Migration and Forced Displacement

Vulnerability and Resilience - Volume 1

Edited by Samson Maekele Tsegay

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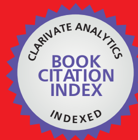

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Preface

This book emanates from the ongoing discourses on the concept of migration, particularly international migration. Migration has been a hot topic among scholars and politicians in countries with a large number of immigrants. It is also evident that antimigrant rhetoric, from conservative politicians and media channels, is fueling the hate and riot against migrants, especially refugees and asylum seekers, as recently seen in the UK. This book aims to explore international migration, focusing on the past events, current conditions, and future trends of refugees, asylum seekers, and other migrants. The book covers the concept of migration and associated issues and discusses their implications, starting from the causes of migration to sociocultural and economic integration. It also addresses the causes and effects of migration, environmental factors, border control, and weaponization of migrants. Therefore, it contributes to increasing people's awareness of the concept of migration and the experiences of migrants. In addition, it can serve as a source of academic reference and discussion.

The book consists of 11 chapters from many countries located in different parts of the world. Moreover, the book consists of chapters based on primary and secondary sources using various research approaches. Hence, it is expected to resonate with multiple audiences from different countries.

In Chapter 1, Thomas Cooney and Martina Brophy explore the business and owner characteristics of immigrant entrepreneurship in Ireland. They argue that immigrant-owned enterprises are an important feature of developed economies. The chapter highlights an immediate need for a coordinated and targeted policy approach to promote immigrant entrepreneurship. Chapter 2 discusses the phenomenon of "Doing Family" in a migrant's experience. The chapter examines the societal changes reflected in the social spheres of everyday practices, which in turn affect family patterns in multicultural societies. In this chapter, Lorenzo Ferrante has done significant work in analyzing the relationships between immigrants, with a focus on the role of the family as a significant dimension of migration and integration processes.

Chapter 3 explores Turkey's dilemma as a buffer state protecting Europe from irregular migration. Burcu Kaya Erdem and Remzi Bilge critically further analyze how Turkey's economic and security conditions are causing its citizens to perceive immigrants and leave the state. Chapter 4 focuses on the weaponization of migration with examples from Russia, the Middle East, and Gaza. Agil Aliyev has done a great job of connecting past events and current conditions. The chapter is significant in understanding the Russian–Ukraine and Israel–Palestine wars.

Chapters 5 and 6 are related to (im)migration in the United States of America (U.S.). Chapter 5 identifies multiple crisis frames and their connections to U.S. immigration politics from 1980 to 2022. Allan Colbern, Shawn Walker, Katie Marie Glenn,

Rockell Schmidt, and Jaime Harrigan suggest that crisis framing in the U.S. media produces crucial understandings of immigration. Hence, they analyzed an original dataset of 100,521 news articles and unpacked the role of news media in (mis)recognizing (im)migrants' humanity and dignity. Chapter 6 examines the enduring and expanding presence of immigrant ethnic enclaves and their distinctive implications for immigrants and natives within the labor market. In this chapter, Tao Song and Mate Szurop focus on the influence of natives' residential decisions when confronted with the emergence of immigrant ethnic enclaves, revealing how these choices may reinforce the enclaves and their effects.

Chapter 7 deals with the experiences of Venezuelan migrant women in Spain. Eduardo José Sánchez Uzcátegui analyzed the role of migrant women, their development in the destination country, and their position regarding their current reality from a feminist and intersectional perspective. Eduardo has done a great job in analyzing the complexity of the women's experiences considering their gender, class, ethnicity, and culture.

Chapters 8 and 9 explore migrants' experiences in African countries, particularly Kenya and South Africa. Chapter 8 highlights the impact of socioeconomic factors on the mental health and integration of refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya. In this chapter, Abulogn Ojulu Okello describes the historical context of refugee hosting in Kenya, including asylum procedures and socioeconomic challenges. In Chapter 9, Siyamthanda Skota discusses the global perception of migration as a crisis by taking the case of South Africa.

Chapters 10 to 11 highlight the nexus of migration and the environment from different perspectives and countries. In Chapter 10, José María Ramos García and Jimmy Emmanuel Ramos Valencia present the ripple effects of climate change on migration patterns. Chapter 11 discusses the impact of Turkish earthquakes on Syrian refugees in Turkey. Sevda Akar addresses the challenges faced by refugees in the face of natural disasters.

As can be seen, the book is a combination of fascinating chapters from various parts of the world and different perspectives. Furthermore, the book has a second part with 11 chapters. Hence, it could be a significant reference for those interested in migration studies, particularly forced migration.

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Chapter 1

Future Potential of Immigrant Entrepreneurship in Ireland

Thomas Cooney and Martina Brophy

Abstract

International data shows that immigrant owned enterprises are an important feature of developed economies. Immigrant entrepreneurs generally report a higher rate of entrepreneurial activity than the incumbent population, and their businesses, though traditionally concentrated in low skilled industries, can and are increasingly featuring in high value sectors of the economy. The motivation of immigrants to engage in entrepreneurship is informed by a myriad of reasons, but is traditionally associated with "push" factors or necessity. This diverse population of entrepreneurs can encounter various obstacles to entrepreneurship, some of which pertain to their immigrant status, in addition to the mainstream challenges of enterprise creation. Such challenges can include access to finance, access to mainstream business networks, and societal hostility. The European Commission has issued a call for tailored business trainings and supports for immigrant entrepreneurs across member states. Whilst efforts to implement supports in Ireland are apparent, this chapter will highlight the immediate need for a coordinated and targeted policy approach to the promotion of immigrant entrepreneurship.

Keywords: immigrant entrepreneurship, start-up challenges, business characteristics, missing entrepreneurs, policy interventions

1. Introduction

Across the European Union (EU), there is an ever-pressing need for effective integration of immigrant communities into the social, cultural and economic fabric of host countries. A major element of integration strategy and policy is to ensure the economic participation of immigrant communities through routes to the labour market. Of lesser prominence are the policies and initiatives that support and foster participation of immigrant communities in self-employment or entrepreneurship. Though tailored schemes for self-employment exist across EU member states, many are limited in scale and scope, particularly with regard to accessing finance [1].

According to the OECD *Missing Entrepreneurs 2023* report [1], though the proportion of immigrant entrepreneurs varies considerably across EU member states, the overall number of immigrant entrepreneurs is rising. In 2022, the share of immigrants among self-employed in the EU had nearly doubled over the past decade [1]. However, this report also found a self-employment gap of 5% in the EU when self-employed immigrants are compared with the most entrepreneurial population group

of 30–49 year-old males [1]. These missing entrepreneurs are evident in 70% of EU member states, including Ireland which is on par with the EU average [1].

As a country, the Republic of Ireland is a particularly interesting context for a review of immigrant entrepreneurship. Non-Irish citizens are estimated to account for 757,000 persons or 14.3% of the population of Ireland [2]. Between 2016 and 2022, Ireland's population grew to 5.1 million, a first since 1851, and the annual average estimated net migration was at its highest since 2006 [3]. Ireland has become home to a diverse community of non-Irish nationals from within and outside of Europe, each with their own nuanced sets of challenges. For example, Cooney and Foley [4] found that different ethnic groups experienced different levels of racism and discrimination in their entrepreneurial activities.

Tailored supports for immigrant entrepreneurs have been increasing across Europe in recent years. In Ireland, Technological University Dublin (in partnership with the Open Doors Initiative) began offering an online Start Your Own Business Programme to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in 2023 [5]. Fingal Local Enterprise Office has also developed and delivered a Start Your Own Business programme targeted specifically at Ukrainian refugees (80 participants) which is delivered bilingually [6]. There is also the Start-Up Entrepreneur Programme (STEP), run since 2012, for innovative entrepreneurs from abroad to be granted permission to set up a business and reside on a full-time basis in Ireland [7]. Notwithstanding the importance of these initiatives, such efforts are small scale and do not reach out to all immigrant communities or all locations across the country. A more coordinated and targeted policy approach is needed to untap the substantial potential of missing entrepreneurs from immigrant communities within Ireland.

In light of this context, the present chapter is structured as follows. First, to provide necessary background, a demographic profile of the immigrant community in Ireland based on census data from 2022 is extended. Then follows a rudimentary literature review on immigrant entrepreneurship, which provides an overview of the business characteristics, motivations and common challenges associated with this cohort of entrepreneurs. Next are the research findings from a survey study of 202 non-Irish participants interested in starting a business, or who are or were in business. Finally, a discussion of these findings and recommendations for future action to enhance the policy environment for immigrant entrepreneurship in Ireland is provided.

2. Demographic profile of the immigrant community in Ireland

There are an estimated 757,000[1] non-Irish citizens comprising 14.3% of the population of Ireland [2]. In the most recent population census (the year to 2023) Ireland received 141,600 immigrants, which represents a 16-year high [2]. As **Table 1** shows, almost half of immigrants in Ireland are from within the EU (312,909). Poland is the single largest non-Irish citizenship, whilst EU-13 countries like Lithuania, Romania and Latvia, which joined the EU in 2004, comprise the largest non-Irish group. In the intercensal period from 2016 to 2022, the number of individuals from Asia living in Ireland has doubled. Of this group, India is the largest citizenship with 45,449 people living in the state in 2022. The number of immigrants from the Americas has also grown, with the largest citizenship being Brazil (27,338).

[1] The figure of 757,000 is based on CSO 2023 Population estimates, whereas 631,785 reported in **Table 1** is based on CSO census data from 2022.

Citizenship	Total number of persons	% of the usually resident population 2022 (in italics)
Irish		
of which Irish only	4,112,893	96
dual Irish citizenship	170,597	4
Total Irish Citizens	*4,283,490*	*84*
EU-13 (excludes Poland)	134,913	21
Asia	100,320	16
Poland	93,680	15
EU-14 (excludes Ireland)	84,316	13
UK	83,347	13
Americas	53,738	9
Africa	34,761	6
Rest of Europe	25,273	4
Other citizenships	21,437	3
Total Non-Irish Citizens	*631,785*	*12*
No nationality (incl. not stated)	*169,604*	*3*

Table 1.
Population profile of Ireland by citizenship 2022 [8].

In terms of gender, there was an even split between male and female non-Irish immigrants with 314,707 (49.8%) male immigrants and 317,078 (50.2%) female immigrants. The overall average age of non-Irish citizens is lower at 36 years compared with 39 years for Irish citizens. The average age of non-Irish citizens varies depending on citizenship. The youngest average age at 25 years old was among the Ukrainian population and the oldest average age at 49.7 years old was among the UK population [8]. In 2022, 45% of Irish citizens aged 15 years and older had attained a third level degree compared with 86% of Indian citizens. The highest proportion of those whose education ceased no later than primary school level were Irish citizens (11%), followed by Romanian citizens (8%) and UK citizens (6%) [9].

In 2022, the number of non-Irish citizens in the labour force had reached 420,465, an increase of 21% on the figure from 2016. The labour force participation rates were higher for non-Irish citizens (75%) than for Irish citizens (59%). However, it should be noted that this figure is distorted because there will be many Irish citizens of working age who will be students or retired. The highest labour force participation rates were evident among those with Croatian (89%) and Italian (87%) citizenship, and were lowest among those with US (58%) and UK (61%) citizenship, again due to a higher proportion of students and retirees among these citizenships [10].

Based on the 2022 Census data, the non-Irish immigrant population is growing and is shown to be younger and more highly educated then the general Irish population. Non-Irish citizens also have a higher labour participation rate than the native population. However, the non-Irish population have a slightly higher unemployment rate at 9% compared with 8% of Irish citizens. In terms of occupational profile, a lower percentage of non-Irish citizens are corporate managers and directors (3.8%) compared with Irish citizens (5.9%). This data reinforces the notion that there are

missing entrepreneurs among the immigrant population in Ireland. In this vein, the chapter will now explore the literature to better understand the prevalence and characteristics of immigrant entrepreneurship.

3. Immigrant entrepreneurship

Immigrant owned businesses are a growing and important feature of developed economies. In the EU, the share of self-employed workers born in another country has almost doubled from 7–12% from 2013 to 2022 [1]. As of 2019, there were almost one million self-employed immigrants who were job creators in the EU-27 [11]. It is estimated that at least 800,000 minority businesses exist across eight European countries (including Ireland) that employ at least 2.7 million people and have a combined turnover of at least €570 billion [12]. The UK has approximately 250,000 businesses led by ethnic minority entrepreneurs who contribute £25 billion per annum to the UK's Gross Value Added [13]. In the UK, as in other countries with an established history of immigration, patterns are now discernible in relation to both the extent and nature of immigrant entrepreneurship. In terms of business ownership, a number of Western countries report that immigrant entrepreneurs have a higher rate of entrepreneurial activity than native-born entrepreneurs [13–15].

In terms of the nature or type of entrepreneurial activity, minority businesses can be found across all sectors of industry and commerce. The sectoral concentration of minority-owned businesses does vary across countries, however. The Minority Business Matters Europe report found that countries with relatively recent large-scale immigration of ethnic minorities, such as Italy and Spain, see the highest concentration of minority-owned businesses in traditional, low-value added sectors, such as retailing and hospitality [12]. In contrast, countries with well-established ethnic minority communities, such as France and Germany, have a higher concentration of minority-owned businesses in high-value added sectors, such as business services, though their prevalence in these industries lags behind that of mainstream businesses [12]. In the UK, there has been a noticeable trend among immigrant entrepreneurs entering higher-value added sectors (i.e. electronics, pharmaceuticals, and advanced manufacturing), although the majority of immigrant entrepreneurs remain in sectors where a traditional stronghold exists [13]. In terms of international trade, immigrant entrepreneurs in the UK are more likely to export than their native counterparts [13]. Higher levels of importing and exporting among immigrant owned businesses might be reflective of transnational diaspora entrepreneurship, where immigrant business owners in their country of residence maintain entrepreneurial, material and sentimental linkages with their country of origin [16]. This concept of transnational diaspora entrepreneurship between an immigrant's country of origin and their country of residence has become increasingly popular in recent times.

The motivation to pursue entrepreneurship can be influenced by necessity (i.e. "push" factors) and by opportunity (i.e. "pull" factors). Traditionally, the literature has associated immigrant entrepreneurship with necessity or economic adversity, where individuals are pushed towards starting a business by labour market discrimination [17], limited labour market skills, continuation of family tradition [18], and unemployment [19]. This necessity-based perspective is linked to a concentration of immigrant owned businesses in low value sectors (e.g., restaurants, shops), tied to serving an ethnic or immigrant customer base, with limited growth prospects. Although this may be the case for a proportion of immigrant business owners, there is an increasing number of individuals (often highly qualified first generation and

particularly second-generation) who are pursuing opportunity entrepreneurship [1] and are concentrated in higher value sectors [12]. This is reflective of the growing economic impact of immigrant owned businesses across the EU and further afield.

Immigrants in Ireland are more entrepreneurial than the native population. As of 2017, 30% of immigrants aspire to start a business in the next 3 years compared with only 8% of those born in Ireland [20]. According to the Minority Business Matters Europe report, an estimated 4.5% of Irish businesses in their sample[2] are minority owned [12]. Such businesses are believed to employ at least 37,000 workers and account for 1.2% of the total turnover of private companies in the report sample [12]. An estimated 27.6% of minority business owners in Ireland are female and 72.4% are male [12]. Chinese (24.6%), Pakistani (18.6%) and Indian (18%) are the top ethnicities of minority entrepreneurs in Ireland [12]. Black entrepreneurs of Sub-Saharan African origin account for 10% of minority business owners in Ireland [12]. The main sectors in which minority businesses are concentrated is travel, personal and leisure (29.2%), of which minority business owners are nearly three times as likely to feature than mainstream businesses [12]. This is followed by business services (19.3%) and public administration, education, health and social services (14.9%) [12]. Despite these encouraging statistics, there is still a gap in the rate of early-stage entrepreneurial activity among immigrant communities and that of the indigenous male population aged 30–49 years old [21]. It is estimated that there are 114,000 missing entrepreneurs in Ireland, with immigrants accounting for 20% of that number [21].

4. Challenges facing non-Irish nationals starting a business

When starting a business in Ireland, not all immigrant entrepreneurs experience challenges of the same type or severity. For instance, some individuals have bountiful financial, human and social capital (e.g., finance, education, business contacts), whilst others, especially asylum seekers and refugees, may have limited or no resources. While immigrant entrepreneurs face the same challenges to business start-up as the mainstream entrepreneurial community, they also ensure additional and distinctive obstacles that are unique to their context. Some of the most frequently cited challenges of small immigrant owned enterprises are explored below.

