislation to set up a new "armed service" called the Border Management Authority (BMA) that, if it is ever established, would subsume security roles currently fulfilled by the police and have the exclusive right to perform "border law enforcement functions" including

dealing directly with irregular arrivals and asylum seekers.[32] Together with plans to detain migrants at processing centres on South Africa's borders, the BMA is seen by some as of part of a process of "militarising the margins [that] has become an integral plank in the [African] continent's new approach to 'migration management,'" with "**Central African Republic**, **Ethiopia**, **Niger**, and **Sudan** … all planning enhanced border management strategies, including bio-metric tracking and militarisation".[33]

- In 2013, **Israel** began to enhance the securitisation of irregular entry to its territory from Egypt by constructing a fence, stationing troops, and installing electronic sensors along the border. This dramatically curtailed irregular arrivals through the Sinai. The Israeli government also securitized existing asylum seekers and irregular migrants in-country by enforcing mass detention, re-labelling approximately 40,000 Eritrean and Sudanese nationals as "infiltrators", organising deportation, making employment harder and publicising the criminal threat of these groups in Israeli society.[34]

- In recent years, although accepting over 3 million Syrian refugees, **Turkey** has securitised its border with soldiers and fences specifically to prevent more Syrian refugees entering its territory.

Private sector bonanza

For companies specialising in equipment and personnel to protect borders, the securitisation of migration (and refugee movements) has been extremely lucrative. The global border security market was estimated to be worth some 15 billion euros in 2015 and is predicted to grow to over 29 billion euros annually by 2022.[35]

The EU's investment in securing its borders benefits military and security companies which, as well as providing equipment to border guards, surveillance technology to monitor frontiers, and IT infrastructure to track population movements, also influence policy decisions via extensive lobbying.[36] Far from being "passive beneficiaries of EU largesse, these corporations are actively encouraging a growing securitisation of Europe's borders, with some willing to provide ever

25 The Economist (2019) *Why the EU's sea-rescue mission has no boats*; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2019) *NGO search and rescue in the Mediterranean - state of play*; Howden, D. Fotiadis, A. & Loewenstein, A. *Once migrants on Mediterranean were saved by naval patrols. Now they have to watch as drones fly over* The Guardian
26 European Commission (2018) *A strengthened and fully equipped European Border and Coast Guard*
27 Akkerman, M. (2016) *Border Wars - The Arms Dealers Profiting From Europe's Refugee Tragedy* Stop Wapenhandel
28 Australian Government (2019) *Operation Sovereign Borders*
29 Human Rights Watch (2019) *Australia: Reverse Cruel Refugee Policy*. See also Cave, D. *A Timeline of Despair in Australia's Offshore Detention Centers* The New York times
30 Phasuk, S. (2017) *Thailand Needs to Stop Inhumane Navy 'Push-Backs'* Human Rights Watch
31 Ng, E. (2018) *Malaysia intercepts boat carrying Rohingya refugees* Associated Press
32 Botha, C. (2018) *In the shadow of the Border Management Authority Bill* Politics Web. See also Phillip, X. (2019) *Dusting off the Border Management Authority Bill borders on mismanagement* Daily Maverick
33 Landau, L. & Kihato, C. (2017) *Securitising Africa's borders is bad for migrants, democracy, and development* The New Humanitarian
34 Deane, Y. (2018) *Eritrean And Sudanese Crime Data Released For First Time In Five Years* Jerusalem Post
35 Akkerman, M., op. cit.
36 Ibid.

more draconian technologies."[37] Some contractors are among the biggest arms sellers to the Middle East and North Africa: "the companies contributing to the refugee crisis are now profiting from the consequences."[38]

Australia's off-shore detention centres also provide rich pickings for canny private sector operators, as do those for migrants held inside the US and the UK, to cite just three examples.[39]

Beyond militarisation

Beyond militarisation – the most visible iteration of securitised border control – the securitisation of migration and refugees takes place at many levels of society in terms of policy, law, and security apparatus application:

> "... multilateral and bilateral agreements have been signed, international and domestic institutions have been created, extradition and deportation agreements between receiving and sending states have been authorized, and conventions and protocols have been ratified with, at their core, the linkage between migration and security."[40]

Evidence and iterations of securitisation of migration (including internal migration) is found not only in main destination countries such as those listed above, but also in locations such as Egypt, Sudan, Bangladesh, Thailand, Jordan and Syria, where the securitised discourse combines migration with competition for scarce resources.[41] Even in reputedly migration-friendly Canada, analysts have accused state immigration and refugee services of having become securitised.[42] In Kenya, the government has repeatedly linked terror attacks in the country to Somali nationals, especially urban Somali refugees and those residing in Dadaab refugee complex. The securitisation of Somali refugees has been the legitimising rationale for the often announced but legally contested and as yet unimplemented closure of Dadaab and repatriation of hundreds of thousands of Somalis, many of whom were born in Kenya and have never even visited Somalia.[43]

More mixed flows to come

The essays in this report and the many sources used in compiling them outline compelling reasons why the level

of global displacement, which reached a record 70.8 million people in mid-2019, is likely to keep growing.[44]

Even though cross-border mixed migration makes up only a small percentage of global displacement, the political impact of irregular movement is disproportionately large. There are clear indications that the mixed migration phenomenon is likely to expand, not least because of unequal global demographic changes forecast for the next decades and the considerable disruption climate change might deliver.

A lively smuggler market has shown itself to be very responsive to demand for its services, and as political instability and conflict shows no signs of reduction this demand will no doubt grow too. The situation will be exacerbated if the current reluctance to accept asylum seekers and resettle refugees, coupled with a declining appetite for low-skilled labour migration, continues.

The hard and the soft...

Developments that might thwart an increase in mixed migration are closely linked to the securitisation of migration, including refugee movement, in ways such as those set out in the brief border security examples listed earlier in this essay.

As unequal global pressures mount in relation to economics, politics, the environment, demographics, security, and opportunity, the trend we are now witnessing of normalising extreme policy measures relating to movement might not only continue but become more extreme and entrenched.[45] To secure borders against unwanted irregular access will entail both further "hard" fortification and militarisation and "soft" measures where legal, administrative and policy cooperation barriers are erected. Migrant and refugee countries of origin and transit can often be bought off or bullied into compliance by enacting containment policies, as evidenced already in countries such as Mexico, Sudan, Libya, Niger and the EU's relationship with the African Union itself.[46]

...and the counterproductive

Ironically, current policies, especially those of border externalisation and containment, could result in "heightened inequality within and between countries, along with increased poverty and likelihood of conflict

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37 Akkerman, M., op. cit.

38 Ibid.

39 Grigg, A., et al. (2019) *Cashing in on refugees, duo make $20 million a month at Manus Island* Australian Financial Review; Darby, L. (2019) *Private Companies Are Cashing in on ICE's Detention Centers* GQ; McIntyre, N. (2018) *Private contractors paid millions to run UK detention centres* The Guardian

40 Bourbeau, P. (2011) *The Securitization of Migration: A Study of Movement and Order* New York: Routledge

41 Sowers, J. (2015) *Securitizing Water, Climate, and Migration in Israel, Jordan, and Syria* International Environmental Agreements

42 Atak, I. et al. (2018) *The Securitisation of Canada's Refugee System: Reviewing the Unintended Consequences of the 2012 Reform* Refugee Survey Quarterly

43 Hovil, L. (2017) *Treating Refugees as a Threat to Security Is Counterproductive* Refugees Deeply

44 UNHCR (2019) *2018 in Review - Trends at a Glance*

45 Hume, T. (2019) *Denmark's Elections Show How Much Europe Has Normalized Anti-Immigrant Politics* Vice

46 Foundation Robert Schuman (2018) *European Union/African Cooperation: the externalisation of Europe's migration policies*

[that] will create precisely the pressures to migrate that Europe hopes to contain."[47] For example, stricter implementation of anti-smuggler legislation in Niger (instigated by the EU) could well lead to greater impoverishment and unemployment providing militants with more potential recruits that may disrupt society and cause larger displacements in the future.[48]

Equally, the EU's discreet cooperation with and funding of Sudan in the realm of migration control have reportedly supported the empowerment of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF).[49] This paramilitary unit – which grew out of the Janjaweed militias that gained infamy in Darfur – have acted harshly to stem smugglers and migrants in Sudan's deserts and, on several occasions in mid-2019, opened fire on anti-government protesters, leaving many dead.[50] The ensuing civil instability in Sudan could lead to considerable displacement. Only history will show whether in these kinds of paradoxical developments the purported cure (for irregular movement) turns out to be more dangerous than the phenomenon itself.

Immobility risks

Deeper securitisation of migration will be central to achieving the goal of containment, leading to a potential scenario of increased involuntary immobility: large groups of stranded and probably destitute refugees and migrants, and accompanying humanitarian crises. Involuntary immobility could increase frustration among those stranded as well as among local host populations, particularly the growing youth cohort in the global South. This in turn risks exacerbating insecurity, in the form of violent extremism, recruitment by ideological movements, internal conflict, and political instability, further feeding – to complete the vicious circle – legitimacy for securitisation and, by likely even if counterproductive extension, yet more irregular migration.[51]

It was with an eye on these potential negative outcomes that the proponents and architects of the two global compacts for migration and refugees worked to achieve their widespread international adoption in late 2018. The first Global Refugee Forum will be convened by UNHCR at the ministerial level in late December 2019 to deliver "concrete pledges and contributions that will advance the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees and achieve tangible benefits for refugees and host communities."[52] It remains to be seen whether these initiatives and the Sustainable Development Goals (which

also stress the importance of international agreement around migration) as well as other multilateral initiatives will make a difference.

Increasingly, countries will need additional migrant workers, but such labour demand may be at odds with electorates' intolerance for higher volumes of migrants or refugees and the continued securitisation of mobility. As one analyst wrote more than 12 years ago:

> "How then do states regulate migration in the face of economic forces that push them toward greater openness, while security concerns and powerful political forces push them toward closure? States are trapped in a 'liberal' paradox — in order to maintain a competitive advantage, governments must keep their economies and societies open to trade, investment, and migration. But unlike goods, capital, and services, the movement of people involves greater political risks."[53]

These are risks many governments are currently unwilling to take, and future expected pressures suggest they will be even less willing to take them in the medium term.

The history of migration and the numbers of people potentially involved suggest that future migration and refugee issues can be managed through international cooperation given enough political will. Yet, enforced by significant sociocultural intransigence, current political will seems firmly directed towards the continued securitisation of migration. So the key question is: to what extent can this be rolled back and an alternative approach adopted to avoid negative and self-reinforcing outcomes?

47   Landau, L & Kihato, C., op. cit.
48   Lucht, H. (2017) *European anti-migration agenda could challenge stability in Niger* Danish Institute for International Development
49   Tubiana, J., Warin, C. & Saeneen, G. (2018) *Externalisation of border control to Sudan: an unlikely partner* (Chapter 3 of *Multilateral Damage - The impact of EU migration policies on central Saharan routes*) Clingendael; Ahmed, K. (2019) *EU accused of 'hiding' from links to Sudanese armed groups in migration funding* Middle East Eye. Some EU support was reportedly suspended in March 2019 over RSF abuse concerns: Wills, T. (2019) *EU suspends migration control projects in Sudan amid repression fears* DW News
50   Al Jazeera (2019) *Sudan detains nine RSF members over killing of protesters*
51   Reitano, T. & Tinti, P. (2017) *Reviewing the Evidence Base on Migration and Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism* CT-MORSE
52   UNHCR (2019) *Global Refugee Forum*
53   Hollifield, J. (2006) *The Emerging Migration State* International Migration Review

The prevalence of endemic turbulence and insecurity as drivers for future movement

The essay **The ever-rising securitisation of mixed migration**, in this review (page 186) deals predominantly with the securitisation of migration and asylum in policy and action from the position of transit or destination countries. It does not discuss the securitised and intrinsically insecure reality many migrants and asylum seekers are moving away from.