- Access to finance

  Access to external financing is a perennial challenge for Irish SMEs. Following the global financial crisis, the Irish banking sector became less favourable to SME (Small Medium-sized Enterprise) lending, with higher-than-average interest rates and a greater than average rejection rate for loan requests by SMEs across EU-28 countries [22]. The need for financial supports among Irish SMEs has been exacerbated by environmental challenges, including increasing energy costs, the Covid-19 pandemic, and Brexit. Immigrant owned businesses often face additional challenges over their incumbent counterparts in terms of accessing finance and credit. Flynn and colleagues' findings suggest that ethnic-minority SMEs (ESMEs) in Ireland experience a higher refusal rate for bank loans compared with the general SME population [23]. ESMEs perceived the biggest barriers to external funding to be the interest rates, the bureaucratic process, fees

[2] A sample that comprised of 159, 919 Irish companies for which Moody's Orbis Corporate Database has data.

and commissions, the burden of terms and conditions, followed by the necessity for collateral to secure a loan [23].

- Access to mainstream business networks

  A disconnection from mainstream business networks and an overreliance on ethnic/immigrant networks can stifle the growth of small immigrant owned enterprises. Some studies of ethnic minority businesses in the UK have highlighted the overreliance of immigrant owned enterprises on ethnic/immigrant networks of employees, suppliers, and customers [24, 25], and this feature is also common in Ireland. Whilst there can be many positive aspects to an immigrant entrepreneur's dependence on co-ethnic networks (e.g., having a shared language and cultural understanding), an overdependence can stifle opportunities to grow the business and tap into the mainstream market. In Ireland, there is an under-representation of immigrant entrepreneurs in mainstream business networks (e.g., Chambers of Commerce, trade associations) which can be attributed, in part, to a lack of awareness around such networks among immigrant business communities [26].

- Exclusive focus on immigrant markets

  Although many immigrant-owned enterprises target broader markets, some immigrant entrepreneurs are oriented, at least initially, towards meeting demand for products or services connected to their country of origin [27]. This demand usually emerges from sufficiently large numbers of specific immigrant communities that are spatially concentrated in urban areas [28]. The advantage for the immigrant entrepreneur is having a niche and captive market, but to grow the business, an immigrant entrepreneur must break out of this market to expand their consumer base or face diminishing returns as a result of changes in demand (i.e. spatial dispersion of immigrant community) or the introduction of mainstream competitors to the market [28].

- Concentration in marginal economic sectors

  Given their disadvantage relative to incumbent firms, immigrant owned enterprises may have little option but to insert themselves *"into whatever crevices of market space are available after a host of structural obstacles have been side-stepped"* [29]. Those with low skill levels are usually confined to industries with high competitiveness, low entry requirements and low yielding returns (e.g. take-aways, beauty services) [28]. Such sectors are often less resilient against environmental shocks and are in greater need of targeted business supports [1, 13].

- Skill gaps

  Studies show that a certain level of education, local language fluency and cultural skills are necessary for immigrant entrepreneurs to exploit opportunities and grow their businesses [30, 31]. Previous reports on immigrant entrepreneurship in Ireland have highlighted the need for upskilling and training provision in areas such as business planning, sales, marketing, financial management and digital business [26, 32].

- Lack of familiarity with regulatory framework

  Navigating an unfamiliar regulatory environment can be a serious challenge for immigrant entrepreneurs. Understanding and complying with business administrative procedures (e.g. company registration, taxation) can be particularly onerous for immigrant entrepreneurs due to their unfamiliarity with the institutional environment. This can be compounded by language difficulties and missing credentials that may be needed for the acquisition of operating licences [1].

- Societal hostility

  Hostility from members of the host country towards members of immigrant communities can be another major challenge experienced by immigrant entrepreneurs. In the EU, six in ten people report that discrimination due to ethnic origin (60%) or skin colour (61%) is widespread in their country [33]. Ireland is also among the EU countries with the highest rates of harassment experienced by immigrants and descendants of immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa (44%) [34]. Immigrant entrepreneurs may experience discrimination in their dealings with customers and suppliers, securing finance from institutional lenders, leasing business premises, and establishing their legitimacy within wider society.

These distinctive challenges exist for immigrant entrepreneurs in addition to the normal challenges of starting a business in terms of finding customers and making it financially viable that applies to all entrepreneurs. However, policymakers and enterprise support agencies have frequently failed to recognise that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach is not suitable for immigrant entrepreneurs, thereby failing to recognise also the need for customised supports that have been tailored to the specific challenges and needs of immigrant entrepreneurs.

5. Research findings

This section will now discuss the results of a survey study of 202 non-Irish participants interested in starting a business or who are or were in business which was undertaken over 6 months across 2022 and 2023. This survey was designed to capture data on business characteristics (e.g., size, sector, market focus) and also on owner characteristics (e.g., motives, challenges). The respondents of the study comprised 120 business (co-) owners and 82 potential business owners. A higher proportion of women than men answered the survey (68% vs. 32%) and the breakdown of nationalities were as follows: Africa (57%), Asia (24%), EU (13%) and rest of Europe (5%). An earlier iteration of this study entitled *A Mapping of Ethnic Entrepreneurship in Ireland* [32] was published in 2008. The purpose of the present study was to determine any major trends or developments in immigrant entrepreneurship in the 15-year period since the original study was published. The findings from an analysis of the survey results are discussed below.

6. Business characteristics

The analysis of the data enabled a profiling of the businesses to be undertaken and the following are the key results.

6.1 Form of ownership

Over half of respondents (60%) reported to be sole owners of their business. About a third of respondents (32%) reported to have limited company ownership, whilst 8% of respondents reported to have company partnerships. These findings are consistent with the report from 2008, suggesting the strong prevalence of sole owners among immigrant entrepreneurs in Ireland. Given that entrepreneurial teams are not very common in business start-ups, there is little evidence of it happening among immigrant entrepreneurs.

6.2 Age of business

The majority of respondents (62%) reported owning or co-owning a business that was aged 4 years or less, with 12% of those described as having a newly established business (less than 1 year). The remaining 38% reported to have a business aged 5 years or more, which is over four times higher than the equivalent figure of 9% reported in the 2008 survey. This might be indicative of the ageing profile of immigrant-owned businesses in 2022, compared with 2008 when mass immigration was still a relatively recent phenomenon. It may also reflect that immigrant businesses are surviving for longer periods than experienced in the past.

6.3 Industry of business

The immigrant-owned businesses of this study are reported to operate across a range of industries, as shown in **Figure 1**. The wholesale/retail trade sector has the highest concentration of businesses at 23%, followed closely behind by the restaurant and food sector at 21%. Next comes the personal services sector (e.g. hairdressing, cleaning) at 17%, followed by consultancy (16%) and ICT sector at 11%. The remainder comprises businesses located in the construction (4%), manufacturing (4%), financial services (1%), transport industries (1%) and others (2%). This profile of

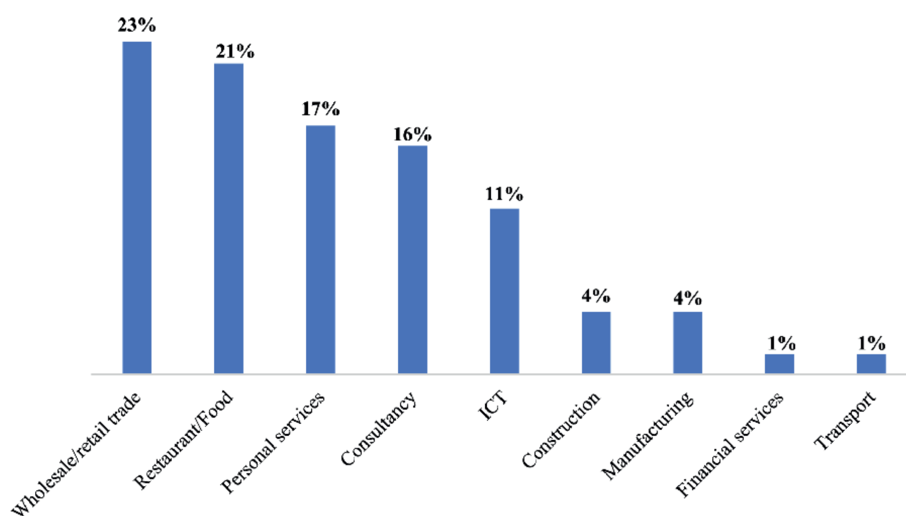

Figure 1.
Industry of business.

industries deviates from the 2008 survey which showed the ICT sector as having the highest share of businesses (18%), followed by restaurant/food (15%) and wholesale/ retail sectors (16%).

6.4 Size (as measured by employee number and turnover)

The first measure of the size of immigrant owned businesses is the number of workers in employment. In respect of full-time employees, 60% of respondents reported to have none. A further 31% report to employ 1 to 5 full-time staff, dropping to 4% for 6 to 10 full-time staff. This leaves only 5% of the sample employing 11 or more full-time workers. This highlights the micro nature of the enterprises and how very few of them have grown to become even a small business employing more than 10 people.

The second measure of the size of immigrant owned businesses is the sales turnover in the last 12 months. Approximately 69% of surveyed businesses generate less than 50,000 euro in sales revenue over the last 12 months. This fell to 15% in the 50,000 to 100,000 euro category and to 8% in the 101,001to 500,000 category. Only 4% of businesses surveyed generate revenues of 501,001–1 million euro and the same for those over 1 million euro. Similar to the 2008 survey, this profile highlights the prevalence of micro immigrant-owned businesses in Ireland.

6.5 Market focus

Immigrant businesses surveyed for this study are spread across local, regional, national and international business markets. The breakdown of these markets is provided in **Figure 2**. The majority of businesses (46%) operate on a national level, followed by local level (45%) and international level (39%). The smallest subset comprised of those businesses with a regional focus (26%).

6.6 International customer base

The international customer base was determined through the percentage of annual turnover generated from customers located outside of Ireland. From **Figure 3**, it can be seen that the majority (64%) generate at least some revenue abroad. For a quarter of the sample over half of annual revenue is generated outside the Irish market. For these businesses, the international market can be

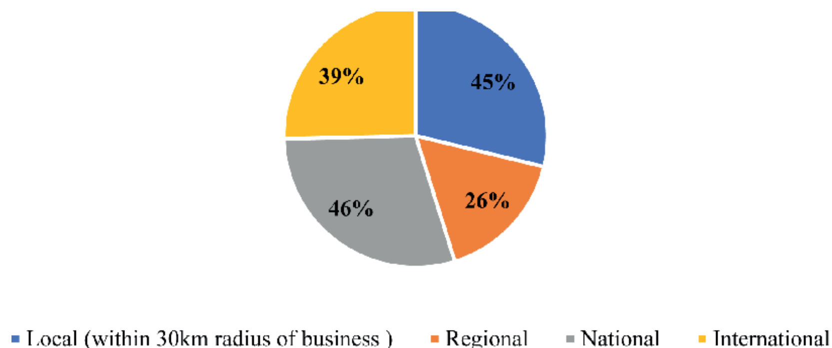

Figure 2.
Business markets served.

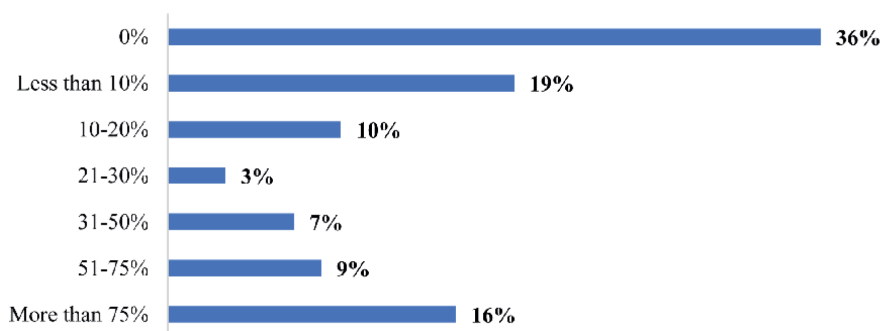

Figure 3.
Annual revenue generated by international customers.

Statement	Yes (%)	No (%)
Source products from your country of birth	33	67
Export products to your country of birth	15	85
Provide services in your country of birth	26	74

Table 2.
Business activity with country of birth.

considered their primary focus. It should also be noted that some businesses are securing some revenue from abroad why not seeing themselves as operating in the international market (difference between 39% with international level focus and 64% generating revenue from abroad). This may be happening due to online sales activity or because the immigrant entrepreneur does not realise that they have significant potential markets abroad.

6.7 Business relations with country of birth

To establish the business relations with an entrepreneur's country of birth, respondents were asked whether they sourced products from said country, exported products to said country, or provided services in said country. **Table 2** shows that immigrant entrepreneurs of this sample are most inclined to source products from their country of birth (33%) and least inclined to export products to their country of birth (15%). Policymakers are commonly seeking to grow export activity and the ability of immigrant entrepreneurs to export to their country of origin is relatively untapped.

The review of the business characteristics has once again highlighted the low level of revenue and employees among immigrant-owned businesses in Ireland. To help understand why this trend might be happening, a detailed analysis of the characteristics of the owners was undertaken.

7. Owner characteristics

The analysis of the owner characteristics sought to identify the nature of immigrant entrepreneurs and how they might be most effectively supported to start and grow a business. The following are the key results from this analysis.

7.1 Status in Ireland prior to business ownership

The majority of immigrant entrepreneurs (44%) were employees of a firm prior to setting up their own business. A further 28% reported having always been self-employed since arriving in Ireland. This figure is a significant increase on 4% reported in the 2008 survey. This may suggest an increased interest in Ireland as a start-up location for immigrant entrepreneurs or perhaps signal an improvement in start-up supports and incentives within Ireland since 2008. Of the remaining sample, 12% report being a full-time student, 9% report as unemployed, and 7% report being a participant on a training programme prior to business ownership.

7.2 Causal factors for starting a business

Respondents were asked to choose the most relevant factors (listed in **Figure 4** below) that drove their decision to start a business. They could also specify any additional motives that were not listed. The majority of the sample could be described as opportunity-driven entrepreneurs, with the top three "pull" factors reported as a desire to be your own boss (45%), a business opportunity in the market (43%), and preference to be independent (38%). Interestingly, greater flexibility to work around family responsibilities was a factor for 33% of the sample. "Push" factors like 'unable to fulfil career ambitions in the organisation in which you worked' and 'unable to find suitable work' accounted for 18% and 17% of the sample respectively.

7.3 Main challenges

Respondents to the survey were asked to choose up to three main challenges (listed in **Figure 5**) facing non-Irish business owners in Ireland today. The main challenge reported by immigrant business owners was the lack of familiarity with Irish business laws and Irish business regulations at 44%. For a third of the sample (34%), there were concerns over having no business contacts in Ireland and in obtaining support from state

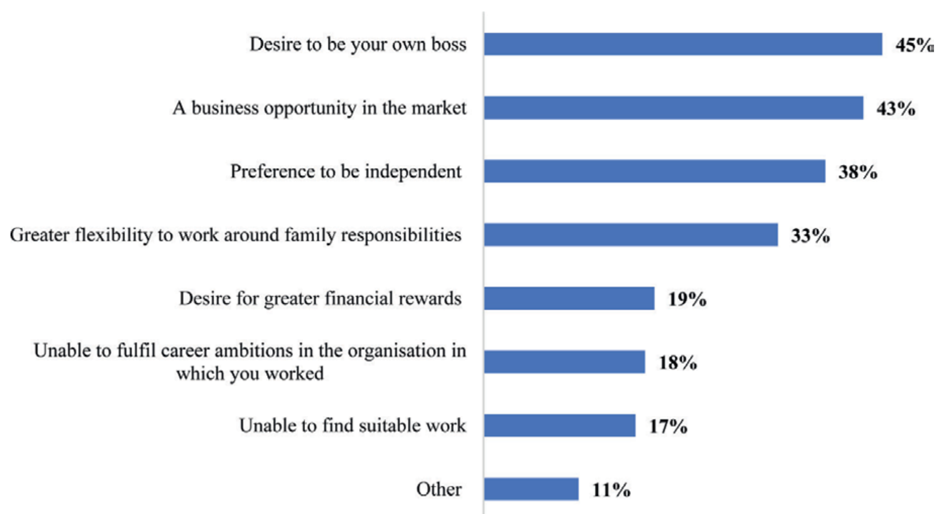

Figure 4.
Causal factors of immigrant entrepreneurship in Ireland.