The 4Mi data graphic titled *migration drivers and decisions* on page 84 shows clearly that in Asia and all over Africa, apart from the driver of economic necessity, "violence", "general insecurity" and "lack of rights" are the most salient secondary reasons that people move. Also, economic deterioration itself is often a direct result of conflict, insecurity, lack of rights, persecution and poor governance.

Beyond the major wars and specific armed civil conflict or dramatic terrorist incidents that hit the media headlines, there is often on-going chronic turbulence involving political violence, civil protests, riots and criminality affecting millions of people in all continents. The data illustrated below offers graphic evidence of the kind of lower-level but often lethal turbulence occurring in Africa during 2018 and 2019 and which, given the expected pressure and forces of the future, could increase, causing displacement and international movement of people desperate to find refuge and new hope. The graphic of alarming levels of Ethiopian displacement on page 20 of this review is a sobering example of such unrest and suffering due to political and environmental events in a country "at peace".
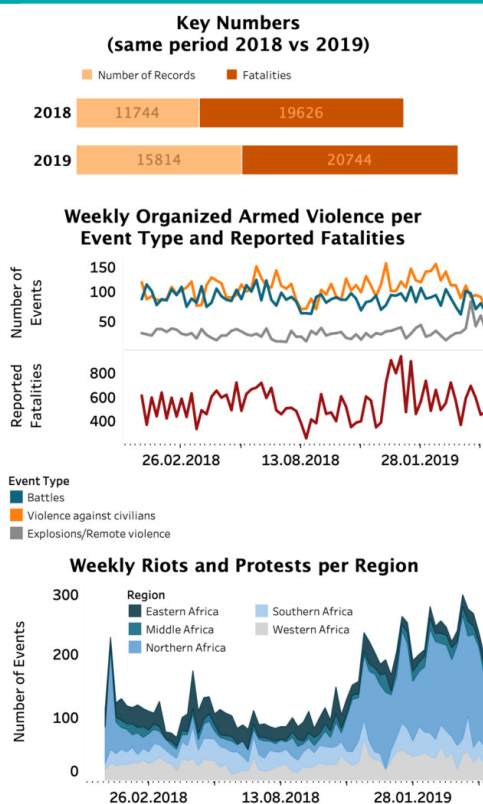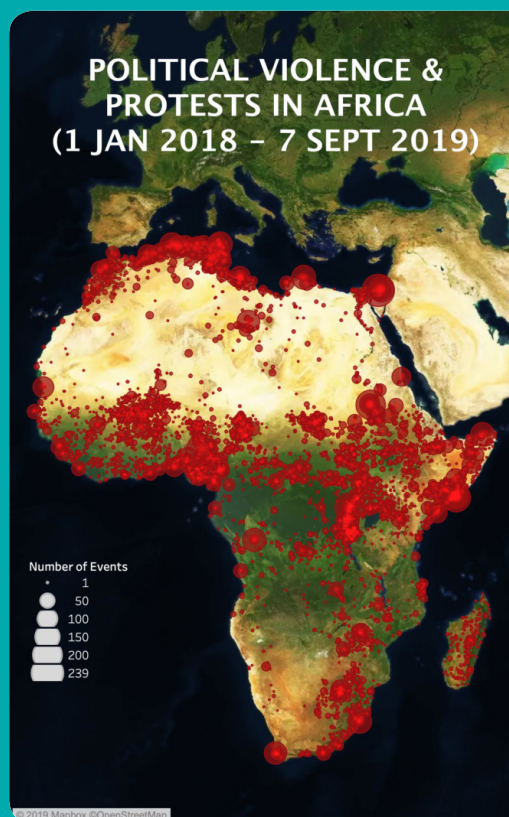
Source: The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED): Regional Overview - Africa 10 September 2019
Graphics reproduced with appreciation to ACLED.

Interview

Mind out for mission creep

The perception of migration as a threat is expanding beyond those who cross borders irregularly to include students, refugees and asylum seekers, and is gradually becoming normalised, according to **Khalid Koser**, who worries that this growing emphasis on securitisation perpetuates polarised debate and hampers necessary outside-the-box thinking.

Dr Khalid Koser is Executive Director of the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), and serves, among other positions as, Professor of Conflict, Peace and Security in the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences at the University of Maastricht, Chair of the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Migration, and Editor of the Journal of Refugee Studies.

Would you agree that the securitisation of migration only occurs when large numbers in mixed flows enter countries without correct procedures, and not in relation to tourism, student visa applications, regular labour migration, or everyday immigration work, including refugee processing?

The ill-placed focus on security has been around irregular migration, and we can discuss the question of proportionality and responses to that. But I see a tendency now to securitise even other aspects of migration that normally would have been fairly immune to securitisation. You mentioned students: certainly there's some coverage in the press at the moment about student visas being abused and people using the student visa entry route to perhaps move illicit people into countries. We see some discussion on investment migration, which has normally been

criticised, but not normally been securitised. We now see some suggestions that investment migration may be a security threat to countries, and even with refugees and certainly asylum seekers. I'm now seeing some links made between asylum flows, even refugee flows, and the risk of national security concerns, including terrorism at some point. I fear that securitisation is trending beyond just regular migration. It's one of the main discourses around migration at the moment, whatever the category is. These traditional categories around migration are breaking down. Securitisation is certainly contributing to breaking them down.

You've spoken a lot about the securitisation of migration, especially around 2015-16, but what would you say in 2019? Has it increased or decreased? Has it become normalised to some extent?

> **These traditional categories around migration are breaking down. Securitisation is certainly contributing to breaking them down.**

It's hard to measure. My hunch, without having done specific research, is that yes, it's become normalised. Whenever I hear discussions of migration of asylum seekers and refugees, certainly in political circles, certainly in media circles, probably in policy circles and I fear even sometimes in academic circles, there's just simply an acceptance that this is now a securitised debate. And, as with all of these issues, there is an initial outrage, and advocates correctly trying to hold us to account say that you shouldn't be doing this and look at the evidence and be objective, but eventually these issues become normalised and we're moving toward a normalisation of securitisation of movement.

Given the numbers involved in irregular migration and the national laws they inevitably transgress, isn't securitisation an obvious response, even one expected by citizens?

It's certainly expected by citizens; I'm not sure it's an obvious response. One has to look at proportionality. If there's one potential terrorist in a boat of a thousand asylum seekers crossing the Mediterranean, is that reason enough to turn back the boat? I don't think it is. I think it's reason to screen people thoroughly to make sure that we're processing appropriately to reject and turn back asylum seekers as appropriate, and I don't think it's a reason to sacrifice people who are moving for valid and often humanitarian reasons. And I think it's about proportionality: building walls to stop everybody when in fact what you want to do is stop a few people seems to me to be inappropriate. But I think, basically, I'm losing the battle of that argument.

> **If there's one potential terrorist in a boat of a thousand asylum-seekers crossing the Mediterranean, is that reason enough to turn back the boat?**

Whether you're fleeing for humanitarian reasons or other reasons, you should obey the laws of the countries where you're trying to settle, or even where you're transiting. If you break the law by trying to pull down fences or provoke public outrage, then there should be sanctions against you. I have no problem with that. Certainly, I'm not naïve about this. Some migrants, some asylum seekers, some refugees may be trouble-makers and may be criminals and may even be terrorists, but I would argue the majority are not.

Is there a kind of naivety or simplicity in the humanitarian response, which is opposed to securitization and prefers to open borders to both migrants and refugees, irregular or otherwise?

I've often said that we need an objective debate, and we need to be clear and honest about this. [We now have a] polarised perspective where one either considers all asylum seekers and migrants to be trouble-makers or potential criminals, or sees them all as heroes and victims and people who should be protected. Both stands are wrong, I think. A sensible, objective debate about where the challenges are and how to exploit them makes sense to me.

For the anti-securitisation lobby is the aim to have open borders full stop and roll back government control and restrictions? Has this position been fully thought through?

Yes and I wouldn't position myself as an anti-securitisation person. I would position myself as somebody who is trying to promote an objective debate around these issues. The line I've always taken on this is that if sensible, like-minded people don't have this conversation, then less sensible people will have the conversation and that's what's taking place at the moment. I sometimes despair over some of the humanitarian anti-securitisation lobby as much as I do over people at the other end of the spectrum because I find it equally unthinking.

How do you think the securitisation of migration will look in the coming decades as we face big societal and environmental challenges?

The question is whether these big future changes are going to generate more irregular migration, and my hunch is they will. Most countries are not, for example, yet set up to provide legal cover for people moving primarily because of the effects of climate change. I don't think there's going to be the political will to admit large numbers of people from swelling populations in the Maghreb and so on. I would predict an increase in irregular migration in the coming years; I think that's a fairly safe bet. If the focus on securitisation has normally been around irregular migration, which I think it has, I can't see anything reversing that. And certainly I don't think that anything I've seen in terms of policy or political will suggests that will be reversed. So one answer is that irregular migration is likely to increase, which means we'll continue to securitise our approach and understanding of it.

Technology is likely to enhance securitisation, hopefully to make it more effective and less intrusive, but we can't be sure of that. When we start moving into really advanced technologies in terms of biometrics and those sort of things, there is some hope that they will make managed migration more effective.

If the aim of policy makers has been to reduce irregular flows through securitization and externalising immigration policy, given the fall in new irregular arrivals in some countries do you think they could argue that their policies are at least working?

No. Measuring irregular migration is incredibly difficult. I'm not sure that I've seen any data that could convince me that irregular migration has reduced in Europe. I've certainly seen data that shows that refugee flows from Syria have decreased and perhaps that arrivals by boat in Australia have decreased. Australia might be a really good example of how securitisation effectively works. Security responses, including externalisation, are parts of the comprehensive response, but they've got to be undertaken in a proportionate and a reasonable way that respects human rights. If you look at the Australia case, I would argue that the boats have stopped, but what's the price that has been paid? Certainly there's been criticisms about human rights records, certainly Australia's reputation has taken a hit. So what's the price worth paying to turn back a few thousand irregular migrants? That's a question I think needs to asked.

> **Security responses, including externalisation, are parts of the comprehensive response, but they've got to be undertaken in a proportionate and a reasonable way that respects human rights.**

If restrictive policies are successful, is it possible that in future we're going to see a large section of predominantly young populations who will be involuntarily immobile, basically prevented from moving irregularly?

Yes. I suppose migration theorists would say that ultimately it's very difficult to stop migration and people always find a way through smuggling, through trafficking, through social networks, through communications, through transportations and so on. But yes, I can see a situation where you have more and more refugees finding, hopefully, protection and assistance in poorer countries, not richer countries, which is a bit of an outlet. I can see, yes, through some of the externalisation, especially around Europe's neighbourhood, an increasing concentration of migrants, transit migrants, would-be migrants, becoming effectively trapped. Whether it's North Africa, the Middle East, perhaps Europe's periphery, that would be a trend to expect.

If this is the case, is there a future risk in terms of violent extremism and a larger, more frustrated, less aspirational, more desperate youth cohort?