Figure 5.
Main challenges of self-employment.

enterprise agencies, like Local Enterprise Offices. Discrimination by Irish society was reported as a challenge by 30% of respondents to the survey. The impact of Covid-19 on businesses was also deemed relevant, though only 22% of the sample reported this as a challenge. Language barriers (16%) and low levels of general and financial management skills (10%) were the least significant challenges of self-employment.

7.4 Access to finance

Of the 39% of respondents who approached a government agency, just over half were successful in obtaining finance. A higher success rate of 57% was found among those who approached a bank or building society. Interestingly, this success rate had dropped considerably from 78% reported in the 2008 profile. The highest success rates were business acquaintances (78%), family and relatives (96%) and peer-to-peer lending (100%), but it should be noted that this last option was sought by only 5% of the overall sample. The full breakdown is available in **Table 3** below.

	% of respondents who attempted to secure financial backing (%)	Success Rate in securing financial backing (of those who made an attempt to secure financial backing) (%)
Bank/Building Society	34	57
Credit Union	15	46
Government Agency	39	52
Family/relatives	27	95
Business acquaintances	11	78
Peer-to-peer lending	5	100
Angel Investor finance	10	50
Venture capital funds	2	0
Crowdfunding	6	20

Table 3.
Access to Finance.

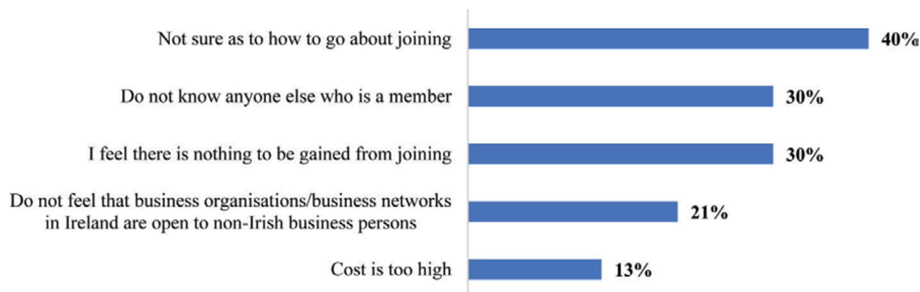

Figure 6.
Reasons for non-membership of Irish business networks.

7.5 Mainstream business networks

Only 27% of respondents reported to be members of Irish business networks, meaning that the majority (73%) are not involved in any Irish business representative body. Those who hold membership in an Irish business organisation or network has more than doubled since 2008 (11%). In terms of reasons for not seeking membership, the majority of respondents (40%) cited a lack of awareness on how to join a business network. For almost a third of respondents, non-membership is attributed to not knowing anyone else who is a member. The benefits of membership are not apparent to almost a third of respondents. See **Figure 6** for a full breakdown of the reasons for non-membership of an Irish business network.

7.6 Embeddedness in immigrant community

The survey sought to establish the extent to which support is offered by immigrant communities to the participants, as well as the nature of such support. Respondents were first asked whether they held membership in any immigrant business organisation or network, to which 20% answered 'Yes' and 80% answered 'No'. Respondents were then asked if their immigrant community was useful to their business in any of the ways listed (see **Figure 7**). Overall, the majority of participants were not in receipt of any of the listed supports from their immigrant community. Making useful business contacts was the most highly cited source of support (46%), followed by the provision of regular customers at 32%. In a separate question, it was determined that a vast majority of respondents include among their customer base at least some of their immigrant community, with a third of the sample claiming their immigrant customer base to be above 25%.

Non-business respondents to the survey were asked whether they believed that good opportunities existed for starting up a business in their local area to which 76% answered 'Yes' and 24% answered 'No'. Respondents were then asked to reflect on their own entrepreneurial readiness. As **Table 4** shows, the majority of respondents believe that they have the knowledge and skills to start a new business (76%) with a slightly smaller percentage aiming to start their own business in Ireland within the next 3 years (68%).

What is clearly evident from the analysis of the data is the disconnect between the immigrant business community and the mainstream business community. There is little knowledge of existing enterprise supports, limited membership of business associations, poor knowledge of business laws, and a significant lack issue of trust. Combined, these factors help explain why immigrant-owned businesses are struggling to start and grow in Ireland.

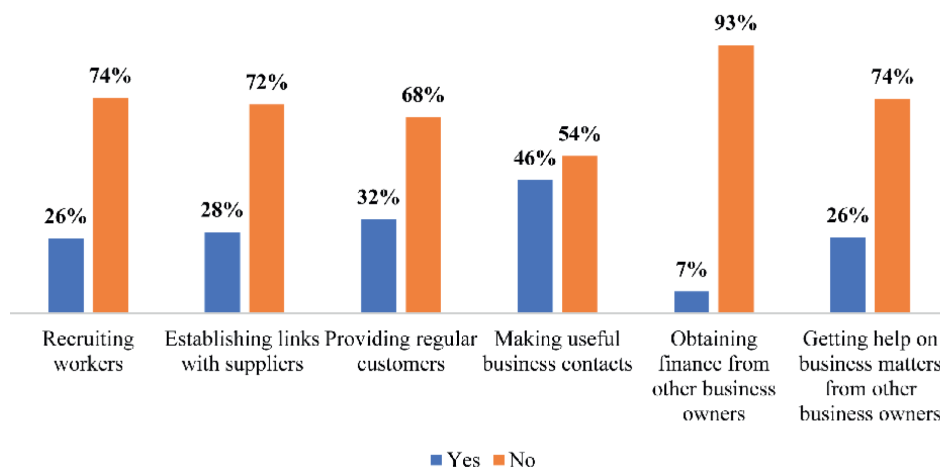

Figure 7.
Support from immigrant community.

	Yes (%)	No (%)
Do you think that you have the knowledge and skills required to start a new business in Ireland?	76	24
Is it your aim to start up your own business in Ireland within the next 3 years?	68	32
Are you aware of the availability of training programmes in Ireland designed specifically for people to start a business?	50	50

Table 4.
Entrepreneurial readiness of non-business owners.

8. Discussion and recommendations

Based on the sample of 202 non-Irish participants who contributed to this study, a number of inferences can be offered. First, the business owners among the sample have enterprises that are predominantly small in size (i.e. sole trader or micro enterprises), young (62% reported their business as aged 4 years or under), and concentrated in lower value sectors such as wholesale/retail trade, restaurant and food trade, and personal services. The majority of these businesses exhibit a low level of turnover and are local or national in their customer market focus. This perhaps signifies the high level of competitiveness or low growth prospects of which these businesses face, and the greater need for state intervention to protect and sustain such businesses through environmental shocks (e.g. rising energy costs). It might also highlight the need for the Irish government to implement financial schemes that direct immigrant entrepreneurs away from sectors characterised by high competitiveness, over-supply, and limited growth opportunities.

Second, the businesses among this sample were surprisingly international given their small operational size. Almost 40% reported to have an international customer market focus, plus for a quarter of the sample over half of their annual revenue is generated outside the Irish market. Government-backed schemes may help these businesses to increase their overseas sales and strengthen their foothold in international markets. One third of the sample imported products from their country

of birth, though this dropped to 15% for exports to said country. This shows that entrepreneurial ties to one's country of origin [16] is a notable feature of a portion of immigrant-owned enterprises in Ireland. State enterprise agencies, training providers and business networks should be cognizant that these international trading ties may exist when advising and coaching this entrepreneurial community.

Third, the business owners of this sample are predominantly opportunity-driven entrepreneurs, with 44% in employment before starting a business and 28% having always been self-employed since arriving in Ireland. Push factors like unemployment or inability to fulfil career ambitions in paid employment were cited less by the entrepreneurs of this sample. Nonetheless, it is important to iterate that entrepreneurship should be a desirable option for people, whose readiness and proclivity is apparent, rather than a panacea to limited or low-prospect options in the labour market.

Fourth, the main challenges for business owners cited in the study indicate the need for greater supports. Lack of familiarity with Irish business laws and Irish business regulations, in particular, can be partially redressed through clearer signposting of the procedures and processes involved in starting a business. Providing immigrant entrepreneurs with administrative support (e.g. complying with regulations, applying for a start-up visa) and making regulatory requirements available in multiple languages are some approaches that could be taken to support this cohort. Gaining the trust and acceptance of Irish business suppliers and customers was the next biggest challenge. This highlights the need for greater cultural awareness of immigrant entrepreneurship and of the need for enhanced integration of immigrant businesses owners into mainstream business networks and wider society. Securing finance from banks and building societies was the third biggest challenge cited. For business owners with domestically traded businesses, which comprise a majority of this sample, it can be particularly challenging to secure government grants, which generally favour export-led high-potential start-ups. Microfinance Ireland, established under the government's microenterprise loan fund, caters to underrepresented cohorts of small business owners, with ethnic-minority SMEs accounting for 19% of all loans approved [23]. Greater awareness of this microfinancing option, and its criteria, should be targeted at the immigrant business community.

Fifth, although a majority of respondents were not involved in an Irish business representative body, the membership of those who were has more than doubled from the 2008 study. For those who are unsure of how to join (40%) or feel there is nothing to be gained from joining (30%), endorsement of business network membership, and greater awareness of the process for membership should be communicated by business networks, business coaching programmes and local enterprise offices. Communications should not only be targeted through mainstream media, but also through community-based media in appropriate languages. Further, the over-dependence of immigrant entrepreneurs on their own immigrant community for business support was not evident from the data. Less than a third of businesses rely on their immigrant community for regular custom and close to a quarter recruit labour from their immigrant community. In terms of customer base composition, a third of the sample claim that their immigrant customer base is above 25%, meaning two-thirds are much more dependent on the mainstream customer market. For those businesses with a high dependency on their immigrant community, financial schemes and business training supports could be used to broaden their customer reach and pool of suppliers. Membership of mainstream business networks will also help to redress an immigrant entrepreneur's overreliance on their immigrant community for making business contacts.

Sixth, the majority of non-business respondents to the survey believe there are good business opportunities in their local area (76%) and aim to start up a business in the next 3 years (68%). This cohort of aspiring entrepreneurs should be plugged into the mainstream network of enterprise training and supports. Further, only half of respondents are aware of the availability of Start-Your-Own-Business programmes. Greater awareness of existing programmes, including tailored offerings, such as those provided by TU Dublin, should be communicated widely through community-based media and social media for immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Further, entrepreneurship should be included in integration programmes for migrants as a means of creating awareness around the alternatives to paid employment [35].

What is perhaps most interesting about the findings is that many of the obstacles experienced by immigrant entrepreneurs could be reduced through better communication. Promotional activity and information are not expensive and simply requires a commitment by various Irish government bodies, enterprise support agencies, and business network organisations to reach out to immigrant communities through their media and network channels. Traditional channels of communication are not appropriate if seeking to reach immigrant communities, and new channels need to be embraced.

9. Conclusion

Ireland is a country with a long tradition of mass emigration. In recent decades, it has seen a reversal of this phenomenon with mass immigration of returning emigrants, as well as people who arrive from around the world to these island shores. The increasing multiculturalism of Ireland contributes to its rich tapestry of social, cultural and economic life. A contribution to Ireland's economic lifeblood is the enterprising behaviour of immigrants that results in new businesses, products or services to cities, towns and regions across this country.

Nonetheless, like 70% of EU member states, Ireland counts immigrants among its missing entrepreneurs. This untapped potential has yet to be realised. Consistently, immigrants have shown to be more entrepreneurial than the native population [15], with 68% of participants of the current study aiming to set up a business in the next 3 years. The appetite for new business creation is evident among immigrants, but major structural obstacles still persist. Issues around accessing finance, becoming familiarised with Irish business laws and regulations, and gaining the trust of Irish customers and suppliers are impediments cited by the entrepreneurs of this study.

Importantly, there are a number of recommendations and calls for action that have been identified to support current and aspiring immigrant entrepreneurs. More cultural awareness of immigrant owned enterprises is required not only to broaden the pool of suppliers and expand customer reach, but to provide role models to aspiring entrepreneurs. Communication and marketing of both mainstream and tailored business networks, training supports and schemes needs to be targeted towards immigrant communities. Furthermore, the enterprise ecosystem (e.g. mainstream business networks, enterprise agencies, funding agencies and business training providers) should adopt a tailored approach to the level, timescale and kinds of supports offered to immigrant-owned businesses. This reflects not just the additional and unique challenges immigrant entrepreneurs may experience relative to mainstream entrepreneurs, but also the varying degrees of support required by this diverse, heterogenous population.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Chapter 2

The Phenomena of "Doing Family" in a Migrant's Experience

Lorenzo Ferrante

Abstract

The contribution is focused on the immigrant's re-shaping identity in the integration process through the phenomena of the "doing family" or "to continue to be a family." This analysis looks at the relationships between immigrants, the role of family in migration and integration processes, and the challenges of managing change when people from different cultures, values, and languages live together. The basic assumption is that immigrants who arrive in a foreign country continue their lives as protagonists of their lives, seeking their authentic identity through the government of their daily practices, oscillating between defending traditions, and pushing innovation, adhering to the life models of the host society.

Keywords: immigration, family, religion, identity, integration

1. Introduction

This essay focuses on the transformation of the immigrant's identity through the phenomenon of "making a family" or "continuing to be a family." It offers an analysis of the role of the family in the migration experience as a significant dimension of the integration processes.

In particular, this essay offers a descriptive analysis based on second-level data, scientific literature, and statistic data of institutional organizations with a focus on the themes examined in contemporary multicultural Western European societies. Furthermore, the essay examines the societal changes that are reflected in the social spheres of everyday practices, which in turn impact family patterns in multicultural societies.

The migratory phenomenon is multidimensional, involving the plurality of social spheres, difficult to summarize in a single analysis. It is a global structural phenomenon constantly growing worldwide. The twenty-first century will be the century of migrants. At the end of the century, there will be more regional and international migrants than ever recorded in history [1]. Today, there are 1 billion migrants. The data highlight a trend in which every decade, the percentage of migrants keeps

growing in resident populations.[1] Over the next 25 years, the rate of migration is expected to be higher than in the last 25 years. Empirical data confirm that this is a numerically significant phenomenon. However, in the analysis of the latter, the effect that globalization has on the phenomenon is underestimated.

Host societies are facing greater linguistic, ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. The growth and entrenchment of international migration have put a strain on the social integration mechanisms of hosting societies. The search for tools and approaches to manage the coexistence of new multicultural societies on an ethnic basis has led to the adoption of legislative and political arrangements that are not globally uniform, but rather aimed at addressing primarily local urgencies.

The difficulties of political regulation depend on the internal variety of immigration, considering the various types of immigrants (economic, political, and family reunification). The emergence and development of ethnically based multiculturalist models have not proved effective over time. The promise or intention of achieving a more integrated society has not been fully realized. These difficulties on the one hand have led scholars, politicians, and opinion makers to decree its crisis, failure, decline; on the other hand, the remedy for the abandonment of traditional models turns toward a return to approaches more marked by the cultural assimilation of immigrants.

The current challenges facing many Western European countries in terms of democratic leadership, global political reorganization, and the assertion of imperialist powers such as Russia, China, and the United States have led political parties and movements to focus on new urgencies and dangers. One of them is the phenomenon of immigration. Invasion, security, and theft of resources are the *leitmotif* of the most recent election campaigns across Europe. For this reason, racial attitudes and behaviors are strongly resistant to any moralizing appeal or to the rules of universal equality.

However, the presence of ethnic differences in daily practices, political, religious, and educational institutions, as well as in individuals and groups with distinct characteristics, inevitably becomes inseparable from the social relationships that shape identities.

The problem of managing the change, that takes place when people of diverse cultures, values, and languages live together, can be a complex task [2]. It is important to acknowledge the challenges that immigrants face when moving to a foreign land. They continue their life in a place where they do not passively participate over time but become actors. Their active participation in the new environment is activated. Finding an authentic identity can be a delicate balance between tradition and innovation, while also respecting the norms of the host society.