I always preface any of this with a health warning: we have to be really, really careful. Migrants and asylum seekers and refugees are undergoing enough of an assault at the moment without also suggesting they're potential violent extremists. But it seems to be intuitive that if you have large numbers of young people who are frustrated and marginalised, and feel they have no particular future prospects, that we shouldn't be surprised if some proportion of them become violent and become extremists. I think that would be an outcome that would be easy to predict.

> **Migrants and asylum seekers and refugees are undergoing enough of an assault at the moment without also suggesting they're potential violent extremists.**

But the risk is surely greater among those prevented from becoming migrants or asylum seekers?

Certainly if people feel they lack some alternative to their lives, then they may be tempted to join extremist groups, and for some people, migration is one of those alternatives, and if you take the alternative away and don't replace it with employment, education, empowerment, then yes, there's an issue. Securitisation and externalisation are fine as long as they are accompanied by something else, which is to provide some form of livelihood and future in countries where the people are living. But to extend it, it's not just people who can't find a way to leave their countries. There's real risks around transit camps and possibly even refugee camps.

> **Securitisation and externalisation are fine as long as they are accompanied by something else, which is to provide some form of livelihood and future in countries where the people are living.**

If violent extremism is one of the outcomes of more restrictive immigration policies, could this create a vicious cycle where securitisation is increasingly legitimised?

Yes, and that's the risk, that it's a self-fulfilling prophecy. Yes, on the surface, if you find migrants causing trouble and perhaps becoming extremists, that is simply another reason to stop them coming. I can understand that logic.

Is the combination of demographic decline in countries with an increasingly automated economy going to spell a dramatic decline in regular labour migration in the future?

I don't think demography will reduce immigration. It's true, of course, that largely in the northern hemisphere populations are declining and aging, but certainly in the southern hemisphere the opposite is true. The indications are that in most countries in the world development and livelihoods are rising, then eventually that may be a reason that fewer people want to migrate, but I fear it's a long way away. I don't think it's going to happen in the next 20 or 30 years. It's more the development than demography, but I think it's beyond our lifetimes.

What about automation? What if there just isn't a need for labour as there was, because machines and AI-type technology are going to replace so many areas of work, including areas that migrants are very active in.

Yes, it's interesting. People have discussed this for a while. The answer has always been that there are certain sectors of the labour market that, where you will have labour-saving devices, you can computerise lots of stuff. But ultimately, you can't computerize certain activities easily. Ironically, the demography in Europe, where there's more aging and dependent people, probably means there will always be a demand for certain people to do certain work.

> **"I've always been a little bit sceptical of the Global Compact for Migration. Some out-of-the-box thinking is needed, and I don't think either of the compacts did that."**

Against the reality of increased securitization of migration and asylum do you think provisions such as those in the Sustainable Development Goals and the migrant and refugee compacts are sufficiently aspirational or implementable?

First on the SDGs, a lot of work was done at least to get migration recognised as an important component of many development goals. I think that was positive. I've always been a little bit sceptical of the Global Compact for Migration. It's a non-binding document and it makes some generally sensible principles. Most countries, although there are some very important exceptions, have signed up to it. I welcome the fact that that most countries in the world coalesced around some general principles, but I'm not sure that I see those principles necessarily being played out in reality.

But ultimately, we do need a new approach to this. Some really important questions need to be asked concerning refugees. We are to an extent spinning wheels: we insist on the three durable solutions – repatriation, integration, resettlement – none of which seem to be working. We insist on maintaining this red-lined humanitarianism and economic purpose. Some out-of-the-box thinking is needed and I don't think either of the compacts did that. Some people say, and maybe I agree, that the private sector may become a game changer if we can engage them, not just their money but their thoughts and their ideas and their disruptive influence, and that might be a way to go about this, but I'm a little frustrated. UNHCR I think is, in my opinion, too dogmatic. As the guardians of the 1951 Convention, I think it does as good a job as far as it can with its funding challenges and so on, so maybe it's not UNHCR's role, but somebody somewhere needs to think beyond and ask some difficult questions.

What's your view of the future? Are you pessimistic, optimistic? Dystopian or utopian?

I think actually I'll choose both. I think it will become messier and messier, but I'm still optimistic. Despite the criticism I've just given about some of the SDGs and compacts, at least this stuff, sometimes I think for the wrong reason, but at least these issues are on the agenda. At least we're paying attention to immigration and refugees.

Mixed migration in an era of contested multilateralism

Multilateralism entails the transfer by national sovereign states of legitimacy and a degree of authority to international rules, principles or organisations. We now live in an age of contested multilateralism, where a rise in neo-nationalism, infused with anti-globalism and a renewed appetite for unilateralism or isolationism, runs the risk of undermining the established multinational world order.

This essay explores the current stresses multilateralism faces, the impact of unilateral action on refugees and migrants, and the potential contradictions facing the two Global Compacts on refugees and migrants. Finally, it examines how a significant retreat from multilateralism might affect the global management of mixed migration.

The bedrock of multilateralism

International laws, norms, and institutions, including those related to human rights, are central pillars of the doctrine of multilateralism. The United Nations encapsulates the doctrine, and is at the core of the world's multilateral system. "Multilateralism is the DNA of the United Nations Organization," the body's deputy head declared this year.[1] The sovereign equality of states guided by universal human rights is the bedrock of multilateralism, which, its proponents claim, is the only credible response to global challenges such as climate change, migration, transnational crime, and terrorism.[2] Ideally, multilateralism offers states a way to "pursue interests collectively, while sharing costs and risks".[3]

The post-Second World War multilateral structures, chief among them the United Nations, are widely recognised as having a multi-decade track record of saving lives, generating economic and social progress, and preventing a third descent into world war. Without multilateralism, the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on climate change, as well as critical multinational peace operations, would be impossible. For

many, multilateralism is not a choice but a necessity: a multipolar world requires multilateral structures and agreements (although some question how multipolar the world has actually become to date).[4]

Persistent, wide-ranging multilateralism dominates relations between states. More than 560 multilateral treaties have been registered with the UN, covering a vast range of issues, including transportation, communication, outer space, international justice, human rights, disarmament, the environment, commercial arbitration, public health, international trade and development, and the law of the sea.[5] Treaties more pertinent to the subject of this essay deal with refugees and stateless people, the smuggling and trafficking of people, and migrant workers.

Low trust and high stress

There is a rising fear that multilateralism is under threat. In November 2018, UN Secretary-General António Guterres told the Security Council, "multilateralism today is under immense stress. [...] trust is declining within and among nations, and people are losing faith in political institutions and seem less able to cooperate, even as complex global challenges are on the rise."[6] At this special Security Council meeting on the subject, representatives from many countries lined up to reaffirm the importance of multilateralism and condemn the new resurgence of unilateralism and breaches of international solidarity. Speakers said that "picking and choosing" which principles states will respect had degraded multilateralism at a time of multiplying conflicts, advancing climate change, deepening inequality, rising tensions over trade, and unprecedented numbers crossing borders in search of "safety or opportunity".[7]

In April 2019, more than 50 delegations participated in the UN's International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, with many warning "against the rise of unilateralism, isolationism, authoritarianism, populism

1   UN (2019) *Multilateralism Key to Global Prosperity, Sustainability, Deputy Secretary-General Tells Symposium, Warning Trade Restrictions Could Erode Confidence, Derail Growth*
2   United Nations Human Rights Council (2018) *Human Rights Council holds panel discussion on human rights mainstreaming in the light of multilateralism*
3   United Nations General Assembly (2019) *Principles for Reclaiming Multilateralism* Statement by H.E. Mrs. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the 73rd Session of the UN General Assembly
4   Derviş, K. (2018) *Global power is shifting. Is it the end of multilateralism?* World Economic Forum
5   For details, see: *United Nations Treaty Collection*. For a list of treaties ranked by the number of ratifying states, see *this Wikipedia page*.
6   UN (2018) *Rising Nationalism Threatens Multilateralism's 70-Year 'Proven Track Record' of Saving Lives, Preventing Wars, Secretary-General Tells Security Council*
7   Ibid.

and protectionism as challenges to the rules-based international order".[8]

Many identify the United States under Donald Trump's presidency as a main instigator of the present assault on multilateralism.[9] But Washington's position is not unique, or even new: it has a long history of non-cooperation with the very institutions it was often instrumental in creating.[10] Another clear example is the United Kingdom's choice to leave the European Union – probably the world's most tightly-knit multilateral organisation in terms of shared values and unified systems. Despite this closeness, in relation to migrants and refugees within the EU itself, member states have flouted EU multilateralism in the chaotic events and reactions surrounding the so-called "refugee crisis" of 2015-2016 and continue to do so in its political aftermath.[11]

Anti-globalism and neo-nationalism
In his speech to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2018, President Trump proclaimed: "We reject the ideology of globalism and we embrace the doctrine of patriotism."[12] While anti-globalisation challenges the very basis of capitalism itself, anti-globalism can be described as a philosophy which rejects the current global economic and trade system, not least because it fuels the perception that it undermines national sovereignty. As such, anti-globalism has a tendency to disengage from multilateral processes, considering them to have gone "substantially too far" and the movement attracts those from both the right and left of the political spectrum.[13] Indeed, centre-right parties are showing themselves more willing to identify with anti-globalism, which presents little threat to the international economic order, than the centre-left parties had with anti-globalisation. Thus, "anti-globalism succeeded where anti-globalisation had failed: it captured the popular imagination as a response to the economic impact of globalisation."[14]

Thanks not least to Trump, neo-nationalism and far-right ideology are increasingly visible phenomena much discussed by commentators and the media.[15]

Nationalism, authoritarianism and populism are easily conflated, but are actually distinct and can occur independently. When commentators analyse nationalism today, they often refer to a nationalism

that includes protectionism, unilateralism, xenophobia linked to nativist and identity politics, as well as anti-elite discourse. Economic nationalism illustrates that nationalism can be associated with the political left and right. Some, therefore, identify a multi-dimensional sense of marginalisation as the key structural cause of nationalism.[16]

Visibility vs prevalence
However, the current phenomenon of rising nationalism – when measured by the rise of nationalist parties, policies, and violence (including hate crimes) – may have more to do with the growing visibility of more "virulent expressions of nationalism" [emphasis added] in a climate of political polarisation and changing priorities than with any widespread, let along globally unified, pro-nationalist changes in attitudes.[17] Nevertheless, European Union elections results in late May 2019 also illustrated a rising support for nationalist – and green – parties challenging the hold of traditional centre right and centre left parties (both multilateralists) in Europe.[18]

The pressure of rising neo-nationalist expressions can be seen in the US and Britain and the success of centrifugal forces of populism and Euroscepticism in the far-right parties in Europe as demonstrated Denmark, Hungary, the Netherlands and France as well as the Italian, German and Austrian elections in 2017 and 2018. They are also found in the nationalist policies of the Philippines, China, South Africa, in Japan under Prime Minister Shinzō Abe, in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's India, and President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Turkey, amongst various global examples.

Hostile environment for refugees and migrants
There are important differences between the iterations of nationalism in these countries and nationalism may not be their only platform for support, but a pervasive anti-migrant and anti-refugee sentiment is evident in many of the abovementioned countries, particularly in relation to unexpected mass arrivals of those in irregular mixed flows – seen as a direct challenge to sovereignty and state control.[19]

The responses include a variety of policies and actions, sometime contravening or contesting multilateral

8   UN (2019) *Speakers Call for Reinvigorated Multilateralism, Stronger Diplomacy to Address Global Crises, as General Assembly Marks International Day*
9   Grant, M. (2019) *Is President Trump Playing With Fire In His Attack On Multilateralism?* Forbes
10   Ikenberry, G. (2003) *Is American Multilateralism in Decline?* Georgetown University
11   Amnesty International (2018) *Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea Europe Fails Refugees And Migrants In The Central Mediterranean*
12   The White House (2018) *Remarks by President Trump to the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly*
13   Heneghan, M. (2019) *Global governance and multilateralism in an age of anti-globalists* Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute
14   Stringer, J. (2017) *Why did anti-globalisation fail and anti-globalism succeed?* Open Democracy
15   Rachman, G. (2018) *Donald Trump leads a global revival of nationalism* Financial Times
16   Bieber, F. (2018) *Is Nationalism on the Rise? Assessing Global Trends* Ethnopolitics
17   Ibid.
18   For analysis, see for example: BBC (2019) *European elections 2019: Power blocs lose grip on parliament* ; SUGGEST we replace this with more robust analysis later when people are writing about the fall out. For now lets keep this.
19   Shain, M. (2018) *Shifting Tides: Radical Right Populism and Immigration Policy in Europe and the United States* Migration Policy Institute

agreements or national laws, to deter, divert, obstruct, disincentivise, punish or criminalise irregular migrants and asylum seekers as well as those that assist them.[20] Relatively small and manageable numbers of irregular arrivals can cause disproportionately strong (and expensive) reactions by states, while offering nationalist and populist parties more examples of "crisis" and "invasions" around which to rally further support.[21]

Despite studies illustrating evidence to the contrary, the optics of unregulated in-flows of foreigners supposedly threatening jobs, access to education and healthcare, as well as culture and national life, is a powerful one that populists and nationalists commonly utilise. If it can be shown that the foreigners adhere to a religious ideology contrary to the national heritage the potential power of those optics is even greater.[22]

Breaches everywhere
In this current political climate, the level of refugee resettlement was below five percent of global needs in 2018, according to UNHCR.[23] Meanwhile, in all categories the number of refugees, displaced people and migrants on the move has never been higher. In Europe, strict directives from the EU for member states to burden-share refugees arriving in Greece and Italy have been blatantly ignored while asylum acceptance criteria have become stricter. Some countries have been explicitly vocal in their anti-migrants and anti-refugee pronouncements and have been actively obstructionist in preventing asylum seekers arriving at their territorial jurisdictions, or have made their arrival as unwelcome and protracted as possible by keeping them in detention for months or years. UNHCR's public condemnation of cases of breaches of the principle of non-refoulement appears all too frequently. Europe's relationship with Libya in terms of training and funding its notorious coast guard in intercepting Europe-bound migrants and refugees and returning them to equally notorious detention camps in Libya is at very least a clear case of bad faith, and at worst a violation of various international and EU human rights provisions.[24]

Tough times for UNHCR
These are tough times for UNHCR – the mandated protector of refugees and asylum seekers – as it fights to maintain the integrity of the multilateral refugee regime against multiple breaches of the 1951 Refugee Convention, whether they occur in Australia, the US, Italy, South Africa or Kenya. At a time when analysts and academics are asking whether the convention is still fit for purpose, UNHCR is forced into a defensive position, knowing that if the substance of the landmark instrument were ever re-visited it would likely lose rather than gain ground. As one refugee expert stated, "The Convention should be maintained because if we tried to renegotiate it we'd get a far worse deal for refugees today than we've had in the past."[25] This was, for some, exemplified by the UNHCR-negotiated multilateral Global Compact on Refugees (GCR). While UNHCR heralded the compact's adoption in 2018, others saw it as a "cop-out," where, rather than seeking greater rights and protection for refugees, the UN agency only managed (by its own assessment) to "consolidate traditional standards in tandem with a voluntarist framework".[26] According to one analyst, to strive for more would be to risk complete failure around the GCR; the consensus had to be "thin" because it had to be pluralist.[27] UNHCR chose strategic consolidation instead of attempting progressive reform. The language throughout the agreement lacks teeth and makes clear that "firm commitments were not envisaged".[28]

"Over principled and under-performing"?
Commentators are divided on the strengths of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), negotiated and adopted in parallel to the GCR. Those supportive of what was signed at the end of 2018 see the political significance of reaching an international agreement on migration that many saw as an "impossible gamble in an age of xenophobia and nationalism".[29] Others dismissed the GCM as another "overprincipled and underperforming" agreement, decrying the decision to reiterate principles instead of focusing on practice or implementation. Positive impact will come from action and practice, they argue, not repetition of agreed commitments or re-wording of diluted principles and a persistence in negotiations for the "lowest common denominator". [30]

Madeline Albright, a former US secretary of state, gave a keynote speech in the run up to the GCM's signing in Marrakesh. She stated that migration could only be managed through international cooperation,

20 Serranno, M. (2018) *How Europe Turned Compassion into a Crime* Time
21 The UK's Home Office, for example, declared a "major incident" after an apparent rise in irregular arrivals on its coastline in late 2018. See Bulman, M. (2018) *Rise in migrants crossing Channel 'blown out of proportion', campaigners say* The Independent (including below-the-line comments for a taste of British public opinion)
22 Abbas, T. (2018) *The Rise of Islamophobia and Radicalisation in the Global North* Leiden Safety and Security Blog
23 UNHCR (2019) *Less than 5 per cent of global refugee resettlement needs met last year*
24 Hayden, S. (2019) *The EU's deal with Libya is sentencing refugees to death* The Guardian; see also: Human Rights Watch (2019) *No Escape from Hell: EU Policies Contribute to Abuse of Migrants in Libya*
25 Betts, A. (2018) *The 1951 Refugee Convention today is under serious threat* CBS Radio
26 Hathaway, J. (2018) *The Global Cop-Out on Refugees* International Journal of Refugee Law
27 Ibid.
28 Alfred, C. (2018) *U.N. Official: Refugee Compact Will Meet Fear and Ignorance with Facts* Refugee Deeply
29 Foresti, M. (2018) *Long Live Multilateralism: Why the Global Compact for Migration Matters* Refugee Deeply
30 Faal, G. (2018) *Overprincipled and underperforming: Why we need a practice-based Global Compact for Migration* GK Partners

emphasising that the GCM's adoption was a significant achievement in multilateralism, perhaps one all the more impressive in an age, by some states, of multilateral retreat.[31] Additionally, mechanisms and targets are in place in an attempt to make the GCM more performant. It is still early days, but reports from the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF)[32] and the UN Migration Network,[33] recently established in Geneva, will monitor and document the GCM's implementation as it supports states in fulfilling this necessary but ambitious compact.

Future expectations of mixed migration

All the indicators suggest human flight and mobility linked to aspiration and abilities will continue to rise, not only in absolute numbers but as a proportion of world population.[34] A combination of push factors, including climate change, resource scarcity, regional inequality, global demographic changes, poor governance, rising aspirations, connectivity, the role of diaspora, natural disasters, and conflict are all expected to create migratory pressures. At the same time, increasing globalisation, rising incomes, growing international labour demand, and better educational outcomes, coupled with access to transportation, financing and facilitators and smugglers, will also increase people's desire and ability to move. The collision potential between rising mobility aspirations and abilities on the one hand, and destination states' reduced appetite or tolerance for rising numbers of asylum seekers and migrants on the other, is clear. Indeed, the increased restrictions preventing regular mobility already heighten the demand for irregular movement, creating not only a management problem for states but, as we have seen, incendiary political tensions, as well as increased risks for people on the move in mixed migration flows

Few states, be they countries of origin, transit or destination, are untouched by the rising and tenacious phenomenon of mixed migration. Unilateral responses, or bilateral agreements (such as the EU-Turkey Statement and Italy's agreements with Libya) may appear to offer short-term responses or defuse particular explosive situations, but the consensus is that mixed migration is sufficiently global to require multilateral solutions. It was in recognition of this that the two global compacts relating to migrants and refugees were so widely supported and passed in December 2018. The question is whether these compacts, and other multilateral instruments related to

migrants and refugees, will get caught up in the current and possibly future retreat from multilateralism and therefore fail to deliver. An assumption here is that if migration and refugees are not addressed in an explicitly multilateral manner they will fail to deliver.

How inevitable is the retreat?

What looks like an inevitable retreat from multilateralism today, however, may turn out to be something else: somewhat paradoxically, some analysts suggest that multilateralism may have a "life cycle" and that current pressures on multilateralism and multilateral institutions, including threatened withdrawals, "may be natural symptoms of those institutions' relative success".[35] Instead of being an indication of failure, the current stresses on multilateralism may be better understood as "the natural growing pains of an increasingly mature set of institutions."[36] In other words, the future of multilateralism is one of renewal and consolidation rather than termination. It's possible that this future consists of more local or regional "clubs" but there remain major global issues that cry out for a global response. For many, the answer therefore is more multilateralism, not less.[37] A case in point came in 2018, when the African Union declared its intention to implement a free-movement protocol across the whole continent with a single AU passport for all citizens. Whether this is a form of aspirational multilateralism or gesture politics remains to be seen.

Reform to reinvigorate multilateralism

Deficiencies or "growing pains" do not call for a retreat from multilateralism; on the contrary, many agree that multilateralism must be reinvigorated and reformed to be more democratic, representative and effective.[38] This reform will need to reflect the changing global balance towards multipolar economic and political (as well as demographic and military) powers within the structures of multilateral institutions, starting with the United Nations itself. Long-standing demands for such changes are expressed through the 120-member of the Non-Aligned Movement[39] and especially felt from states such as Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.[40]

The so-called crisis of support for the multilateral order, which is one of the characteristics of today's nationalism, may also have roots in the fact that multilateral

31 United Nations (2018) *Global Compact an Achievement in Multilateralism, Says Keynote Speaker, Stressing Migrants Must Be Treated with Dignity, Respect, as Conference Holds Dialogue; see also* Mixed Migration Centre (2018) *UN migration compact shows the world still believes in dialogue and international cooperation*
32 For details of the IMRF's roles, see the "Follow up and Review" section on p33 of the *GCM final draft*.
33 See *here* for the network's terms of reference.
34 MacKenzie, D. (2018) *The truth about migration: How it will reshape our world* New Scientist.
35 Cohen, H .(2018) *Multilateralism's Life-Cycle* American Journal of International Law
36 Ibid.
37 Feltman, J. (2017) *We Need More Multilateralism, Not Less, The Case for Prevention* Keynote address of Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman to the United Nations Association of the United States of America
38 United Nations Human Rights Council (2018) op. cit.
39 Banerjee, S. (2019) *Think Tank Supports NAM Call for Reform of the UN System* UN Insider/In Depth News
40 Lazarou, E. (2017) *The future of multilateralism - Crisis or opportunity?* European Parliament

institutions have become "disconnected from publics in the very countries that created them".[41] There is a sense, for many, of having been "excluded of the promised gains of globalization" (closely associated with multilateralism), an increasing feeling of marginalisation – even by those within wealthy countries.[42] The globalisation debate has been running since the turn of the century and continues to wrangle over its putative pros and cons.[43]

Keeping perspective

Nevertheless, keeping perspective, when one looks at the high number of multilateral agreements that are in place and that guide the activities and norms of international relations, it is clear that, for the most part, most states adhere to their signed agreements – of which there are more than 300 active and guiding international activities. Despite the amount of literature about the crisis of confidence around multilateralism, contested multilateralism affects a limited (though important) proportion of agreements such as climate change, trade and the International Criminal Court. Issues around migration and refugees are also, typically, the subjects of highly polemical international debates, which makes it all the more impressive that the two compacts were signed last year.