Specific forms of multiculturalism are determined, through religious syncretism, new models of contemporary family migration, genesis of transcultural and mixed families, and reconfiguration of religious practices in the identity system of immigrants, especially when it is linked to migration. Pressed by the hegemonic culture of the host society, immigrants do not cease to practice their religious and original cultural expressions. Immigrant families continue to be the essence of belonging to a place. It binds together people separated by space but united by feelings. In a distant land, the pain of lack of continuous care is underestimated. They fight for the reunion of their own family in their homeland. New families are made up or transnational ones

[1] Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revision (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2008), http://esa.un.org/migration; and The US National Intelligence Council, “Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds,” December 2012, http://globaltrends2030.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/global-trends-2030-november2012.

are managed, at the cost of sacrifices and economic as well as affective deprivations. Between hopes and expectations of integration, new visions and behaviors in everyday life are introjected in immigrants, in the effort of "doing" and "being" family.

Even from afar, they establish forms of co-presence with the family of origin. Marriage norms, food habits, dressing customs, festivities, politics, and people's way of adapting to their environment are some among others that are influenced by the hegemonic culture of the host society. This force is opposed to the one with which immigrants reject such practices, defending them. Some researches [3] show how immigrant's assimilation oscillates between attitudes of rejection of the new culture and defense of the culture of origin, through practices whose expression changes in the public and private spheres.

Marriage is a cultural universal. It exists in every society in different forms. It is also the basic reason for the perpetuation and continuity of society and generation. Furthermore, marriage is "*subject to the reciprocal influences of social, cultural, and political forces*" [4]. In some European societies, despite the constraints of structural factors like the restriction of interreligious marriage by the religious community and the public one, the practice is increasing. According to Lamb [5] and Ritzer [6], the increasing trend of interreligious marriage in Europe reveals the decreasing role of the influence of structural constraints on individuals and the increasing freedom of individuals with rationalization. In these scenarios, younger cohorts of immigrants are the main actors in the processes of adaptation and assimilation. They experience change in daily practices, through relationships with native peers, in classrooms, and places of socialization. From participation in the public dimension, they introduce innovative roles and behaviors with respect to the cultural and religious values of origin that inevitably drag into the private family dimension.

Among European countries, trends reveal that the phenomenon of mixed couples is relevant. Mixed marriages have long been considered important indicators of the social integration of immigrants, as well as potential factors of social and cultural change. By using data from EU surveys, the percentage of persons in mixed marriage is estimated in 30 European countries over recent years. Across Europe, for the period 2008–2010, on average 1 in 12 married persons was in a mixed marriage (**Figure 1**).

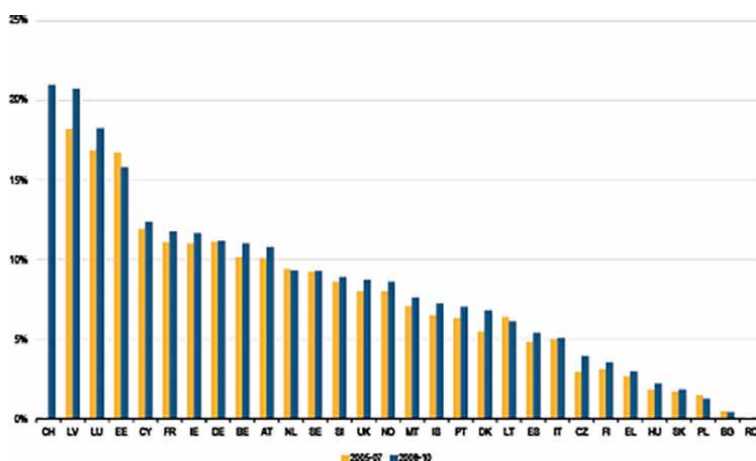

Figure 1.
Average for 2005–2007 and 2008–2010 of the percentage of mixed couples on total married couples by country [7].

2. To continue to be a family: the transnational families

Few immigrant families arrive already formed in the receiving societies. These cases are usually located at the extreme poles of the social stratification of migration: in one pole, highly qualified migrants (e.g., managers and professionals), who move abroad with their whole families; at the opposite pole, asylum seekers, fleeing war and persecution with their families. The so-called "transnational families" are families divided between a member who emigrated abroad and the rest of the family nucleus that remained at home. The issue is relevant to the phenomenon of the departure of mothers who leave their children at home. These are entrusted to the care of grandmothers, sisters, older daughters, and more rarely husbands, sometimes of other salaried women, in a kind of international chain of reallocation of care tasks [8].

It is the abnormal functioning of these families that leads immigrants to frame them as a new form of family. Some features characterize their particular functioning. Among them, the most distressing is the sense of emptiness that results from the departure of the biological mother, who is primarily responsible for the care of the children. Their experience of suffering is structured in relation to this absence and the efforts that mothers make to participate in the lives of the remaining children. Frequent travel is only possible if costs and distances allow it. Distance parenting is another feature. Telephone, chat, and video calls are used to virtually take part in family events and relevant decisions [9, 10]. The fatigue of long-distance parenting cannot be detached from the characteristic role that immigrant mothers play in the informal welfare system that solves the problems of caring for families in hosting countries. This characteristic, according to Ambrosini [11] can be defined as: "*international stratification of care opportunities*." According to this form of stratification, many children and young people in the richest societies benefit from the care of mothers forced to entrust their children to others. This is a stratification, at the top of which are the wealthy families of the developed countries, assisted by nannies, domestics, and baby-sitters, and at the base the families of poor countries. The latter must be replaced with temporary solutions: the departure of mothers who go abroad to care for the elderly and children.

Transnational is often more a stage in the life cycle of migrant families than a fixed condition [12]. In many cases, the migration of families occurs through a dynamic process in several stages: (1) the family living together in the country of origin must first face the dramatic test of separation because only those who have the greatest chance of crossing borders and finding a job migrate; (2) the transnational phase follows, namely the time of remoteness, nostalgia, and emotional ties at a distance; (3) the time of reunification finally arrives. It occurs either through the return home or more frequently with the transfer of family members to the host society, as soon as the first migrant has managed to achieve an acceptable level of integration in economic and housing well-being. At the end of this process, the reunited family is very different from the one left home years before. It is also other than that dreamed in the time of forced separation or revised during the brief returns to the homeland for the holidays.

3. Who leaves and who stays: from separation to reunification

When it comes to the decision of migrating to a family, complex negotiations take place. Components face the test of a separation. The decision on who will leave does not lead to subjective initiatives, but to family strategies to maximize income

and increase the opportunities for well-being of the whole family. If those who leave can survive the journey and try to establish their new life on the destination land, the family of origin will represent the time of distance, nostalgia, and emotional ties at a distance. Only later, the time for reunification can come, by returning home, or with the transfer of family members to the receiving society. The moment of reunification is another traumatic moment that family members have to face. After a phase of enthusiasm and joy for the regained unity, the moment of awareness and disillusionment takes place. The reunited family is different from the one left at the time of departure. It is different from the one imagined during the time of exile. Reunited families are forced to rebuild themselves, looking for a balance that is often difficult to establish between integration in the new context, maintaining identity links, and protection from unwanted elements of the new context. In these processes, immigrant families are both a component of the problem and a decisive factor in the construction of possible solutions.

Negotiating solutions leads to strategies to increase benefits and reduce loss risks. These strategies usually coincide with the paths of upward social mobility, according to the models of the places of destination. Sometimes, these strategies are in open contradiction with the religious values and the family hierarchy of the origin country.

They do so through attempts to recover abandoned roles. In decision-making processes, the marginality or irrelevance of the contribution, due to a prolonged absence in the family circuit, corresponds to a feeling of loss due to the reshaping of authority roles in the internal hierarchies. In the new context, parents are more exposed to the loss of authority and control over their children. They are concerned about their loyalty to their origins, convinced of the importance of transmitting at least some of the founding elements of their traditions. At the same time, they are convinced of the value of education and social mobility for their children as steps on the path of integration to be achieved.

In these cases, the professional and family role of immigrant ethnic groups, traditionally linked to the restrictions of the roles of women, oscillates between persistence and innovation. Men tend to reorganize their social and family roles in the domestic context, either in the work they share with their partner or in limiting their power or authority, tending toward greater symmetry with their partner. These role transformations in the private sphere are identity bifurcations in the biographical path of individuals, who renegotiate with themselves and their cultural world the values of loyalty and the cost of identity betrayal.

4. The genesis of mixed families in migration experience: the ethnogenetic myth

Intercultural marriage is a broad concept that embraces interethnic or interreligious marriages. Religious and ethnic intermarriages are single dimensions of intercultural marriage. Intercultural marriage refers to the marriage between people of two different cultural backgrounds. It may involve differences in country, language, religion, race, ethnicity, political ideology, dressing styles, food customs, living styles, etc.

Intercultural marriage, also called mixed marriage, implies "a marriage between persons of differing culture, origin, or religion." It is a form of intermarriage and a type of interaction between religious groups, sub-societies, or societies [13].

In intercultural marriage, the married spouses have extreme differences among them, and the challenges to its successful outcome are far more complex than in

interethnic and interreligious marriages [14]. The sociological discipline focuses its analysis on the more general international effects, taking an interest in "*how do ways of doing family change in emigration and what forms does interaction and confrontation with the other take?*" [15]. The sociological reference to the *mixed couple* reiterates the importance of referring to the internal world of the couple, of the sphere of affectivity and intimacy, as opposed to the more superficial *mixitè* that directs the gaze on otherness, therefore on the reactions that the couple moves around them [16].

One of the changes in the forms of interaction and comparison of differences concerns the redefinition of identities of the social actors involved in mixed families. The redefinition represents a space for exploration and search for compatibility of differences. This is a space in which individual cultural specificities are mutually mediated through a continuous commitment to research and recognition of points of balance. It is never entirely definitive, but provisional and negotiable. In order to establish a bond with the other in mixed unions, subjective differences are characterized by the dynamic process of one's own identity of belonging [17]. This means the reframing of one's cultural codes in a gradual process of redefining identity. More analytically, the ways in which the belonging identity is reshaped are the outcome of the negotiation of prolonged and constant contact with an ethnic and religious identity acquired in the place of emigration.

Negotiating identity means establishing a degree of permeability with respect to the endurance of a painful betrayal of identity, when you make yourself the local cultural practices in everyday life, in the choices of family life, in the education of children, in religious practices. The betrayal in question is relevant in all those cases in which the interreligious marriage requires a conversion of one of the spouses to the religion of the other. In the confrontation of symbols and practices, one is sometimes obliged to socialize and reconcile opposite life's horizons of meaning. The subjective right to believe can be called into question by the need or obligation of conversion.

Conversion implies the effort to respect, in the same living space of the couples. Belonging to an "undesirable" religion is sometimes tolerable when it is a legacy of family history, but it becomes a fault to be punished when it is the upshot of an individual choice. This is a counter-test of the profound link between religion and individual freedom. In the experience of Islamic conversion, it is above all women who leave their own family to become part of that of their spouse [18].

One receives teachings from the mother-in-law and relatives of the husband, oriented toward submission, respect for family hierarchies, and dedication to the husband.

Religion is not really the original factor upon which to build the differences that prevent or prohibit marriages between people of different faiths. For some communities particularly united in collective identity, such as the Jewish one, even if fragmented in a multiplicity of ethnic differences, origins, and epic paths, the obstacle factor to mixed marriages is the ethnogenesis of the community. The historical reconstruction of the genealogy of the community (Jewish, Islamic, etc.) justifies the idea that the origin of the community and continuity must be maintained with the same symbols, values, beliefs, practices, and social organization. On the one hand, ethnogenesis is a strategy of exclusion of strangers and strengthening of uniqueness, and purity, of race. On the other hand, history demonstrates and contradicts this idea. In fact, it is precisely thanks to the ethnogenesis of communities that racial elements of different origins have been acquired through proselytism and mixed marriages with "the children of a foreign God."

It is evident that in these patterns of identity reproduction through religion, we seek the reasons for the roots of identity as the basis of social exclusion. The real

problem in this political strategy is the difficulty in collecting adequate information on the anthropological and religious characteristics of social groups contaminated from the outset by unions of peoples, ethnicities, and races, especially as these groups have dispersed and fragmented over time through diasporas, migrations, land movements.

Interreligious spouses are treated differently in different societies. These treatments are subject to the attitude of the society and the dogma of a particular religion toward the practice. Despite the variations across societies, in some societies, the practice is considered as deviant behavior that goes against the established norms and values of marriage [19].

In the native communities, the perception of the relationship of mixed couples is of great problem, due to the irreconcilability of cultural differences. The constitution of such perception often occurs by stereotypes that generalize physical attributes, traditional clothing, food practices, or behaviors of individuals who struggle to deviate from the value and behavioral universe of their culture. In common sense, mixed couples carry the social stigma of transgressing the rules of social proximity, referring not only to nationality but also to race, ethnicity, and religion.

About the motivations of choosing a foreign partner, the collective perception is built on the degree of integration of immigrant communities with the native population. Some research [20] hypothesizes that mixed unions in a specific historical and social context are the most significant indicator of the progressive level of integration of society (more than that of schooling and housing integration). Actually, these hypotheses have been more defined if related to the effectiveness of multicultural policies. For example, some assimilation hypotheses argue that the more immigrants are assimilated into the cultural and economic reality of the native community, the more likely they will be to marry the natives [21]. On the level of economic and status differences, other hypotheses correspond to and reinforce many of the clichés and prejudices about mixed unions. We refer to the theories according to which, the wider the socioeconomic and status distance between the partners (in this case between natives and immigrants), the greater the possibility that unions (especially if formalized in a marriage) are constituted as a consequence of an economic and symbolic exchange between native and immigrant. From it, both partners get mutual benefits (for example, the young age of the immigrant partner would compensate for the imbalance of ethnic status[2] with the native partner, receiving in return a greater sense of belonging to the local community).

Mixed unions, to be intended as markers of population change, would demonstrate more than any other social process, the erosion of social, cultural, religious, and psychological boundaries between different ethnic groups [22]. In particular, in nations traditionally characterized by immigrant flows and higher ethnic differentiation, the scientific debate has identified mixed marriages as the indicator of assimilation and identification of a certain ethnic group with the culture of the host society.

Overcharged by social pressures to the effort of adaptation, the members of the mixed relationship tend to defend themselves from the alienation of their sense of identity, landing at a multiple identity that facilitates possible cultural contradictions. When social pressure to adapt subjects submits members to unbearable psychological stress, when faced with a climate of hostility toward them, the reaction is often a refuge in the value and religious niche of origin. The more the orthodoxy is amplified,

[2] The imbalance of ethnic status is determined by the original non-belonging to the local community and the distrust that derives from the culture, daily practices, and religion of origin.

the greater the sense of hostility experienced. This strategy of refuge in a protective shield guarantees members from the uncertainty of the actions to be taken without any cultural guidance now lost.

The cultural distance between the partners stands as the intersection of a path that both partners undertake when establishing a bond with a person of another culture or religion. This path is characterized by asymmetrical cultural contexts and backgrounds. In the coordinates, internal/external, universal/particular of the social scenarios in which they live, intercultural couples are obliged to negotiate within them the cultural meanings of the communities to which they belong. They negotiate new values that have emerged from their union with the external communities. The point we want to emphasize is therefore that the place where the critical issues are negotiated is not external but internal to the dimension of daily life. In such couples, when members face routine problems of daily life, amplified by cultural, religious, or lifestyle diversity, different values seem to emerge in all their evidence and potential opposition. Specifically, this happens when it comes to assessing how the partners behave with respect to time management, the use of money, the order of common tasks, and the education of children.

Within the daily experience, communication is one of the most critical issues. You choose a common language, often that of the immigrant land, especially if you have children already included in the processes of education and local socialization. Otherwise, the problem is the exact understanding of the language and the attribution of different meanings assigned to the words spoken. Some misunderstandings may depend on the intimate idea that the partners have of each other, for example, one judged conservative, compared to the other innovative. They are visions that sometimes are not explicit, to avoid judgments that over time can produce grudges and serious conflicts.

In conclusion, in my opinion, what has been defined by the scientific literature as *binational marriage*, *interfaith marriage*, *intercultural families*, *cross-cultural marriages*, *mixitè conjugale*, etc. is a delimitation of a social change referred to the family environment in which the difference concerns society as a whole. Furthermore, mixed couples represent an indicator of integration or assimilation of the foreign partner in multicultural contexts, through which to hypothesize distance or proximity between social groups. Moreover, the phenomenon of mixed unions highlights that in integration processes, an initial phase of cultural assimilation (to the language, rules, values, daily practices, and nutrition) follows a phase of structural assimilation in which an immigrant becomes part of the social networks and institutions of the host community. Just the mixed unions would be a sign of the structural assimilation of an immigrant in the host society [23], facilitating him in the entry into structural networks. Couples like many others have multiple identities, through which to observe the dynamics of change in society in a portion of the mirror which reflects the pluralism of daily family lives. It can be considered a micro context from which to grasp, within cross-cultural practices, the most relevant data for the entire social structure.

5. Being close from a distance: the hidden side of distant families in migratory experiences

Can one be absent and co-present at the same time? The stories of migrants are stories of families—families separating, families facing the unknowns and fears of separations, families who recompose, find themselves in the destination country to face a load of uncertainties, learn a new language, and adapt to new habits, and daily

practices. Bonds, hierarchies, and roles are redefined because of the acculturation to the social scenarios. In a foreign land, the rights of families and their members are governed by migration policies that often demarcate a border line which distinguishes different treatment between native and foreign families. The perimeter of who is part, who has the right to live together, and under what conditions is controversial. All this does not set the emigrants back in the effort of sacrifice to continue keeping their families alive. The traditional family dimension continues to persist as an existential unit that increases a sense of belonging and continuity to one's own community. Migrants face the pressure of family ties as early as they leave. It is a lacerating psychological condition parallel to that of separation from one's own home. You leave the bed in which you sleep. The first glance in the morning is no longer on the usual panorama of objects and people. One wonders if the effort to leave for providing needs for family, or for ensuring future security, can temper the pains of separation. That is, the pain of depriving the spouse and children of affection and common life, in the hope of seeing them again 1 day, certainly grown or aged. But it certainly changed.

The tests to which families are subjected in migratory experiences are complex. Variables move in the coordinates of time and space.

The first variable concerns gender identity. The difference between man and woman as protagonists of the emigration project is significant both emotionally and factually. When it is the woman, mother, and wife who leave, the possibility of having children cared for and raised by others is concrete. The rupture of a universal moral and biological order is associated with women and refers to the intimate bond between mother and children. For men, there is always a socially accepted condition of responsibility and dedication to the family. The consequence is that migrant women suffer forms of blame and stigmatization when they fail in their natural tasks and leave their families behind. Thus, creating forms of self-guilt [24].

If it is the man, the husband, who leaves, landing in a faraway land and a creating new life can break the bond of union. The union is made fragile by separation, in the awareness that for him a new family life, more or less declared, can be realized, accepting it with fatalism and resignation. For men, since the function of emotional-affective care of children and their daily presence is less accentuated, the migratory experience psychologically and factually facilitates life in solitude [25]. So, such as the acceptance of jobs with atypical or extraordinary schedules to maximize the outcome of the project. Social control over daily life is loosened or absent. When the man, the father, remains at home, he can tend to a greater involvement and responsibility in the care of children, although assisted by other parental or neighborhood female figures. He manages the economic resources and uses them independently. Emigration breaks the bonds that create integration at home, but also control of behavior [26]. Life in a society culturally open to separations and new unions, in which the opportunities for meetings and opportunities to find a new partner multiply, exposes the subject to new experiences. Sometimes, living in these conditions convinces them of the preference to educate their children at home, respecting the religious and cultural values of origin. Meanwhile, families have already begun to depend on the economic remittances of those who have emigrated. They have improved their level of well-being but continuing to be a family is an impractical desire [27]. Returns to the homeland are temporary and above all expensive.

A second variable concerns the adoption of tactics and strategies for surrogacy of presence. Being a family is a concept intimately linked to physical proximity. According to Baldassar [28], continuing to be a family from afar means finding ways to compensate for the absence with the co-presence in the life of those who have remained at home. The availability of a multiplication of technological and

communication tools is worth establishing a *virtual* co-presence, directly and without the need for intermediaries. You can be present in the important moments that celebrate festivals, and rites of passage. Surrogates of presence like phones, emails, and virtual chats establish a particularly effective point of contact today. Easy access to technological tools, on the one hand, has eliminated the difficulties of contact. On the other, a moral obligation has been created to communicate more frequently. So, the risk of fraying the bonds is reduced and the exchange of caring acts is guaranteed.

A form of co-presence with a nostalgic and emotional flavor is the *delegated* one which derives from the objects sent and received between those who leave and those who remain. The memory and essence of those absent are symbolically *delegated* to the visits of relatives and friends. Through gifts and visits, those who are not there become present. The object embodies memory and its function surrogates absence. The sense of family unity persists even in the absence of communication, for example, when remembering family members in prayers. One imagines continuing to live together, in the memory of happy moments, mitigating tensions. The *physical* co-presence, as the most intense form of communication, is realized on the occasion of temporary returns to the homeland. The feelings that generate these encounters do not always have the desired results, especially if you have been away from your family for a long time. The forms of *virtual*, *delegated*, *physical*, and *imagined* co-presence examined idealize and surrogate the physical presence. Through them lives the representation of a family unit in which confidence and intimacy as well as feelings of abandonment and self-guilt coexist. Strategies are used for a family life at a distance.

A third variable is related to reunification. The life path of the families in migratory experiences is never linear. Unexpected obstacles can turn back or be a starting point. We separate and reunite. The emotion of finding oneself overlaps with nostalgia, with the illusion of continuing where family life has been interrupted. Illusions give way to the difficulties of learning to be together again as if time and distance had changed nothing. In reality, when living under the same roof, it is the people, feelings, and emotions that change. In reunification, a new balance must be recreated. Each individual's life must be recalibrated to accommodate the co-presence of all family members, each of whom is forced to share and negotiate the living space of the others.

Whether one returns home or reunites in a foreign land, the recovery of broken ties is never easy or obvious, just as the settlement in the new contexts of life is not. The separations of unhappy or already fragile relationships at the time of departure, after the suspension in the emigration experience, return to being unhappy [29], or they break permanently. In these circumstances, one goes back with the product of acculturation to the new context in which independence, freedom, equal opportunities have been experienced. Especially for some women from countries with a high gender differential, they return with the intention of freeing themselves from control and dependence on their husbands and their families. Those who are or have been alone in a foreign land can live in a new union and can have other children. These are signs of an incessant vital drive to get out of loneliness or economic difficulties or even for the usefulness of regularizing one's legal status.

Migrant families must undertake various forms of mobility to maintain their housing, occupational, and economic standards and sometimes may move to other countries to preserve their unity. It may happen that for some immigrants, their economic situation has deteriorated to the point that they decide to send their wives and children back home, failing to bear the costs of their maintenance in a foreign land. The project of family recomposition can be compromised by the fall into underemployment, temporary or irregular work. In these conditions, we find ourselves taking

a step back. That is, returning to being alone with a job that, even if precarious, can allow you to continue to hope to recover the economic stability that allows you to bring your family back with you. One can give up returning home when the family has a strong emotional bond among the members that it does not want to break; one can give up also when they have already experienced the strain of acculturation through school attendance and job professional integration.

More globally, it is the whole experience of emigration that tests individuals in the experimentation of freedom and new skills. You feel like you "make it" not just to survive but because you find that you are capable of it. Self-reflection on one's abilities is activated by unprecedented forms of interaction when interacting with public health or school services. In relations with public services, the complexity of bureaucratic procedures is overcome by the search for practical, although non-formal and precarious solutions. The network of solidarity with the community to which it belongs can give support in a climate of reciprocity of favors received and offered. In the silent form of welcoming newcomers or hosting the children of working parents, forms of coexistence and mutual satisfaction of needs can be created.

Older and lonely people, who become adoptive aunts and grandmothers, find an existential and productive answer to the empty time of their days. In these practices, defined by Stack and Burton [30] *Kinscripting*, the expansion of the family network and the early emancipation of children determine a positive effect on the functions of family care and the empowerment of the children themselves, the latter in the absence of parents. Rapidly growing up, children are often expected to take on the roles of governing the home and caring for younger siblings.

6. The emotive compensatory trap of immigrant families

Moving to a new country can be an arduous experience for anyone. The family shares and divides the stress of change equally among the members. The migration experience is lived differently among family members of different ages. Children live the immigration experience differently than their parents, especially if children are not involved in the discussion of immigrating to a new country. They are brought to an unfamiliar environment with little preparation. Children may feel powerless on a journey they did not even want to take. In a foreign land, newcomer children often struggle with feelings of loneliness as they miss their friends and extended family back home and may feel pressured to juggle the traditional values and customs of parents with the local practices of their peers.

The problems that families initially face concern the satisfaction of basic needs: a job, a home adapted to family needs, and effective communication with the local context through a language that is sometimes not known. These issues are addressed to and managed by adults who bear the emotional burden of the migration experience as a whole, with the perspective of compensating for suffering and healing trauma. Sadness over separation from grandparents and friends, anxiety over uprooting caused by moving, and frustration over learning a new language were among the challenges the parents identified. When you decide to leave, you do not imagine that children will become sad. That far from their own land, they would have suffered the lack of their grandparents or friends. The desire to repay their suffering with a better life grows in parents. They will want to give them everything they have not had in their lives.

The priority in the solution of basic needs, in the first phase of emigration projects, puts in the background the children's settlement issues. It is only in the later stages that all

members of the family find a wider satisfaction. Children's socialization and adaptation to the new environment, ensured by attending school, and participating in sports clubs and cultural projects in their home community, allow children to interact with the wider community and improve their social interactions. If the path to integration for younger cohorts begins in school, it is complicated, especially for second-generation immigrants, by their desire to recover the essential components of their identity.

In these scenarios, religious affiliations also acquire a renewed strength and a role of legitimization of individual and family behaviors that, if amplified in fundamentalisms, can be transformed into identity revenge on the hegemonic presences on the same territory.

To reduce the risk (or feeling) of loss of identity, some communities' immigrants use techniques such as visiting their country of origin, teaching their kids their country of origin, and taking them to prayer places, festivals, and traditional weddings. Some research has shown that parents give birth to their children in their place of origin. Their children attend classes that focus on learning the language and traditional practices of their place of origin [31].

Perched within their own community and often within the territorial boundaries of the neighborhood of the first settlement, they perceive and amplify the hostility that surrounds them. Frightened by the failures of so many of their compatriots and without hope for the future, they tend to exercise stringent control over their children. Worried that the latter emulate the immoral behavior of their native peers, and especially of their native peers, they limit their relationship life through prohibitions and impositions, exacerbating family control to the limit of the semi-imprisonment of female daughters.

In the practices of gated communities, other emotional traps are revealed. Parents face the tradition/innovation dilemma of raising their children, prioritizing family values of origin. At the same time, they do not exclude that they can have a public social life, have friends, or go out with them. Attendance at public schools does not exclude the possibility of attending schools with linguistic and cultural programs of the country of origin, in order to preserve the knowledge and use of the cultural and religious heritage of origin. In these cases, the oscillation between the innovation of family practices and the sense of belonging to the origin's community can become a defense tool against the processes of new inequalities.

7. The answers to the identity confusion of mixed marriages: forced marriages, arranged marriages, and the reasons for others

Cultural values, through family configurations and their genesis, can be expressed in particular and different ways depending on the local context, as in the case of *Akan* matrilineal families [32]. These show that although there are various types of organization of family life, relating them to our horizon of meaning as reasonable depends on the principles of the culture in which we were born. Among different cultures and territorial mentalities, it can be difficult to understand the meaning of a prohibition or an act that in different contexts is not performed simply because there are significant reasons for not performing. Cultural practices in the daily lives of individuals are inspired by a sense of belonging to a community and the history of its reproduction.

In some communities, it is forbidden to eat pork. In others, the cow is sacred. In the Western world, these prescriptions are not applied but rather are subject to stigmatization because they are rationalized. In various cultures, the demarcation between forbidden and permitted is quite clear. The reification of this border into

symbols has the ability to define the identity elements of the community. What is forbidden has an ancient history. It has been consolidated in the collective imagination as a tradition, neither rational nor criticized. Transgressing a cultural prohibition often corresponds to breaking a taboo.

The semantic value of the word taboo amplifies the importance of tradition, a sign of the constitutive roots of the community. Honoring a taboo, as well as a tradition, is an obligation to belong to a group or community. It is not a prohibition that is taboo. Nor is it the taboo that constitutes the prohibition to perform an act. The point is that in every culture, acts or behaviors are avoided because there are good reasons not to perform them. In some communities, caste marriage is taboo. In others, the bond between spouses may occur if they share the same religious faith. Incest is taboo in our societies. In ancient times, it was accepted and favored in some social groups because it was intended to perpetuate lineages and descendants. The concordant love that predominated in Greco-Roman society persisted until the Middle Ages when the central unit was the patriarchal family. The patriarch establishes alliances to maintain and strengthen the family's wealth. Marriage has become one of the most productive ways to increase wealth. The man moves from choosing a partner for merely reasons of erotic attraction to incorporating the calculation of convenience.

In Western multicultural societies, the tensions of social change are amplified by the coexistence of multiple transnational identities. These inevitably generate a plurality of instances (endogenous and exogenous) and short-sighted views on migrant communities. Maintaining one's own subjective and collective identity, in the course of migrant experiences, translates into the creation, interpretation, and reconfiguration or even in the rediscovery of practices more or less shared within the groups to which they belong. However, these practices are often in contrast to the legal norms of the host countries.

Among these practices, arranged marriages and forced marriages fall into categories that culture, values of freedom, equal opportunities, and Western European regulations hastily label as retrograde or irrational. Often, these practices are traced back to an "essentializing orientalism" [33]. What do such labels hide? Do these marriages perform functions that are underestimated, or is their importance overlooked?

The difference and the social distance that immigrants articulate in reference to one's religious and cultural practices generate a state of disintegration among immigrants and natives that accentuates the "ethnic" criterion as a "discriminative" social category to establish new identities on which to base the social order.

In this sense, the influence of religion and cultural practices in the genesis patterns of families, even in migration experiences, thus in foreign lands, is decisive. In a foreign land, Hinduist families who have already been residents for years, integrated and acculturated to the local lifestyle, can continue to arrange marriages according to traditions never abandoned. Thus, it happens that the father of one of the sons addresses an intermediary who deals with combining marriages. He was looking for the best combination of people and families. In some ethnic communities of Tamil Hinduists, people have a booklet of personal profiles filled with the help of the stars. The intermediary with this booklet seeks the most suitable person, even with the economic level and the status of the families because we still have the castes that differentiate people.

To give a more analytical answer, we will use the anthropological, sociological, and juridical studies that show that in all societies there are oral or written, juridical and social norms, constantly evolving, which regulate marriage and the choice of future spouses [34–36]. These norms define the boundaries within which the marriage can

be contracted. In detail, these defined the space left to the choice that comes from "romantic love" [37]; the freedom to express the consent of those who are about to marry; the possibility of interference by parents, relatives, or even the community to which they belong in individual choices to contract and end marriage; the social sanctions in the event of transgression; the space for honor and shame [38]; the influence of religion and values of origin [3, 38].

Analysis of the awareness level of subjective and contextual motivations cannot be detached from the functions these practices perform for individuals and the communities to which they belong. In this regard, in the functionalist socio-anthropological tradition, from Malinowski to Merton, the relationship between need and the satisfaction of need is highlighted. According to Malinowski, there is a close relationship between institutions and functions. That is, the function of a given phenomenon must always be related to the order and persistence of society. According to Merton [39], every element (custom, material object, belief) that is part of a civilization performs a vital function. The author thinks that men are not always aware of the goals they are pursuing and therefore of the functions that their behavior performs. A distinction must therefore be made between (a) *manifest functions*, i.e., the aims intentionally pursued by the men involved in social practices; and (b) *latent functions*, which are not recognized or even unintended by the individuals involved.

With regard to marriages, these distinctions can be traced in the two authors and in others of classical sociology. Among the manifest functions of endogamous forced marriages is Durkheim's extensive analysis of the family as an institution [40] and the "protective function," which refers to the protection of spouses from dangers outside the family or community.

From whom and from what does endogamous forced marriage protect the spouses? Again, the answers are unequivocal. Sometimes, the condition of migrants leads families to safeguard their children from the otherness of a "degenerate" society, in which family ties are "liquid" [41], seem to collapse, and do not respect the individual.