Moreover, it is individual political leaders who are championing anti-globalism, and it is not clear how much of their policies will remain once they leave office.

Impact on mixed migration

There is an assumption that in relation to mixed migration, any retreat from multilateralism will result in reduced assistance for refugees and reduced opportunities and protection for migrants. This assumption deserves to be tested, particularly in relation to migration in a changing world, where the old patterns of origin and destination countries will doubtless evolve as the impact of demographic changes and economic opportunities begin to bite and a multipolar global economic profile consolidates.

In terms of mixed migration, where people use irregular pathways, in the absence of effective and implemented multilateral agreements or standards, there will be a strong tendency for countries to act unilaterally or bilaterally or in defence of regional interests, riding roughshod over existing national or international norms and treaties.

Three precedents

This is already the case. Australia, for example, has chosen to implement policies against irregular maritime migrants and asylum seekers that are vigorously contested at home by human rights organisation while

also contravening the spirit and letter of the 1951 Refugee Convention and attracting wide spread condemnation abroad.

Equally, the sudden mass influx of people in mixed flows entering Europe between 2015-2016 resulted in countries choosing different and often contradictory policies, resulting in chaotic and desperate scenes. The migrant "crisis" almost jeopardised vital aspects of the European project, while opening the doors for more illiberal politics and populist parties. The repercussions of those events continue to influence European politics as countries continue to develop unilateral or bilateral responses. Nevertheless, however disorganised and confused the response of European member states was, it did offer hundreds of thousands of refugees and migrants a chance to access the bloc and seek asylum. Irrespective of having signed the GCM or the GCR, member states continue to act to prevent national short-term political fall-out from uncontrolled and irregular arrivals and continue to act against European-wide agreements and for many, the spirit of European solidarity.[44]

The Americas in 2018 and into 2019 saw equally disorderly and tumultuous scenes and a developing humanitarian crisis around the Mexican/US border, where a government administration led by Trump clashed not only with federal and state laws in his desire to implement restrictive policies, but also breached international norms, again attracting wide condemnation.

Multilateralism offers better outcomes

The ineluctable logic here is that principled and reasonable multilateral agreements stand a higher chance of defending the rights of refugees and migrants than does a global governance structure where individual national interests and policies prevail. However, in a climate where national politicians cannot help but react to their perception of constituents' short-term demands, the tension between international agreements and perceived national imperatives will remain strong. A central question is whether strong future multilateral agreements properly implemented will backfire and bring about their own demise or usher in a new era of protection and burden sharing. It is unclear if the current tides of anti-globalism and anti-multilateralism will characterise the future political landscape, but what appears undoubtable is that migratory and refugee pressures will remain high and even increase substantially.

The realpolitik paradox

In relation to mixed migration, the paradox is that the more nations seek to sign up to liberal multilateral agreements, the higher the risk of situations developing where their electorates reject these more liberal positions in favour of

41   Lazarou, E. (2017) *The future of multilateralism - Crisis or opportunity?* European Parliament
42   United Nations General Assembly (2019) op. cit.
43   See, for example: Roberts, M. (2003) *Three Takes on the Globalisation Debate* Policy
44   Matuszczyk, K. (2017) *Migration crisis in 2017 – challenges for EU solidarity* Open Democracy

more intolerant, unilateral ones. Perhaps this is already well understood by many of the signatories to the most recent multilateral compacts on migrants and refugees and an unspoken divergence between public solidarity and private (national) policy is accepted. Accepted without cynicism but merely part of realpolitik? This remains to be seen, but achieving a critical balance between principles and political pragmatism (and between multilateralism and unilateralism) may be the best that can be hoped for as we enter an uncertain future.

Interview

Breaking the gridlock

The influx of new blood at the top of the EU's executive branch provides a welcome opportunity to move beyond the current impasse over migration policy, says **Michael Spindelegger**, who believes meaningful dialogue could deliver consensus on key contentious issues.
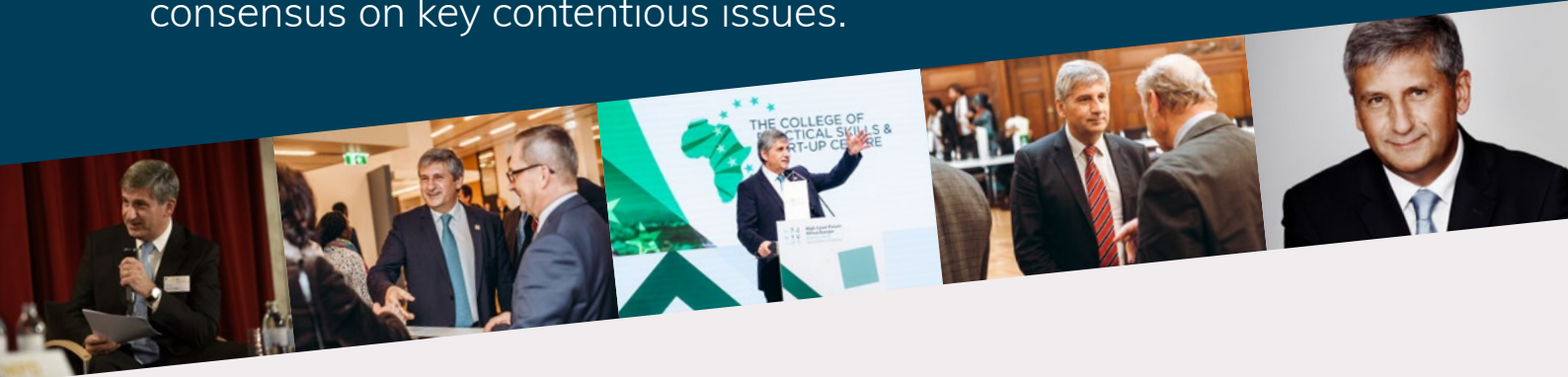
Since 2016, Michael Spindelegger has served as Director General of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), a Vienna-based organisation with 17 member states that links research and policy, migration dialogues and capacity building. Previously a politician in his native Austria, he held the posts of Foreign Minister and Finance Minister. He has also served as his country's Vice-Chancellor and as a member of the European Parliament.

What exactly is the "gridlock" you often refer to in relation to the EU policy on migration?

When we talk about the gridlock, we mean that positions are so different that they block each other, and no one can move ahead. With the creation of a new European Commission, this is a very good time to start to come out of the gridlock. It is only possible at this special moment because we have new positions with new people, and this is a time where you can start a new dialogue.

But although there is a policy gridlock at one level, at another level, there's quite a lot of consensus, isn't there?

Yes, of course. There have been a lot of achievements recently. Look at the EU-Turkey deal, look at the African continent, the meeting in Valetta, the EU Trust Fund, and

so on. This is the positive part of the story. But internally, we have come to a gridlock because of the discussions, because of the behaviour of some of the member states, and that is why we are in this very special situation. And the consequences are felt in other areas. So we really need to come out of this, but there is no single solution, one that is just a single step away. We have to do it step by step.

In what areas are EU member states gridlocked? And where is there consensus?

You have different visions at the moment in the European Union. Some would like to be more open-minded, others would like to be more restrictive. And with these two different positions, we cannot make progress in one of the most important issues, namely, reform of the Common European Asylum System, and The Dublin System. In that area, of course, we are in this

> **Migration is not an issue with purely technical solutions. You always need a political solution.**

gridlock. The first step to getting out of it is to talk about the common vision. And there, yes, there is already a common vision around fighting irregular migration.

But this is only one part of the solution. There are several others where you must find an agreement, and when you do, you can take the next step. And the next step would be to talk about the external dimension, because I think there you will find more agreement than in the internal dimension. If you have done this, you can come to the third step, and this is to find an agreement about the internal dimension. This is the most difficult part, but without a common vision about what you want to achieve in the next five years, you will not solve the problem.

This is what you and ICMPD mean by "hitting the reset button"? Starting with a new approach, with a common vision?

Yes, of course. To achieve a common vision, there is no way other than to sit together and to talk about what all the different member states would like to see within the next five years. And I think this is not such a hopeless task. Compromise can be found, because everybody knows about the challenges. There is a good chance we can agree on the bigger picture of migration and on what we would like to see as the European Union.

ICMPD has for many years been involved in different processes, particularly Rabat, Khartoum, and Prague, and others. And yet when the crisis came in 2015/16, you then supported this new process, the Global Compact for Migration. To what extent has this eclipsed the previous processes? And, speaking generally, how important are these multilateral processes?

It's useful to come together on a global level to find a compromise, a founding document you can agree on. But I think you have also to realise that this will not help you solve the concrete problems along different migration routes. For that, it's good to have this global dialogue, but for the different problems along, say, the Balkans route or the eastern Mediterranean route, you have to find another format. And the smaller the format, the more you will be able to find a solution, because a tailor-made solution is needed everywhere. So processes like Budapest, Khartoum, Rabat, and Prague provide opportunities to talk in more detail and find special migration-related partnerships along the route with the countries of origin, transit, and destination.

You speak of the need for "solid compromises" in migration policy. What do you mean by that term?

Migration is not an issue with purely technical solutions. You always need a political solution. And finding a "solid compromise" means looking not at just one of the issues, you must look at the bigger picture of migration, to find common ground. To give you an example, if you as the European Union are negotiating with Nigeria about the Readmission Agreement, you will not find an agreement with this country unless you also discuss other issues like investment in Nigeria, trade agreements, illegal migration channels, and so on. So if you don't see the broader picture you will fail in finding an agreement. And this is why we talk about solid compromises.

> **If you don't see the broader picture you will fail in finding an agreement. This is why we talk about 'solid compromises'.**

The original Marshall Plan after World War II was about economic recovery in Europe, but the new idea of a Marshall Plan for Africa seems more about investments that reduce the potential number or refugees and migrants that would want to come to Europe. How do you see such a plan working?

I think it's just a symbol and just something that people can rally around in terms of financing and funding African development. But I don't think you can draw a comparison with the situation after the Second World War in Europe, it's a different situation. We need to start looking at economic cycles in Africa, figure out how to give people perspective just to find a job, to get the right training, to have a chance at coming to Europe legally. Initiatives likes this [the Marshall Plan for Africa] are a good start, but they must engage at ground level. And they will only succeed if they involve the private sector, because without the private sector there will be no real jobs, no benefit for companies in Africa, and without all that, the motivation will fail. Private sector involvement is one of the big issues for the future.

> **Initiatives likes the Marshall Plan for Africa are a good start, but they have to engage at ground level. And they will only succeed if they involve the private sector compromises.**

In terms of labour migration, you have suggested that a future Europe needs to accept that it is a continent of immigration. Even if this is correct, will legal pathways satisfy migration demand? Won't there always be over-supply of labour, meaning irregular migration is bound to persist?

Legal migration opportunities will not replace irregular migration. But if you want to see cooperation with

countries of origin, you have to convince them to fight irregular migration together with countries of destination. And you have to offer them different benefits, such as opening up legal pathways to Europe, providing certain trainings in Europe, maybe also places in companies, as well as for students in universities. And for that I think it is good to open up legal pathways, even if we know that this will not end all the irregular migration we have seen in the past.

Even if you do not like the idea, can you envisage a future where labour migration channels are greatly expanded and facilitated, while the securitisation of borders (especially the EU's borders) to prevent irregular access is significantly increased?

I think this is a realistic future. You must do both. You have to open up on the one side, but also choose who will come to your country, and not leave that up to the smugglers. But on the other hand, of course border control is an issue, not only for European countries, but also for African countries, because every state would like to know who is entering and who is in the country and who is going out.