For the reason that "it has always been done in this way," families who impose marriage in countries of emigration are reassured precisely by traditions and customs. These practices would bring about "the best" for their children and in their communities. When the spouses are identified in the origin's country, the imposed union can serve to strengthen ties with the family or community that remained in the country of origin. Especially in societies that are hostile to migrants, or perceived as such by "foreigners," forced marriages play a predominantly latent function of cohesion, strengthening of identity, and continuity of the community. This feature protects against the risk of "Europeanization" of the progeny [42]. It is no coincidence that marriage is imposed on many girls when they fall in love with "European" peers [43]. With reference to women, the protection of the sexuality of young women can be traced back to the *manifest function*, thanks to the identification of a husband who, presumably, will respect and protect them during engagement and marriage. This "protection," certainly paternalistic and patriarchal, preserves the reputation of the family through the protection of women's "honor." In reality, forced marriage has no clear epistemologically boundaries but, above all, is understandable by Western culture for which the choice (of the woman) moves between freedom and physical violence. For example, in the case of so-called "child brides," the marriage is certainly to be considered forced and violent. It is more difficult to comprehend the forms of oppression, material, and symbolic, which are also present in other types of marriage in which there is a formal manifestation of consent. Available data show that forced marriages almost never perform a beneficial protective function, especially for the bride [44].

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In addition to the coercion exercised to contract marriage, there are often other types of violence (psychological, sexual, physical, economic) against women, during marital life, because of the reduced freedom they often benefit. Moreover, families find it difficult to play the desired role of mediation between spouses and, indeed, in many cases exert pressure so that they do not end the marriage.

8. Conclusions

When multicultural policies have not been composed to be compatible with integration processes, the result has oscillated between tolerance and attitudes of superiority. Thus, multiculturalism has become an ambiguous and elusive concept that often refers to the problem it is intended to solve. The failure and decline of traditional models of multiculturalism in Western democracies have depended on the idea of bringing together all foreign individuals, aliens, and immigrants, toward a single way of life [45–47].

The conflict that has arisen has depended on the underestimation of the right of these men to live their lives "in their own way." In short, there was no respect for legitimate differences. The conflict sometimes has been violent. The reasons for the conflict or antagonism were the field of values. On the one hand, living with us and like us implied an obvious need to share the social scenarios of a world that had already been experienced.

At the end of years or centuries of progress and civilization, societies became fortresses of values that provided security and order for their fellow citizens. The presence of outsiders in these cosmopolitan scenarios thrilled projects of understanding differences.

The thesis that different cultures can exist side by side without sharing a homogeneous system of values and without reaching a final agreement seems to be utopian to this political lineup.

Vice versa, sovereignist agreements have opposed the presence of "those who arrive uninvited" [48] or those who "arrive today and stay tomorrow" [49]. Political rhetoric has fed fears of invasions, religious contagions, and clashes of civilizations [50].

But values, practices, and beliefs, introjected into subjective and collective identity, give meaning to different lives. On the level of religious values and beliefs, the diversity in the foreign gaze is mutual. However, here is no symmetry between natives and foreigners. Through the consolidation and crystallization of what one is not and does not want to be, the natives and their cultural political mainstream produce the narrative of differences and the domination of the majority.

Some beliefs may appear irrational because they are linked to supernatural, magic, and magical rituals, such as the *juju* rituals practiced in West African countries such as Nigeria, Benin, Togo, and Ghana. The practice/rite, based on blood, hair, and chicken feet is celebrated before the departure of women in the more traditional and conservative areas and with a strong tribal collective identity [51].

An ethnocentric and rational perspective would judge this practice as a control mechanism to keep the victims tied to the community and exploited, enslaved, and indebted to the human traffickers.

For those who believe in it, it is a curse that will fall upon the women and their families if they fail to repay the debt incurred when they embark on the journey. Spirits and ghosts are also brought into play in this ritual, to the point of believing that objects may have magical properties.

> *Wherever you are from, you will not have peace in the morning, afternoon and night. No, I did not give you that money I spent to bring you from Nigeria to Italy. You will always have fire on you, you will not have peace for your life.*

These words serve to psychologically intimidate women and their families that if they do not repay the debt, no matter what the cost or condition, their souls will be damned forever. Such rites and beliefs will seem unreasonable to the heirs of European Enlightenment culture. If so, then it is probably a value. But if it is a value that is fundamental to individual or collective identity, then it cannot be subjected to criticism. Different cultures, rites, religions, and values show that the phenomenon of "Doing family" in migrant's experience unfolds along the coordinates of persistence and innovation of traditions, practices, and values of origin, against the background of cultural prejudices that push for homogenization, i.e., identity loss.

Freeing oneself from prejudices in order to understand their logic of operation facilitates their acceptance without abandoning or betraying one's moral values. It seems clear that traditional models, prejudicially judged as conservative, have characteristics of modernity or even anticipate social change, if we compare them, for example, with the current configurations of stepfamilies in postmodern societies, that is, the newly formed families that are highly regulated by law.

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Chapter 3

Can Turkey's Winter Be Europe's Spring? Turkey's Dilemma as a Buffer State Protecting Europe from Irregular Migration

Burcu Kaya Erdem and Remzi Bilge

Abstract

Europe may not realize that "buffer states" like Turkey also have the potential to become a source of migration, and this is increasing. What is the current situation and future of Turkey, which is designed as a buffer zone, and what are the implications of this future for Europe? Do European states foresee that the buffer zones they have created to save the day will allow their own citizens to reach the European border as immigrants? In this context, in order to concretize the answers to the relevant questions, a survey study is used to reveal the increase in the demand of Turkish citizens to emigrate from the state in recent years, the direction of this migration and its relationship with irregular migrants. Thus, it is aimed to make European states question their potential to turn the geographies selected as Buffer States into new countries of emigration moving towards Europe and what they will do in this case. This is because the hate speech against immigrants in Turkey and the decline in the willingness of educated Turkish citizens to stay in the state is increasing.

Keywords: irregular migration, European states, immigrant, Türkiye, buffer state

1. Introduction

The report shared by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on June 14, 2023, shows that approximately 3.6% of the world's population is forced to live outside their state of birth. Turkey has also received its share of the migration phenomenon due to its location and domestic-foreign politics. Turkey, which is the country of first asylum for many refugees and immigrants due to its geographical location, is home to approximately 4 million registered refugees and asylum seekers (3.7 million of whom are Syrians) as a result of an unprecedented influx of refugees. Connecting Europe and Asia, Turkey has historically been a transit and destination state for immigrants. In other words, migration is a phenomenon to which the state is no stranger. Therefore, the issue of migration and

immigrants is not new in this state. However, the increasing demands for migration and asylum in parallel with the violence and instability in the world have brought new international and national legal regulation obligations for states. Naturally, in this period of diminishing protection of national borders, it is the European states that have panicked the most and have been the first to implement these obligations. These are the states that are at the forefront of economic prosperity, and they once lectured other states on freedom and tolerance. The European Union (EU) and its member states have a basic migration strategy in the Mediterranean Basin, where Turkey also assumes the mission of a "buffer state". Pressure is put on neighboring states such as Turkey, Morocco and Libya to create a buffer zone around the strategy of stopping immigrants and refugees before they reach EU member states. In fact, these states do not have the economic, sociological or historical background to fulfill the conditions of being the "most responsible state" in the migrant crisis. Turkey, which Europe is concerned about "effective protection" on behalf of immigrants, is almost alone with the phenomenon of irregular migration with the decisions taken by the current government. It has been proven time and again that neither the buffer state nor the European states care about the effective protection of immigrants in this equation. The current government is bargaining with the EU over the refugee issue and making some economic and political concessions. At the same time, they have found the cheap labour of immigrants as a formula to solve their own economic crisis. However, states whose policies are guided by long-term and sound decisions and practices rather than short-term interests cannot behave in such a manner. Turkey, which tries to maintain its buffer state mission despite all its impossibilities, is experiencing extraordinary changes in its demographic structure due to the irregular migrant problem. The change in the economic and security conditions of the state is causing upper and middle-class citizens (in terms of socio-economic class) to leave the state.

In this study, publications and research by Turkish academics and organizations based in Turkey have been used as much as possible in order to reflect the country's "attitude towards migrants" across all social strata.

2. From temporary admission to permanent status

Migration is a phenomenon that has been experienced since prehistory. We know that large migration movements were experienced in prehistory to adapt to environmental problems. The phenomenon of migration as we understand it today has a multifaceted nature due to its demographic, economic, political, psychological, anthropological and sociological effects [1].

The vast majority of the world's refugees are documented to be hosted in countries that share land or maritime borders with their country of origin. The highest percentage of refugees is found in relatively low-income countries. In contrast, almost three-fifths of the countries that do not share borders with the countries of origin to which refugees migrate are relatively high-income countries. These figures represent the reality of historical refugee flows around the world. Most of the events leading to asylum today occur in regions of the South and East with fragile characteristics. These are often low-income countries that share borders with the country of origin in fragile regions and are primarily affected by migration flows. Asylum-seekers seeking to settle in a safe country naturally first migrate to countries that share borders with their countries of origin [2, 3].

However, the first country to which one migrates or is forced to migrate is not necessarily the final destination. The problem arises when asylum seekers in the first country of asylum or in their own country want to migrate to another country where they can potentially enjoy better living conditions.

Turkish citizens and millions of people migrating to Turkey face this problem.

In fact, Turkey is a country familiar with the phenomenon of migration in the context of its geopolitical position. The main reason for this is that Turkey is a bridge between some Middle Eastern and Asian countries with conflicts and instability to the east and south and European countries with high welfare and human rights standards to the west. In particular, due to the presence of conflict and political and economic instability in neighboring countries in the Middle East, Turkey is a transit route for migrants aiming to cross into European Union (EU) countries. However, it seems that the majority of migrants are condemned to stay in Turkey, where they have arrived as a temporary accommodation centre or as a transit route. Turkey, despite all the difficult conditions peculiar to it and despite the unrest of its own citizens, is also doomed to host these migrants. The difficulty in the choice of terms such as "refugee", "asylum seeker", and "asylum seeker under temporary protection status", which have been used in our academic studies in recent years, stems from this. A migrant is a person who migrates from their country of citizenship to another country for social, economic and political reasons [4]. In other words, a voluntary migrant is someone who chooses to leave their home for a variety of reasons, for example, people who move to improve their lives by finding work or education. In contrast, forced migration is migration due to a direct threat of persecution. This suggests that migrant is an umbrella category that also includes refugees and asylum seekers. A refugee is a person who has been forced to flee their country because of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group. An asylum-seeker is a person who has fled persecution in their own country and is seeking safe refuge in another country but has not yet received any legal recognition or status [5]. Thus, the broad concept of migration includes externally displaced refugees. However, it is important to note that not all migrants are refugees. Refugees face the threat of persecution and lack the protection of their home country. Based on this recognition, for a person to be recognized as a refugee, they must first be unable to live safely in their own territory. This may be due to racial, religious or political persecution or other human rights violations. Secondly, they must have been unable to obtain protection from their own government. Therefore, anyone who does not possess one or more of these characteristics is not recognized as a refugee. Asylum-seekers are individuals seeking international protection. They are protected in other countries but have not yet received any legal recognition or status [5].

Numerous articles of law in Turkey state in detail that persons arriving in Turkey as a result of mass migration from the Middle East cannot be recognized as migrants, refugees or asylum seekers [6]. Instead, a new nomenclature, "Foreigners Under Temporary Protection Status", has been introduced in Turkey. This regulation is related to the initial expectations of the Turkish public. Turkey initially acted on the assumption that the mass influx was temporary and that Syrians would return to their country after the end of the civil war and shaped its policies accordingly. As a matter of fact, in the press and official statements in Turkey, it has been observed that Syrians who fled the war and came to Turkey are defined as "guests", which has no legal equivalent, and this expression is frequently used [7]. In this context, the expectation that they will return to their country when their guest status ends comes to the fore. "Temporary Protection Status" aims to protect the interests of the states

to which this human mobility is likely to be directed, while providing protection to those seeking asylum. Recognizing that mobility is temporary, persons who are not subject to international individual refugee status determination procedures due to the large number of asylum seekers are not sent back in the event of a mass influx. Thus, a temporary human rights guarantee area is provided in the buffer state.

To summarize, the initial expectations of both Turkish citizens and those coming to Turkey in large groups through external migration from the Middle East are similar. Turkish citizens initially saw them as guests, expecting them to return home after a certain period of time or to use Turkey as a transit country to move to Europe. Similarly, the majority of those who migrated to Turkey did not intend to stay in Turkey permanently. This is most evident in the sharp decline in the number of refugees traveling to Europe after the EU-Turkey migration agreement. For example, the number of refugees traveling to Europe via the Mediterranean has increased rapidly since the early summer of 2014, reaching record numbers. According to IOM figures, more than 1 million refugees traveled to Europe in 2015 [8]. However, as a result of the EU-Turkey migration deal, the number of refugees traveling to Europe fell to 169,060 in 2016 (IOM, 2017). These data are linked to the EU-Turkey agreement of March 2016, under which Turkey was designated as a "buffer country". The acceptance of this status is directly related to the fact that the ruling party in Turkey has gained many new opportunities in the domestic and foreign politics of the country. As a matter of fact, the ruling party associated this phenomenon with its ideology by surrounding it with a religious discourse of the necessity of brotherhood and made itself a part of the process of foreign policy. The ruling party's discourse of "accepting oppressed Muslims to the country despite many difficulties" is in line with the party's claim of ideological leadership of the Muslim world, which is based on historical Neo-Ottomanism. Similarly, the issue of Syrians, which is constantly on the agenda, has helped to suppress other debates that may arise. In such a political and cultural environment, it was not difficult for decision-makers in Turkey to position the country as a buffer country. The EU agreed with Turkey to limit asylum claims and irregular migration in order to control and reduce the flow of refugees traveling to Europe. This agreement is an indication of Turkey's positioning as a "buffer country" in front of the countries to which refugees are traveling. Unfortunately, like any buffer, it has a limited saturation and stopping capacity. The main problem is whether the limits of this capacity are really perceived. This is because studies on Syrian migrants in Turkey after 2016 show that migrants have now accepted that they are permanent in Turkey.

For example, in the "Demographic Outlook, Living Conditions and Future Expectations of Syrians in Turkey Field Survey" conducted by the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) in 2017, approximately 41% of the Syrian guests responded to the question on how much of the Syrian guests would be permanent in Turkey that they thought half of the Syrians would be permanent in Turkey [9].

At this point, it is useful to recall the following discourse: "Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that 'Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution' - not 'Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in the first safe country they reach asylum from persecution" [10]. However, contrary to this assumption, it is well known that the EU uses Turkey as a buffer country to limit asylum claims and irregular migration from the Middle East. The question to be asked at this point is the following: does the EU realize that the residue (unrest and anxieties) accumulated behind this buffer has the potential to lead to a much more marginal migration movement towards Europe in the long term?

3. Defining Turkey's winter as a buffer state against irregular migration

Turkey is a country founded by immigrants. Therefore, after 1980, it opened its doors to millions of people fleeing from the wars and conflicts in its region. Millions of people have flocked to Turkey in the last 40 years from many countries, especially Iraq, Iran, Bulgaria, Greece, Syria, Yugoslavia and Afghanistan [11].

The "Migration History of Turkey", published by the Migration Administration of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Turkey, also shows the influx of foreign migration to the country. Accordingly, since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, foreign migration movements and the number of migrants to the country are summarized as follows:

- 384,000 people from Greece between 1922 and 1938,
- 800,000 people from the Balkans between 1923 and 1945,
- 800 people from Germany between 1933 and 1945,
- 51,542 people from Iraq in 1988,
- 345,000 people from Bulgaria in 1989,
- 467,489 people from Iraq after Gulf War I in 1991,
- 20,000 people from Bosnia between 1992 and 1998,
- 17,746 people after the war in Kosovo in 1999,
- 10,500 people from Macedonia in 2001,
- Approximately 3.6 million people arrived in Turkey between April 2011 and March 2019 due to the civil unrest in Syria [12].

Based on the figures quoted, it can be said that since 2011, Turkey has faced a large-scale irregular migration movement that has never been seen before in its history. Many also argue that Turkey's economic, socio-cultural and demographic structure, public order and security are under threat as a result of this irregular migration movement.

According to the literature, Turkey has experienced three major external migration movements throughout its history. The first one is the migration movement that started with World War I and was mostly composed of Turks from the Balkans. These immigrants found the opportunity to live harmoniously within Turkish society. Today, these immigrants do not even have immigrant status in the country. The second wave of migration took place with the Gulf Operation and the US intervention in Iraq. In this process, a large number of Iraqi migrants or asylum seekers crossed the borders into Turkey and were hosted in shelter centres established near the borders. The third and most important migration wave is related to the Syrian crisis. Today, more than 3 million (approximately 3.6 million) Syrian asylum-seekers are living in the country, some of them in temporary accommodation centres and most of them in different cities of the country as asylum-seekers [13]. In countries like Turkey, which

are accustomed to immigrants, there are basically three important facts that "determine attitudes towards immigrants":

1. The number and distribution of migrants.
2. Adaptation and adoption of migrants.
3. The socio-economic conditions of the country.

In mass external migration movements, it is inevitable that many physical, economic, social and political problems arise for both the migrants and the citizens of the new country of settlement. What the migrant population and the country that welcomes them try to do in this process through migration policies and adaptation efforts is to minimize these inevitable problems. After the 2011 civil war in Syria, mass migration to Turkey has had a significant impact on the country's economy, social structure and politics. Due to the three important facts mentioned above, it is not possible to say that the emerging problems have been minimized.

First of all, the number and distribution of migrants have caused the problem to be of a magnitude that cannot be ignored. As Turkey opened its doors to Syrians without discrimination of religion, language and race within the scope of the open door policy it has been implementing since the beginning of the migration, asylum-seekers who were first accepted in 26 temporary accommodation centres in 10 cities were later started to be accepted according to the principle of non-refoulement.

According to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)'s "Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan", "Since 2014, Turkey has been managing the world's largest population of persons under temporary and international protection. As of February 2, 2023, the number of Syrians under temporary protection was more than 3.5 million, almost half of whom are children and around 46 per cent of whom are women and girls. In addition, Turkey hosts approximately 320,000 international protection applicants and status holders from other countries. While Syrians remain by far the largest population in need of international protection in Turkey, requiring sustained international support, there are also significant numbers of Afghans, Iranians and Iraqis facing serious protection challenges and additional barriers to assistance compared with Syrians" [14]. Currently, around 98% of Syrians under temporary protection live in urban and rural areas in Turkey's 81 provinces, with only around 2 percent residing in the remaining seven Temporary Accommodation Centres (TACs) [15].

The challenging socio-economic context and public concerns about the burden placed on Turkey by such a large refugee population have resulted in the Government of Turkey adopting a stricter approach in 2022 towards persons under international and temporary protection. Policies have been introduced to suspend the registration of new international and temporary protection applicants in nearly 1200 "closed" neighborhoods due to the high density of foreigners compared with the host population, while requiring new registrations of Syrians under temporary protection to take place in TACs [16]. Such measures were introduced when it became impossible to control the migrant population and its distribution. And Turkish citizens' discontent with migrants played a major role in the measures taken.

According to the data of Refugees Association for January 2024, the rate of Syrian migrants staying in Temporary Accommodation Centres is only 1.96%. They mostly live in big cities and without considering the conditions of concentration

and distribution. As of January 31, 2024, the number of Syrians living in cities was announced as 3 million 118 thousand 841 people. 98.04% of Syrians live in cities. A total of 1169 neighborhoods in Ankara, Antalya, Aydın, Bursa, Çanakkale, Düzce, Edirne, Hatay, İstanbul, İzmir, Kırklareli, Kocaeli, Muğla, Sakarya, Tekirdağ, Tekirdağ and Yalova, where foreigners live in large numbers, and in 63 cities where the foreigner density exceeds 20% of the Turkish population, have become closed to all foreigners of all statuses [15]. However, this did not ensure that migrants could live in the provinces where they were resettled. The distribution has become more uncontrolled with each passing day. Syrian asylum-seekers who were granted "temporary protection status", whose camps were called "temporary accommodation centres", and whose schools where children were educated were called "temporary education centres" did not turn out to be "temporary" as expected. Over time, especially after 2013, while the proportion of Syrian asylum-seekers staying in camps has decreased, the proportion and number of those living in cities intertwined with Turkish people have become a permanent part of Turkey's social, economic and political life. Unfortunately, Turkey's existing social, economic and political conditions were not even sufficient for its own citizens to live in prosperity. Moreover, the potential for the migrant population to increase due to its demographic characteristics increases the perceived threat to this prosperity (**Table 1**).

Age	Male	Female	Total
Total	1.650.823	1.507.901	3.158.724
0–4	206.178	192.689	398.867
5–9	274.169	258.471	532.640
10–14	186.903	177.400	364.303
15–18	125.776	115.912	241.688
19–24	184.677	162.700	347.377
25–29	174.809	144.813	319.622
30–34	129.857	105.450	235.307
35–39	109.340	89.198	198.538
40–44	77.695	69.377	147.072
45–49	52.858	53.557	106.415
50–54	41.256	42.998	84.254
55–59	33.003	34.184	67.187
60–64	21.882	23.671	45.553
65–69	14.633	16.093	30.726
70–74	9.173	10.187	19.360
75–79	4.571	5.467	10.038
80–84	2.238	3.100	5.338
85–89	1.073	1.528	2.601
90+	732	1.106	1.838

Table 1.
Distribution by age and gender of registered Syrian refugees recorded by taking biometric data [17].

There are reports that access to international protection in Turkey is becoming more difficult [18].

Secondly, the level of adoption and adaptation of migrants is another major source of problems. Given these figures, it is not possible for Turkey, the country hosting the largest number of refugees in the world, to continue providing protection and support to those in need of international protection and for public institutions to adhere to national and international refugee law. Under the current circumstances, the only reason for the government to continue its pro-migration and pro-immigrant actions is to overcome its political deadlock with the support of refugees. Turkish citizens, on the other hand, are both unhappy and angry at being forced to share the economic and social resources that enable them to live in limited and difficult conditions. This reaction stems both from the change in the Turkish citizenship regime and from their unwillingness to share their already meager resources. These resources should not only be thought of as economic resources and opportunities. They are all citizenship rights arising from the state's responsibilities towards its citizens. There are, of course, financial assistance programmes and various support funds that the European Union has put in place to reduce the economic pressure caused by refugees in Turkey. However, this support does not prevent Turkey's structurally troubled economy from worsening with millions of refugees in the country.

First of all, until recent years, the Turkish citizenship regime had a unique structure. The dominant feature of the Turkish citizenship regime, which was shaped in an intertwined manner with the nation-state construction, was ethnic and religious selectivity. The inclusion of those who were not 'cognates' was only possible through the necessity of assimilation. For this reason, only certain groups that were deemed assimilable to Turkishness within certain historical-cultural and ideological boundaries, or that were predicted to become Turkic, acquired Turkish citizenship as immigrants. The mass acquisition of citizenship by foreigners of Arab ethnicity throughout the history of the Republic is a new phenomenon. Therefore, the current situation corresponds to a new inclusiveness and a partial de-ethnicization [19].

The majority of Turkish citizens react to this "new inclusiveness". Among the main reasons for this reaction is the initially touted "temporary" status of migrants, their numbers, their distribution within the country, their level of integration into society, their transformative impact on social and political life, and their perception as a source of economic problems.

This reaction has become particularly visible in the political elections held in Turkey in recent years. In Turkey, a large number of studies have analyzed the impact of attitudes towards immigrants on voting preferences using quantitative methods. The basic assumption that these studies agree on is that as negative attitudes towards immigrants increase, the rate of voting for the ruling party that implements immigration policies decreases [20]. In sum, the Justice and Development Party (AKP) government, which has been in power in Turkey since 2002, was openly criticized by the opposition for the first time in the 2023 elections due to its open-door policy towards refugees and moderate migration policies. And many parties that increased their voting rates in the 2023 elections adopted anti-immigration as a core policy.

Migration reveals the distinction between natives and migrants, which has an important place among the sources of social and political segregation. The perception of prejudice, fear and anxiety that locals have towards migrants, supported by economic and social experiences, deepens, broadens and sharpens the segregation. The competition (struggle) between natives and migrants in almost every field evolves

into politics and paves the way for a power struggle. The division between natives and migrants can reduce the level of influence of previously effective divisions and the sources of these divisions. The local-migrant divide can render previously effective sources of class divisions such as class divisions, ethnic divisions, religious or sectarian divisions dysfunctional. Recent migrants are often seen as the weakest link in society and constitute the segment of society closest to social exclusion. In fact, social segments in cities that previously fought against each other in almost every field (segregated) may prefer to act together in the face of recent migrants [21]. Developments in Turkey, especially since 2011, have been in line with this narrative. The current government's ability to accommodate migration has had an impact on the political impact of migration and attitudes towards migrants. The extent to which a political power welcomes migration is also related to its interests and the socio-economic conditions in the country, which depend on its efforts to maintain its power.

In order for immigrants to live their lives freely, arrangements have been made in employment, education, health, etc., over time to create fluidity in normal life. However, at some points, the desired fluidity could not be fully achieved, and at this point, the issue of adaptation of immigrants and the level of social acceptance of the local people have come into question [22].

Numerous empirical studies have been conducted on the adaptation and adoption levels of those who came to Turkey through external migration. The common discourse that comes to the fore in these studies is that the level of adoption of immigrants by the local people decreases over time. At the beginning of the migration process, the perception of Turkish people, regarded Syrian asylum-seekers as religious brothers and sisters and defined them as muhajir[1] and themselves as ensar,[2] has changed over time. For example, in one of the comprehensive studies to determine the perceptions and thoughts of the Turkish people towards Syrian asylum seekers, the result is as follows:

> *"It is not realistic to expect a high level of social acceptance towards Syrian asylum-seekers who have different cultural and demographic characteristics (the majority of them are young and unemployed men, women's education level is lower than the average of Turkey, fertility rate is high, etc.). Moreover, this is an approach that ignores the interests of the Turkish society. According to the same study, 72.8 per cent of the Turkish society think that none of the Syrian asylum-seekers should be granted citizenship". (p. 61) [23]*

Similarly, in addition to generalized prejudices against ethnic out-groups, there are also studies in which prejudices specifically targeting Arabs are found to be applicable in exclusionary attitudes towards Syrian asylum-seekers. The findings of a study conducted by the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Association are as follows: When the participants were asked to what extent they agree with the statement "Arabs have always stabbed us in the back throughout our history", 66.47% of them answered "Agree" or "Strongly agree". Those who "disagree" or "strongly disagree" remained at 13.20% [24].

[1] "Muhajir", derived from the Arabic root "hijr" meaning "to migrate", means those who migrated from Mecca to Medina during the time of the Prophet Muhammad.

[2] "Ansar", derived from the Arabic root "nasr" meaning "to help", means those who helped those who forcibly migrated from Mecca to Medina during the Prophet Muhammad's time.

Many studies have been conducted indicating the reasons for the negative perceptions and attitudes of Turkish citizens towards Syrian refugees. In one of these studies, these reasons are summarized as follows:

- Disruptions in basic public services (health, municipality, education, etc.),
- Economic concerns (loss of job, loss of income, rising rents, insufficient social assistance, etc.),
- Security concerns (public order, suspicion, uneasiness, tension, increase in crime rates, etc.),
- Concerns about basic rights (work permit, residence permit, citizenship, etc.) [25].

Finally, the socio-economic conditions in Turkey, which has been subjected to an influx of external migration, are an important source of problems determining the attitude of the local population towards migrants. The Turkish economy is plagued by high inflation, rising unemployment rates, a depreciating currency, increasing government debt and widening trade deficits. Even without the presence of migrants, these factors would lead to extremely difficult living conditions for Turkish citizens. In this context, the willingness of the political power to host Syrians under temporary protection, bearing the bulk of the costs associated with refugees, is disturbing Turkish citizens. Migrants are cited among the major causes of unemployment and high inflation in the country.

There are a number of studies analyzing the views of Turkish citizens on the negative impact of migrants on the Turkish economy. In one of these studies, 63.1% of the sample group of Turkish citizens believed that Syrian refugees were dragging down Turkey's social welfare level; 77.7% rejected the idea that social assistance to them should be increased [23].

The social and economic burden of hosting such a high refugee population has been exacerbated by COVID-19, while global economic challenges are impacting populations and governments everywhere, particularly in countries hosting large refugee populations [14].

In the context of all these narratives, it can be observed that the youth population, which constitutes an important part of Turkey's demographic structure, has a view of their own country and a tendency to migrate out of the country, recognizing their country as unlivable.

According to Castles et al. [26], the motivations for large-scale migration are mainly economic. This motivation rate is much higher among young people. In addition to economic conditions, one of the most important motivations for migration is the desire of young people to leave political systems in which they are politically oppressed.

In Turkey, the hopelessness of the young population about the future, which develops in parallel with the economic crisis and the political environment, triggers a remarkable increase in their migration plans. The labour market participation and economic integration processes of the Syrian population, which numbers close to 3.6 million in Turkey, inevitably affect the labour supply, income distribution, economic mobility within the country and the balances related to the labour market in Turkey. The main problems faced by the migrant population in Turkey in accessing the labour market are listed as unregistered employment, low wages, employment in unskilled jobs and competition. However, these problems, which lead to unfavorable working and living conditions for

migrants, do not change the negative perspectives of Turkish citizens towards them. This is because the young population, who are Turkish citizens, see these working conditions, which are defined as problems for migrants, as obstacles to their own economic welfare. For them, unregistered employment or low-wage labour of migrants are the biggest obstacles to their own unemployment. On the other hand, the perception that immigrants are more influential than them in political decision-making processes and the belief that immigrants benefit more effectively from health, education, etc. opportunities than they undermine Turkish youth's sense of belonging to their country.

In the context of these claims, this study aims to provide concrete data on the migration tendency of Turkish youth. The effect of the perceptions of Turkish youth

Conditions	Push factors	Pull factors
Economic factors	• Not enough jobs • Few opportunities • Slavery or forced labour • Poor housing • Economic crisis • Poor medical care • Loss of wealth • University crisis	• Better career prospects • Better living conditions • Industry • Finance support: Financing education: scholarships, government-financed subsidized research programmes • Better medical care • Attractiveness of the Universities or research institutes of the advanced countries
Demographic factors/socio-cultural factors	• Poor chances of marrying • Primitive conditions • Racial religious • Bullying	• Better chances of marrying • Enjoyment • Life experience abroad • Familiarization with different cultures • High level of education • Family relatives • Friends links • •Social network
Political factors	• Political fear or persecution • Political crisis • Political instability • Death treats • War • Military coups • Corruption	• Political or religious freedom • Living in societies with higher tolerance towards the other reveals that cosmopolitanism • Security
Miscellaneous factors	• Condemned housing • Discrimination • Foreign invasion • Social instability • Famine or drought • Natural disasters • Pollution	• Attractive climate • Adventures/experiences

Table 2.
List of push and pull factors based on economic, demographic, socio-cultural, political and miscellaneous conditions.

towards refugees coming to Turkey through external migration on this migration tendency has also been revealed. At this point, we would like to remind Martiskova's table, "List of push and pull factors based on economic, demographic, socio-cultural, political and miscellaneous conditions" (**Table 2**).

4. A study on the migration tendency of Turkish youths

4.1 Method and sample

Within the scope of the research, the population of university students aged 18–25 in Istanbul was studied. The sample size of the study was based on the minimum sample size in terms of representativeness, which is stated as 384 in the literature with a sampling error of 0.05 and a 95% reliability interval [27]. In this context, the questionnaire form was sent to the student groups online using a 5-point Likert scale with a one-stage simple random sampling method, and the study was finalized with the completion of the minimum number of 384 forms. In the questionnaire on which the research is based, the first part of the questionnaire, which included eight options for age (between 18 and 25 years old), gender and university information, was followed by a second part of 25 questions structured with a Likert scale. At the end of this section, the participants were asked a single open-ended question to find out how many million refugees they think there are in Turkey. The study was limited to young people between the ages of 18 and 25 who are university students in Istanbul. This research was designed and conducted in accordance with ethical principles. Participants were asked to participate in the study voluntarily, and they were given clear and understandable information about the purpose and process of the research. The privacy and confidentiality of the participants were protected, and the data obtained was kept confidential and used only for research purposes. Additionally, any risk of discomfort during the research process was minimized, and the rights of the participants were respected.