> **" Border control is an issue not only for European countries, but also for African countries, because every state would like to know who is entering and who is in the country and who is going out. "**

ICMPD has been increasingly involved in border management programmes in parts of Africa. Some critics say such projects are part of what they see as a "normalisation of the extreme" in so far that they reinforce externalisation of border management and outsourcing mechanisms to effectively restrict movement of both migrants and asylum seekers. How would you answer these critics?

If you establish border control systems, especially at the external borders of the EU, you will find fewer irregular migrants. This is in keeping with our rule of law system, because if someone asks for asylum on the grounds of needing protection, in two thirds of cases there'll be a decision that says, "No, this person doesn't need protection." So the better the system is working – where all countries are fighting against irregular migration – the more you will find ways where people can come legally to work in Europe, or to live here, or to be trained, or to be a student.

You have been closely involved in the Information Centre in Afghanistan, which provides potential immigrants with realistic information about what to expect in Europe. Some see this as an EU-funded

effort to dissuade Afghans from travelling to Europe even though many asylum applications from Afghanistan are accepted. How do you respond to this?**

The mandate of these resource centres is to give a realistic picture of what to expect in Europe. Of course, we can't recommend they stay at home or go: it is our job to give them more information, because we think the better informed you are, the better you will decide. If you don't have all the various information in place, you may come to Europe and be surprised that it is not what you have heard from your friends or family members. What we have seen in asking refugees coming to Europe is that they really have wrong expectations. There are the rumours about getting apartments here, getting a car from the state, getting money every month, and so on. So I think telling them how the procedures work, and about how many people are sent back because of not being recognised as refugees, is also part of the real world. And the more you know about this and about your chances if you ask for asylum, the better your decision will be.

You have said that "given current demographic and other trends, the overall pressure to migrate will increase, not decrease". Could you elaborate on how demography will influence migration?

I think this is one of the main problems. If you look at the young nations of this world, you will find most of them in the African continent. I think Benin is the youngest country with an average age of 15 years, and it will stay like that in the future. The more younger people you have without an increase in jobs, the more pressure there will be to go out of the country to find better living conditions for you and your family in another country. So it's very clear that demography is one of the main drivers and this won't change unless there is tremendous development on the African continent. But I can't see it.

> **" The more young people you have without an increase in jobs, the more pressure there will be to go out of the country to find better living conditions for you and your family in another country. "**

How significant do you think climate-induced displacement and movement will be in the next 10 or 20 years? Is there a chance we are underestimating its potential impact?

It's too soon to know about the concrete numbers of people that climate change will bring out of their home areas. It's not just a problem for Europe, this will

especially be a problem for the neighbouring regions of the worst-affected areas. Mainly this will bring people to other regions within the same continent, but it could also be a reason to go to Europe or to America or to Australia or somewhere. At the moment we don't have real figures, how many millions this will be. But if this is a situation like we see it today, there will be a tremendous number of people leaving because of these climate change issues.

Is ICMPD engaged in understanding future pressures and likely scenarios concerning mixed migration?

Yes, we are doing that on behalf of our member states to give them a perspective for the future. We have done such a project to show them how the situation will change if they work together, if they are willing to find a compromise in this common asylum system, and so on. But of course, it is up to them to look at it and to take the consequences. This was not a public project - it was just for the member states. But once a year we produce a big outlook about what we think will happen over the next year.

> **" I'm always optimistic because at this very special moment with a new European Commission coming up, it's the time for changes within the EU. "**

In relation to resolving many of these issues, are you personally optimistic about the future, or pessimistic?

I'm always optimistic because I think at this very special moment with a new European Commission coming up, it's the time for changes within the EU. We have developed 70 different recommendations for the European Commission. You can make migration better in the future and this is what we are working towards.

Wheels in motion:

Who's done what since the Global Compact for Migration was adopted?

By 2015, the issue of migration and asylum was already an internationally contentious and prickly one, but it was the chaotic response of European governments to the mass arrivals of those fleeing the Syrian conflict that propelled it to the top of the international political agenda. It wasn't just Syrians: nationals from dozens of countries were on the move using irregular channels and often using smugglers. Scenes of people on the move and their accompanying hardships and tragedies dominated the headlines for months on end.

Born out of "crisis"

The UN General Assembly convened a High-Level Summit in late 2016 to discuss ways to address these and other large movements across international borders, but steady preparations to discuss international migration at the multilateral level, in particular within the process of the Global Forum on Migration and Development since 2007, had already been paving the way for a global UN-led process. Born out of an urgent sense of "crisis" – at least a political and humanitarian crisis if nothing else – the result was the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. This expressed the political will of world leaders to save lives, protect rights, share responsibility and, above all, manage the situation on a global scale.[1]

The Declaration endorsed a number of commitments that apply to both refugees and migrants, as well as separate sets of commitments for refugees and for migrants. The text also contains concrete plans about how member states were to build on their commitments, including the start of negotiations towards the Migration Compact itself, the development of guidelines on migrants in vulnerable situations, and the adoption of a Global Compact on Refugees.

Complementary international frameworks

Both Compacts were developed in separate processes, working towards "complementary international frameworks".[2] The process to develop the **Migration Compact** was state-led, but included non-state actors. Through consultations and negotiation it was developed over the course of two years with the governments of Mexico and Switzerland as co-facilitators. Meanwhile, the Refugee Compact was drafted by UNHCR based on the outcomes of thematic dialogues, the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges, and six formal consultations that took place in Geneva in 2018. Member States and stakeholders were invited to contribute to this process. Separating the two processes proved challenging during the negotiations, in particular when discussing topics that were of concern to both refugees and migrants, such as drivers, pathways, migrants in vulnerable situations, screening, and referrals and returns.

Finally, in December 2018, at an international conference in Morocco convened under the auspices of the UN General Assembly, the **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)** was endorsed with 152 votes in favour, 12 abstentions, and five votes against.[3] The GCM is the first intergovernmental agreement in which signatories committed to enhancing cooperation on international migration.

Since then, several processes have been put in place to implement the GCM at the global level, such as the formation of the UN Migration Network, the establishment of the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund to support the GCM, and discussions around the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF). In addition, and given that implementation of the GCM is ultimately left to countries at the national level, some countries have taken first steps towards the implementation or the development of an action plan for implementation.

Summarising MMC's analysis of progress

The Mixed Migration Centre closely followed the Compacts' negotiations and published several policy statements about them as they were taking place. The MMC intends to continue its analysis of their implementation and follow up on specific commitments and objectives of the GCM, not only to keep track of progress but also to engage in the ongoing policy discussions and offer policy recommendations on GCM implementation.

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1   The text of the New York Declaration can be found at: *https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/declaration*
2   United Nations General Assembly (2018) *Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration,* Marrakech, Morocco, 10 and 11 December 2018 Outcome of the Conference.
3   Member States that voted against the GCM were the Czech Republic, Hungary, Israel, Poland, and the United States of America.

An initial report titled, Wheels in motion was released by MMC in October 2019. This essay offers a summary of the report's findings. For detailed findings and recommendations readers are directed to the full report.[4]

Elements of implementation, follow-up and review

The Compact includes guidelines on implementation. Member States are encouraged to develop national implementation plans while also committing to implement the Compact in cooperation and partnership with a diverse range of stakeholders.[5]

To ensure effective and coherent system-wide support for the implementation, follow-up, and review of the GCM, the UN **Network on Migration** has been established, with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) serving as its coordinator and secretariat. During 2019, the secretariat put in place the structures and procedures to enable the Network to implement its mandate effectively. Concretely, it has conducted the following activities: outreach to resident coordinators and UN country teams; staffing the secretariat, including with a civil society liaison officer and secondments from UNHCR, DESA, and UNICEF; engagement with civil society through consultations and webinars; drafting five joint statements; and the establishment of a detailed work plan. The work plan includes six time-bound thematic work streams that implement the Network's five thematic priority areas.[6] It also includes the set-up of the **Start-up Fund** and its multi-stakeholder **Steering Committee**, which is due to be operational as of autumn 2019.

In terms of follow-up and review, participants in the GCM process agreed that the UN Secretary General will report on a biennial basis to the General Assembly on the Compact's implementation and the functioning of the UN system in pursuit of this aim. The primary intergovernmental global platform for Member States to discuss and share progress on the implementation of the GCM is the **International Migration Review Forum** (IMRF). This forum will convene every four years

and result in an inter-governmentally agreed **Progress Declaration**, with the first one taking place in 2022. 2019 kicked off with the start of the process to develop the modalities for the Forum. The final draft was adopted by the UN General Assembly on July 19, 2019.[7]

Another mechanism created in the GCM process to support regional implementation is the **Regional Migration Review Forums** (RMRFs). So far little is known about these gatherings except that they will take place every four years, starting in 2020 – and then two years after every IMRF. In 2019, regional organisations have been waiting for the IMRF modalities to be finalized before starting a consultation on the RMRFs in their regions.

Within the regions there is a lot of interest from different processes and organisations to host the RMRFs. There is considerable debate on whether they should be hosted within the UN Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) or within the Regional Consultative Processes. It is not clear how this decision will be made. Some RECs are preparing their strategy with regards to a potential role in the review process. For example, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific has developed a plan for benchmarking and assessing implementation in the region.

Member States have not yet established national implementation plans which would provide the basis for review at national level, except for Portugal (see Box 2 below).[8] However, some are conducting mapping exercises and consultations with civil society, laying the groundwork for the structure of possible national reviews. In particular, encouraging progress by governments and civil society was seen in 2019 in Chile (not a GCM signatory), Portugal, the Philippines, and Morocco, in what may become lessons learned for other countries to build upon. The boxes below explain some of these in more detail. Regions are expected to provide an initial view of what countries plan to do between 2020 (the RMRFs) and 2022 (the IMRF).

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4   *Wheels in motion: Who's done what since the Global Compact for Migration* was adopted (and what should happen next)? (MMC 2019). This stocktaking report was conducted by Sophie van Haasen as an external consultant for the MMC. It is based on desk research, a series of key informant interviews at global, regional and national levels, and a validation workshop with civil society organisations based in Geneva on October 14, 2019.

5   For a full list of stakeholders, see article 44 of the GCM text.

6   The five priority areas are: 1) Promoting fact-based and data driven migration discourse, policy and planning; 2) Protecting the safety and wellbeing of migrants, including through addressing the drivers and mitigating situations of vulnerability in migration; 3) Addressing irregular migration including through managing borders and combating transnational crime; 4) Facilitating regular migration, decent work and enhancing the positive development effects of human mobility; and 5)   Improving the social inclusion and integration of migrants.

7   The text of the resolution on the "Format and organizational aspects of the international migration review forums" can be found at: *https:// undocs.org/en/A/73/L.99*; see also: United Nations (2019) *General Assembly Extends Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support's Term of Office, Agrees on Format for International Migration Review Forums*

8   This finding is not based on an exhaustive survey of all GCM signatory states but rather on a quick scan as part of the stocktaking exercise. It is therefore possible that other countries have developed, or begun to develop, national action plans that were not identified during the stocktaking.

Box 1. An Observatory on the Global Compact in Chile

Espacio Público, a Chilean think tank, established the Observatory on the Global Compact for Migration. The Observatory is a tool to analyse where countries are in terms of GCM implementation and consists of two phases: desk research to map whether national migration policies and practices exist within each of the GCM's 23 objectives and 10 guiding principles, and an assessment of effective implementation of such policies by a community of experts. On this basis, the tool calculates a compliance score (as a percentage).

The aim of the tool is to provide a fact-based and neutral basis on which different actors can start a conversation. Also in countries where the central government has no interest in working on the Compact (such as Chile), the tool has been useful to start a strategic conversation within civil society or with local authorities on GCM implementation. The Observatory has been set up in Chile and will shortly be implemented in Peru and Mexico, with more countries in the region to follow. The idea of the Observatory is that it is replicated and improved upon across the globe. The only requirement is for a national organisation to be able to take the local lead.

Box 2. The Portuguese national implementation plan

On August 20, 2019, the Portuguese government approved a National Plan for the Implementation of the Migration Compact.[9] The government sees this plan as a "unique opportunity" to systematize its migration policy in various areas. It is designed as an "operational document" and identifies a number of actions for each GCM objective. Each action has

an assigned ministry and timeline. The plan does not give an assessment of the extent to which Portugal already complies with the various objectives. It is also unclear how the plan was established, whether civil society was involved in the drafting process, or how it will be implemented and monitored.

Box 3. The Philippine consultative process on implementation and review

The Philippine government has set up a process for the preparation of its national implementation plan, as well as input into the Philippine report for the regional and global review of GCM implementation. Its national plan will serve as a framework and benchmark for government agencies involved in migration governance and will contribute to the achievement of goals in the Philippine Development

Plan. As part of this process, it organised a two-day stakeholder meeting in June 2019 with civil society and other actors. This consultation builds on previous stakeholder consultations which the government organised ahead of the GCM negotiations. In March, civil society organised its own consultation to formulate a number of recommendations.

A game-changer?

While some of those interviewed for the MMC analysis lament the non-binding character of the GCM, others countered that a new legal framework might not be successful in achieving change when dealing with a topic as politicized as migration. As with the Sustainable Development Goals, the GCM's value will most likely become clear as a policymaking tool, and will depend on political will, funding, and the creation of innovative

partnerships. As such the Compact may also act as a catalyst and potentially a significant game-changer.

Already in 2019 the impact of the GCM was felt in various ways: within the Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD) space, respondents reported having seen a more pragmatic and positive tone in the Member State discussions, in particular in the

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9   Republica Portuguesa (2019) *Aprovado plano nacional para implementar Pacto Global das Migrações*.The full text of the plan can be found at *https://dre.pt/application/conteudo/124044668*

consultation on the relationship between the GFMD and the GCM, which was held in April 2019.[10] Furthermore, the Compact's implementation is closely linked to some regional development strategies. For example, the El Salvador-Guatemala-Honduras-Mexico Comprehensive Development Plan, developed in 2019 by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, is expected to become an important policymaking tool regarding migration in the region.[11] The plan was launched in July 2019, and civil society will be closely involved in its roll-out.

In June 2019, regional directors of the agencies that make up the UN Sustainable Development Group for West and Central Africa established a Regional UN Network on Migration for West and Central Africa to provide support to Member States in the implementation, follow-up and review of the GCM. In support of this Network, a regional Knowledge Hub will be established which will gather existing data, projects and research in the region. The idea is that this regional hub will link to other data-specific initiatives, such as the Global Knowledge Hub and the African Observatory on Migration and Development (see Box 4). While the African Union has taken important steps in shaping an AU vision for the Compact's implementation, analysts interviewed for the MMC report expressed doubt whether this will lead to concrete policy change, since it may lack "teeth" to follow through on its commitments.[12]

Box 4. Africa spearheading actions to improve availability of data and research on migration

African Observatory on Migration and Development
In July 2018, AU heads of state endorsed the proposal by Morocco to set up an African Observatory on Migration and Development (AOMD) in Rabat, Morocco. The AOMD will focus on harmonizing national data collection strategies of African states, build capacity of Member States and drive research on migration and development in the region.[13] It will be operational in early 2020.

The Pan-African Forum on Migration 2019
The 5th Pan-African Forum on Migration (PAFOM 5), hosted by Egypt in coordination with the African Union on September 15, 2019, focussed specifically on data collection about migration in the region, and aimed to validate a "roadmap on the establishment of [a] national, regional and continental database, portal and depository on migration statistics in Africa" and to "set up a Migration Statistics Working Group in Africa".[14]

Regional Operational Centre in support of the Khartoum Process and AU-Horn of Africa Initiative (ROCK)
This centre was established in 2016, with funds from the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. It aims to better track and share information on irregular migration flows in the Horn of Africa, and to develop common strategies to fight human trafficking and people smuggling. ROCK will support the collection, exchange and analysis of information, support joint investigations and enhance the coherence of national and regional legal frameworks.[15] ROCK predates the GCM, and at this point it is unclear how it fits within the more recent developments.

Whether the GCM will change the way the international community responds to movements where refugees and migrants travel together is still unclear. Due to a lack of clarity on how the two Compacts will work together in real life, including with regards to how IOM and UNHCR will work together, there is considerable concern that the two agreements and separate processes will lead to a continuation of an often siloed approach.[16] The IOM/UNHCR joint letter on GCM and GCR coordination, published January 2019, does not provide clarity in that sense; it sets out a division of labour rather than offering an integrated vision.[17] The UN Network could be well-placed to address coordination challenges in mixed migration flows, and the thematic working streams could

10 GFMD (2019) *GFMD consultation on the relationship between GFMD and GCM - 4 April 2019*
11 UN ECLAC (2019) *ECLAC Presents the Central America-Mexico Comprehensive Development Plan to the Government of Honduras*
12 AU (2019) *AU Member States call for intensive efforts to foster dialogue and mutual cooperation among regions of Africa to manage Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*
13 Euractiv (2019) *African Leaders set up migration body, reject EU migrant 'platforms'*
14 AU (2019) *Strengthening migration data & research at the center of PAFOM discussions*
15 European Commission (2016) *The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Stability and Addressing the Root Causes of Irregular Migration and Displaced Persons in Africa - Action Fiche for the implementation of the Horn of Africa Window*
16 GFMD (2017) *Remarks by François Fouinat, Senior Adviser to the SRSG for International Migration*
17 UNHCR (2019) *Joint Letter from IOM and UNHCR on the Collaboration Between the two Organizations*

be an important entry point to analyse what already exists and to pilot new ideas, but it remains to be seen whether it will manage to overcome agency turf battles.

No vacuum

The GCM has not been developed in a vacuum: the issue of migration, and particularly the more contentious issue of mixed migration, have focused governments' minds for many years. Certain regional intergovernmental organisations (including blocs such as MERCOSUR, the European Union, ASEAN and ECOWAS)[18] have existing competences or historic interests regarding migration. There are some doubts that the GCM will serve as a vehicle for policy change as these blocs already have strong regional migration policy frameworks in place to shape migration policy, and GCM discussions are highly contentious at this time. In the terms of reference of the UN Regional Network in Europe, for example, the polemic led every mention of the GCM to be removed. As such, the influence of the GCM in the short term will also depend on the regional environment, and pushing the Compact too hard could carry risks. As one respondent told MMC, "while a focus on human rights in our advocacy is legitimate and true, at this point it will not help us move out of the toxic political environment. We need to have a conversation with states based on practical solutions, with needs, vulnerabilities and opportunities as key considerations. If not, we may risk losing all we have achieved."

Recommendations

The MMC study provides a number of specific recommendations for civil society engagement the coming months. For example, with regard to mixed migration, it recommends civil society establish a **Mixed Migration Learning Platform**: a group of states, civil society organisations, and agencies to drive a pragmatic and honest conversation about the challenges in mixed migration. Bringing together these actors will have value in and of itself, but it could also be a strong support structure in terms of preparing for the RMRFs and IMRF.

High hopes

The MMC study provides a more elaborate analysis of the GCM's progress in the nine months since its signing in Morocco in late 2018. It also offers recommendations and cites opportunities for the Mixed Migration Centre and other non-governmental organisations and civil society to play a role in making the GCM a success in the coming years. However, as this summary illustrates, there are cautious grounds already for high hopes as the Compact is making its presence felt and is quickly becoming a banner under which structures are established, interventions take place and aspirations are forged.

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18 Mercosur, or Southern Common Market, is a South American trade bloc established by the Treaty of Asunción in 1991 and the Protocol of Ouro Preto in 1994. Its full members are Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a regional intergovernmental organization comprising ten countries. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is a regional political and economic union of 15 countries.

Rights and obligations

The legal status of the millions of people on the move around the world should be no impediment to the respect of their the rights, and humane and dignified treatment, according to **António Vitorino**, for whom international cooperation is the sine qua non of successfully managing migratory flows.

António Vitorino is the Director General of the UN's International Organization for Migration, a post he took up in late 2018. A Portuguese jurist and politician, his previous roles include European Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs, Minister of the Presidency and National Defence, and a judge of Portugal's Constitutional Court.

When we observe current affairs and the political mood in many parts of the world, it appears there is a distinct anti-migrant and anti-asylum tilt. Is this a correct assessment of politics today, or is this a distortion? How would you characterise today's attitudes to displacement and migration?

The political mood you describe is due to a variety of factors. The certain diffuse sense of crisis, feelings of injustice, political conflicts, they are not all related to migration, but it's true that when it comes to migration and asylum, this kind of diffused feeling of uneasiness can become catalysed and channelled into anti-migration and anti-asylum sentiment. To a certain extent, this is due to current political debates in open societies towards a greater polarisation. This polarisation emphasises the negative impacts of migration instead of focusing also on the positive side. So, for me, for IOM, our key concern is to recognise that migration is a challenge for migrants, first and foremost. It is also challenging for host communities as well and we need to address this, while recognising that it brings

along a number of opportunities, for both migrants and host communities. We need to focus more on the second side to have a more balanced approach.

So is it mixed migration with irregular migration that attracts the negative reactions? Because at the other end of the spectrum, regular migration is going on, it's thriving and fairly non-problematic. Is that right?

Yes, I think that we live in a world where the flows are very complex. For us, all who are on the move need to see their fundamental rights fully respected, be treated in a humane and dignified way, irrespective of their legal status. Legal status will then determine additional rights and obligations in the country of destination, while always respecting their human dignity.

Are you finding it harder now in IOM to operate in a world where the distinction between regular and irregular is less defined, where smugglers and traffickers are less separately defined and where people who are displaced are moving together and

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> way, irrespective of their legal status.** "

they're looking for the same protection and the same outcomes?

Oh, yes, definitely. From the point of view of IOM, it is important to deal with mixed flows together with other agencies, especially UNHCR, which is in charge of the specific protections accorded under the [1951 Refugee] Convention. But within these mixed flows, we also identify a large number of migrants that are on the move and may be in need of humanitarian assistance - particularly special protection for those who are in a vulnerable position - even if they are not entitled to international protection according to the Convention. And that's why the critical part of the exercise is to afford all human beings the same dignity and the same access to fundamental rights irrespective of their legal status. Legal status determination comes in later when it is necessary to decide what is their eligibility for residence and potential access to international protection in a third country.

Do you agree that people are pushed into irregularity because of the current restrictive immigration policies and refugee policies? And if that's the case, how do you think this should change? Or does it not need to change?

We are concerned at the fact that the evidence suggests that there are more people resorting to smugglers and traffickers in order to move. And definitely one of our key concerns is to reduce irregular migration, to prevent people from being involved with the smugglers and traffickers because those are the situations where their fundamental rights and their human dignity are most at risk. It is hard to definitively establish a link between more regular migration and less irregular migration, but it is necessary at the same time to have legal pathways for migration so that people can be fully aware that they do not have to expose themselves to criminal networks, but have an alternative in pursuing legal pathways.

> " **One of our key concerns is to reduce
> irregular migration, to prevent people from
> being involved with the smugglers and
> traffickers, because those are the situations
> where their fundamental rights and their
> human dignity is most endangered.** "

Legal pathways are mentioned a lot in the new Global Compact for Migration. But do you see any contradiction between what's been agreed in the Global Compact and actual policy and actions being implemented by the signatories?

The adoption of the Global Compact is not universal, but the vast majority of the member states of the United Nations have subscribed to it. The main characteristic of the Global Compact is its so-called 360-degree view. Among the 23 objectives, some objectives are more focused on issues of interest to countries of origin, other objectives are more of interest for countries of destination. The implementation of the Global Compact, as a political platform of cooperation, is a state-led process. Each government will pick up the objectives that they consider priorities for their country, more adequate to the reality of migration in their regions. From our perspective, as an organization, we are prepared and ready to support member states in the implementation of the Global Compact according to the priorities that those countries have identified. Therefore, there is a diversity of ways of implementing the Global Compact.

The key point -and that is the added value of the Global Compact - is collective awareness of the fact that the complexity of migration today means that no single member state is able to deal with the mobility of people alone. And therefore, international cooperation, whether at the global, regional, or bilateral level, is absolutely fundamental to effective management of migration.

The UN Migration Network is specifically designed to help implement the GCM. What does IOM's role as the Network's coordinator entail?

The UN Migration Network aims to bring together roughly 38 entities in the UN system, all of whom have to deal with migration one way or another. So, the first objective is to bring some consistency and coherence to the way the UN system deals with migration. It replaces the Global Migration Group, but it also aims to be in line with the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Agenda 2030, and the ongoing reform of the UN development system.

The UN Migration Network is also a tool to support member states in the implementation of the 23 objectives of the Global Compact. IOM as an organisation can act in this field with a double head. As an organisation, we will go on doing what we have been doing for 68 years, but as you know, IOM became an agency related to the UN in 2016, and is now within the UN system. The fact that we are the coordinator of the UN Migration Network puts us at the centre of the UN system when it comes to migration. And in that sense, we have a specific role to play as a convener, a facilitator, a coordinator of the work of the different entities in the UN system that deal with the issue.

There is an increased securitization of mobility generally, whether it involves migrants or refugees or asylum seekers, whereby those on the move are increasingly dealt with as if they were security problem. How do IOM view this development?

Historically speaking, there has always been a security dimension to the movement of people. First and foremost, for the migrants themselves, because regular migration is the safest way to migrate and irregular migration and the operation of traffickers and smugglers a threat to the security of the migrants themselves. But when you speak about security, you are referring to the way that the migratory flows are viewed, especially in countries of destination. I've always said that it is totally abusive to say that migrants can be portrayed as a threat to the security of the countries of destination. But having said that, I do recognise of course that there is always a minority that can have harmful intentions when moving. And so, it is quite fair to recognise that a security screening is also required when it comes to mass movements.

But it is totally unacceptable and abusive to link migration with terrorism, for instance. That is extremely unfair for the overwhelming majority of migrants that migrate regularly, that are in the countries of destination, that abide by the law. And we should not stigmatizse an entire group just because a tiny minority may have harmful intentions.

> **" It is totally unacceptable to link migration with terrorism. That would be extremely unfair for the overwhelming majority of migrants that migrate regularly, that abide by the law. We should not stigmatize an entire group just because a tiny minority may have harmful intentions. "**

How about what we are calling the "normalisation of the extreme", the use of measures and policies to prevent irregular migration including asylum seekers? Do you agree that many of the measures that countries (and even the EU) are putting into place today would have been regarded as extreme just a decade ago?

When you look at migration, member states are entitled to control their borders. That's a key element of national sovereignty, and extremely important for the reassurance of all citizens, especially in countries of destination. But if you are just thinking about the global North, you can have a number of examples worldwide, including in the global South, where these kinds of policy developments are spreading.

So the difficulty we are confronted with is to ensure a balanced approach to migration policy that is not hostage of an obsessively securitised approach, but at the same time does not deny that there are a number of valid security concerns. The responsibility of civil society, of the business community, of the local authorities, of the national authorities, and of the international organisations, is to make the case for regular migration pathways that can be an antidote to abuse of migration for criminal or other security purposes.

How do you think changes in demography, climate change, economic imbalances, and the impact of AI and automation will affect future migration?

It will definitely affect future migration, but it's not just in the future, it's happening now. If you look at the Pacific Islands or the Caribbean, you'll see that rising sea levels are creating arduous conditions for people to stay and remain in the places where they were born, and pushing people to move. If you look to Africa, you will see that desertification and water scarcity are already driving people to move, often alongside a number of other factors. And to a large extent, the urbanisation process that is ongoing in Africa is due to the displacement of people from rural areas where agricultural opportunities have been exhausted, who are trying to find a livelihood elsewhere.

Climate change, for a large number of people, is not just a conceptual issue or a problem for the future, it's something that is already having a real impact, and creating obligations to the countries and to the international community to find solutions for those affected, including durable solutions for those people that are displaced, specifically those that are internally displaced in a number of countries.

Nobody can say exactly what the labour market will be in 20 years, but definitely the kind of opportunities to find a job in countries of destination for migrants will be impacted by the changing nature of the labour market in industrialised regions, whether due to technological advances, such as artificial intelligence, greater participation of women in the labour market, or the different skills that will be needed to undertake jobs. And that is an issue of concern for us because definitely shifting job opportunities can make migrants even more vulnerable than they are today. And one of the areas where we are investing is precisely on what we call "pre-departure orientation", including human capital development, to make sure that people are prepared, have the skills not only in language, but also, soft skills, entrepreneurship, cultural knowledge, and above all, the technical preparation to find jobs in the countries of destination when labour market in key countries of destination is a moving target.

What are your teams in IOM thinking about the future demand for migrant workers? Are you expecting it to be high in developed countries where there are declining populations despite the current and future rapid spread of automation?

It is very difficult to make forecasts and quantitative forecasts are always extremely dangerous because they can be misused. It's unfair to say that there is no demand in countries of destination. There is quite a relevant demand for labour in countries of destination, whether in Asia, the Gulf countries, in Europe, or in North America. So therefore, while we anticipate that there will go on being a strong demand, and opportunities, for labour mobility, this will be impacted by the very fast change in the shape and needs of the labour markets of the future.

Some people think that in the future, Western OECD countries may have to compete with emerging economies for migrant work, and that migrants will be in demand and have a greater choice.

Once again, I think that you are talking about the present. You are not talking about the future. It's already happening.

Does IOM expect climate change to have a dramatic impact on human displacement?

Absolutely. The impact will be very significant. I am always afraid of giving figures because these projections are vulnerable to a fast-changing environment. But from our own assessment, we estimate that roughly 40 million people are currently living in cities that are threatened by submersion who will be impacted by climate change. If the global temperature rises 1.5 degrees Celsius we estimate that roughly 30 to 60 million people will be affected. And if temperatures rise by two degrees, the number of people impacted will rise to roughly 100 million. This does not mean all these people will migrate. Let me be very clear. But this definitely means that situations will proliferate where the drive to move is very much present. And we are talking about large numbers.

Do you think the international community will be forced to accept more legally agreed terminology and status for those displaced by climate change? At the moment no government is willing to grant somebody the status of a "climate refugee".

I don't know, to be honest. But I think that we should be very careful not to undermine the international protection system through the broadening of categories of protection. This would weaken the historical and very well consolidated refugee protection framework that exists. We, as IOM, work with migrants that we can see are in need of protection, especially women, children, unaccompanied minors, those who are in

detention as, for instance, those who live in awful situations in Libya in detention centres. Those migrants, they are not generally eligible to refugee status, as they are not fleeing from persecution, but they are in such a vulnerable condition that they need humanitarian assistance or other forms of protection. And therefore, I think we need to find solutions for those people who are in those conditions, whether they have moved because of climate change, or because of poverty, and therefore deliver to them the assistance which is the minimum due to maintain the human dignity of those persons.

Concerning demographic changes, especially with the fast-rising population of Africa between now and 2050, should we expect to see a large number of African migrants attempting to enter Europe in the coming years?

Demographic projections show that probably in 50 years' time, the population in Africa will double. You can see that, in Nigeria, for example, it will likely be a 400 million country by 2050. And it's hard to think that it will be possible for Nigeria to create jobs for all these people in the years to come. So, the grounds for increased mobility is there. But at the same time, I would like to point out that today, 80 percent of those who move from one African country, move to another African country. Only a minority of migratory movements in Africa are directed towards Europe. And in practical terms, the free-trade agreement that has been established in the African Union with the protocol concerning the free movement of people will be a very relevant instrument to accommodate this kind of population growth, if it can create opportunities for economic development within signatory African countries themselves. So, it's very premature to say that population growth will represent a linear growth in flows towards Europe.

Some people predict the future will be dystopic, with greater global inequality and mass displacement causing social unrest and so on. Are you a pessimist or an optimist when it comes to future mobility?

If I was not an optimistic, I would not be Director General of IOM. But I attempt to be a realist, and a determined person. There are challenges, yes, of course. There are obstacles, yes, of course. There are threats, yes, of course. But I think that we have a moral obligation of bringing together civil society, migrants themselves, states , public authorities, and international organisations to overcome those obstacles and those challenges, and I do believe in open societies, in rational decisions, in a humane approach to migration. And I can guarantee you that migration is not going to disappear, so we will all need to work together to ensure migrants are not only safe but have the opportunity to succeed.

New York, September 20, 2019. Thousands of schoolchildren participate in the New York climate strike protest which began in Foley Square, and ended in Battery Park, where 16-year-old Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg spoke at a rally. According to migration and climate specialist Alex Randall, "in terms of a percentage of the global population who might be on the move as a result of climate change impacts, governments have a stark choice ahead of them. They can either facilitate safe, legal migration or they can attempt to stop people moving and create crises." (Read the full interview on page 146 of this publication).

Photo credit: Aapsky / Shutterstock

Unmanned drone patrols over oceans and seas to protect borders and prevent irregular migration will become common. In September 2019, the EU renewed the mandate of Operation Sophia, its effort to combat people smuggling in the Mediterranean, for another six months. Since April 2019, Sophia has deployed no ships, only air assets. The operation, headquartered in Rome, was launched as a naval mission in June 2015 at the peak of Europe's migration "crisis". Its ships rescued thousands of refugees and migrants. It will be a short step to replace Sophia's manned aircraft with drones in the future.

What does the future hold for migration, refugees, mixed migration, and irregular mobility? What's in store for labour migration and asylum space, given the shift towards increased nationalism and moves against multinationalism at a time when the world is facing global problems that need coherent joint approaches? How will the issues of displacement and forced migration be affected by inequality, poor governance, environmental stressors, and the international community's response to these challenges? What will be the impact of the simultaneous trends of population rise and population decline in a context where resources are under huge pressure? Rapid technological advances in fields such as artificial intelligence and automation challenge the very notion of the future workplace and the role of the citizen, let alone that of migrants. Can we even realistically predict or forecast what the future will be?

This year's **Mixed Migration Review** examines future trends and expectations in a wide range of sectors and explores their potential impact on mixed migration. Through essays and interviews with leading experts and thought leaders, MMR 2019 offers a detailed analysis of the nexus between impending global developments and human mobility. It also provides updates on global mixed migration trends and policy events, highlights of MMC's Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative (4Mi) primary data-gathering programme, and individual stories of refugees and migrants on the move.

For a full electronic copy of the Mixed Migration Review 2019, extensive data from 4Mi, and additional commentary, visit our website at: **www.mixedmigration.org**