5. Findings and discussion

When the basic demographic characteristics of the participants were analyzed, it was found that all of them resided in Istanbul because they were students at universities in Istanbul, and 60.9% of them were female (n = 234) and 39.1% (n = 150) were male. 6.3% of the participants were 18, 6.3% were 19, 17.7% were 20, 20.8% were 21, 16.7% were 22, 9.9% were 23, 6.3% were 24, and 16.1% were 25 years old. The average age of all the participants was 21.7 (**Table 3**).

The participants consisted of students from 18 universities in Istanbul. After the questionnaire form was sent to student groups, it reached a wide range of universities, and students forwarded it to each other (**Table 4**).

A significant majority of the young university students who participated in the research stated that they would like to study and live abroad. To the Likert scale statement "I would like to live abroad if I had the opportunity to choose", 61.46% (n = 236) of the participants responded positively (agree-strongly agree) and only 6.25% (n = 24) strongly disagreed (**Table 5**).

Similarly, 82.8% of the participants (n = 318) responded positively to the statement "I would like to study abroad if I had the opportunity to choose". Only 10.42% of the participants stated that they did not want to study abroad (n = 40), while

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Female	234	60.9
	Male	150	39.1
Age	18	24	6.3
	19	24	6.3
	20	68	17.7
	21	80	20.8
	22	64	16.7
	23	38	9.9
	24	24	6.3
	25	62	16.1

Table 3.
Analysis of demographic characteristics of participants.

Bahcesehir University	Bogazici University	Halic University
Istanbul Beykent University	Istanbul Gedik University	Istanbul Kultur University
Istanbul Medeniyet University	Istanbul Medipol University	Istanbul Okan University
Istanbul University	Cerrahpasa University	Koc University
Maltepe University	Marmara University	Nisantasi University
Ozyegin University	Uskudar University	Yeditepe University

Table 4.
Distribution of participants by universities.

Scale	n	%	
Absolutely disagree	24	6.25	22.92
Disagree	64	16.67	
Neutral	60	15.63	61.46
I agree	92	23.96	
Absolutely agree	144	37.50	
Total	384	100	

Table 5.
The proposition of: "I would like to live abroad if I had the opportunity to choose".

6.77% remained neutral. In this context, it is possible to conclude that university students between the ages of 18 and 25 are not satisfied with their current student status and have a serious tendency to emigrate from Turkey, to settle abroad and, if possible, to study abroad. Of course, the refugee crisis in Turkey cannot be considered as the sole or the most important reason for this situation. Nevertheless, this crisis, which reveals the effects of structural problems that can be postponed until today and which can be easily associated with many other problems, has an impact on students'

motivation to leave the country. **Table 6** contains the analysis of the responses to the proposition about studying abroad.

The research provides a variety of information about the interrelated multidimensional discontent of the students. For example, 59.36% (n = 228) of the participants believe that they cannot achieve their career goals in Turkey, and only 3.64% (n = 14) "strongly agree" that they can achieve their goals. This statement is one of the statements with the highest neutrality rate (26.56%, n = 102). It can be accepted that this situation points to the future uncertainty of university students aged 18–25, whose general opinion about their possible careers is negative (**Table 7**).

Analyzing the other propositions containing opinions about the future makes the situation more understandable. Since the importance of young people between the ages of 18 and 25 for the future of society is obvious, their responses to the propositions regarding their opinions about the future should be analyzed carefully. As a matter of fact, these responses reflect the relationship that young people, who will start to have a say in the next decade of the country with their thoughts, actions and careers, establish with the country, the level of satisfaction they adopt and their hopes/despair (**Figure 1**).

The opinion of 42.68% "strongly disagree" and 26.39% "disagree" (total of positive responses: 69.07) given by the participants to the statement "I am hopeful about the future of Turkey" together with the negative response to the statement "I believe that I can achieve my career goals in Turkey" (59.36%) shows that young people in Turkey are not hopeful about the future of the country. These views of the participants are directly related to the refugees in the country. As a matter of fact, this situation is evident in the open reaction to another proposition regarding the future of the country.

Scale	n	%	
Absolutely disagree	14	3.65	10.42
Disagree	26	6.77	
Neutral	26	6.77	82.8
I agree	130	33.85	
Absolutely agree	188	48.95	
Total	384	100	

Table 6.
The proposition of: "I would like to study abroad if I had the opportunity to choose".

Scale	n	%	
Absolutely disagree	134	34.89	59.36
Disagree	94	24.47	
Neutral	102	26.56	14.05
I agree	40	10.41	
Absolutely agree	14	3.64	
Total	384	100	

Table 7.
The proposition of: "I believe that I can achieve my career goals in Turkey".

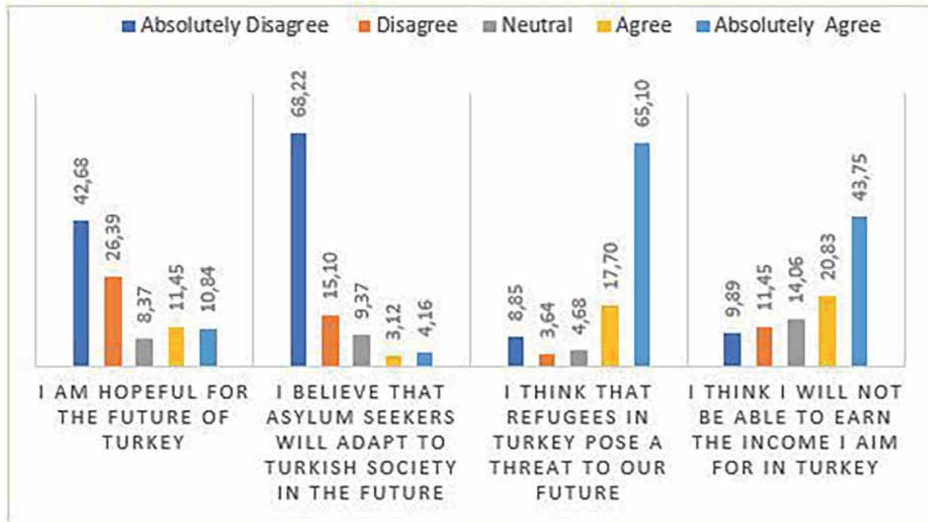

Figure 1.
Opinions about the future.

For the proposition "I think that asylum-seekers will adapt to Turkish society in the future", 83.32% disagreed (strongly disagree: 68.22% and disagree: 15.10%) with the statement. In this context, a significant portion of young people think that the current problems related to asylum seekers will continue in the future and that asylum seekers will not be able to integrate into Turkish society. Beyond this opinion, the participants accept that asylum-seekers are a threat to the future. In this context, a significant number of young people think that the current problems related to asylum seekers will continue in the future and that asylum seekers will not be able to integrate into Turkish society. As a matter of fact, 82.8% (strongly agree: 65.10 and agree: 17.70) of the respondents expressed a positive opinion of the statement "I think that asylum seekers in Turkey pose a threat to our future". Only 8.85% of the respondents are sure that asylum-seekers do not pose a threat in the future. Similarly, the rate of those who responded positively to the statement "I think I will not be able to earn the income I aim for in Turkey" is 64.58% (strongly agree: 43.75% and agree: 20.83%). Only 21.34% of young people (strongly disagree: 9.89 and disagree: 11.45%) think that they will be able to earn the income they target in the future. In this context, it is understood that young people's concerns about the future of themselves and the country, their views that they will not be able to reach their career goals and that they will not be able to earn the income they target in the future are partly related to asylum seekers in Turkey. In other words, one of the main reasons why young people who are currently studying at university in Turkey want to migrate abroad for education or find it preferable to live abroad is that asylum-seekers in Turkey affect young people's predictions about the future in terms of security and economy (**Table 8**).

Aboubt 65.09% of the participants (n = 250) think that asylum-seekers in Turkey do not contribute positively to the national economy. Therefore, two-thirds of the participants recognize asylum-seekers as economically insignificant to the country. The propositions related to political perceptions also provide data on the negative attitudes of young people towards the presence of asylum seekers on security and economic grounds and their concerns about their future in the country (**Figure 2**).

Scale	n	%	
Absolutely disagree	190	49.47	65.09
Disagree	60	15.62	
Neutral	34	8.85	26.03
I agree	42	10.93	
Absolutely agree	58	15.10	
Total	384	100	

Table 8.
The proposition of: "I think that asylum-seekers in Turkey contribute positively to the Turkish economy".

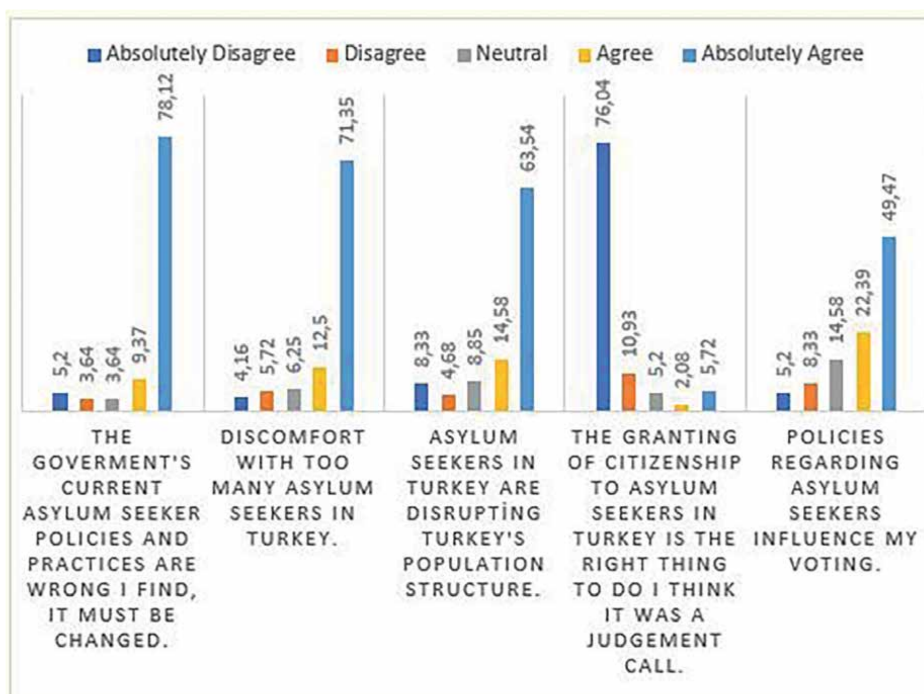

Figure 2.
Political Perceptions.

Aboubt 87.49% (n = 336) of the participants find the current asylum-seeker policies of the government wrong, and 71.86% (n = 276) state that the policies regarding asylum-seekers affect their voting behavior. In other words, a large part of the young people believe that their opinions on asylum seekers are not represented in the current political atmosphere. It is clear that this view is related to hopelessness about the future. Similarly, 78.12% (n = 300) of the participants agreed with the statement "Asylum-seekers in Turkey disrupt the population structure of Turkey", and 83.85% (n = 322) stated that they were uncomfortable with too many asylum-seekers. Similarly, 86.97% (n = 334) of the participants think that granting citizenship to asylum seekers is not the right decision. Therefore, a significant part of the participants do not find the government's policies right, and they are worried about the future as

they think that the disturbing number of asylum seekers disrupts the demographic structure of the country. The response of the respondents to the proposition about whether they feel safe or whether they are satisfied with their lives also provides data on the preference for brain drain from Turkey (**Table 9**).

Aboubt 75.51% of the participants (n = 290) stated that they do not feel safe in the country. Similarly, only 3.12% of the youth responded strongly agree to the statement "I am satisfied with my life" (18.22% of those who said "agree"), and 42.18% of the youth responded positively to the question "I have difficulty in meeting my living expenses such as nutrition and shelter" (19.79% strongly agree and 22.39% agree). These situations are associated with asylum seekers by the youth. As a matter of fact, the research shows that 45.82% of the participant youth (19.79% strongly agree and 26.03% agree) accept that the most important reason for the economic problems in Turkey is the public expenditures for asylum seekers.

Another important data on the perceptions of young people about asylum seekers is revealed by their answers to the proposition, "I think that we can learn accurate numerical data about asylum seekers in Turkey". This Likert scale statement was followed by an open-ended question in which they were asked to state how many asylum seekers there are in Turkey (**Figure 3**).

The graph shows the perception regarding the awareness of the number of Syrian asylum-seekers in Turkey. While 83.33% (n = 320) of the participants do not believe

Scale	n	%	
Absolutely disagree	206	53.64	75.51
Disagree	84	21.87	
Neutral	60	15.62	8.84
I agree	18	4.68	
Absolutely agree	16	4.16	
Total	384	100	

Table 9.
The proposition of: "I feel safe in Turkey".

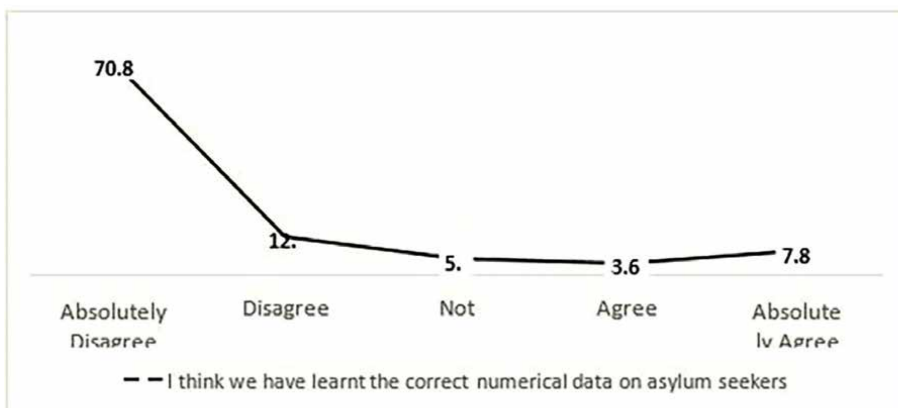

Figure 3.
The proposition of: "I think we can learn the correct numerical data about asylum-seekers in Turkey".

that they are able to find out the actual number of asylum-seekers in Turkey, 11.40% (n = 44) believe that accurate data are shared. The average of the answers given by 326 participants to the question "How many million asylum-seekers do you think there are in Turkey?" is that there are 10 million 458 thousand asylum-seekers in Turkey. As of December 31, 2023, it has been officially announced that there are 3 million 214 thousand 780 asylum-seekers in Turkey, and young participants believe that there are only 30.73% of the official number of asylum-seekers. In other words, 83.33% of the participants think that there are three times more refugees in Turkey than the official number of refugees. It can be concluded that this perception is related to security and economic indicators and that the refugee problem motivates migration abroad by creating future anxiety among young people.

In Turkey, a book was published that begins with Amin Maalouf's quote, "Every man has the right to leave, it is his country that must persuade him to stay-no matter what the boisterous politicians say" [28]. The title of the book written by Evrim Kuran is: "They Migrated From Here: Turkey's New Migration Generation" [29]. In his book, Kuran conducts research between February 3, 2020, and July 6, 2020, involving 3253 participants who migrated from Turkey in 728 cities of 118 countries. The main assumption we can reach from his study is that Turkey has not been able to convince its young people to stay in its bosom. The official data of the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK) also supports this assumption. The last survey conducted by TUIK on the number of people emigrating from Turkey to other countries is for the year 2022. According to this research, the emigration of Turkish citizens increased by 62.3% in 2022 compared to the previous year [30]. This upward trend has continued for years.

6. Conclusion

TurkStat data show that the number of migrants to Turkey and the number of migrants from Turkey have converged over the years. As explained in this study, the migration phenomenon takes place under the influence of the country's attractive and repulsive factors. However, since 2011, when Turkey started to experience an influx of foreign migration far above its resources and potential, both the reasons and the numbers of migrants from Turkey abroad have changed. This study focuses on the perspective of a sample of university students in Istanbul on the phenomenon of migration, the impact of migration on the current situation of the country, and their views on the future. Intensive foreign migration is an important reason for students' dissatisfaction, hopelessness about the future and their desire to leave the country. Because of the current conditions in Turkey, most of the push factors seem to be related to the foreign occupation factor. This association has been and will continue to complicate the living conditions of both those migrating to Turkey and those migrating from Turkey. The increasing negativity in living conditions, that is, the increase in push factors from the country, has the potential to become an important problem for the EU in the near term. Turkey's mission as a buffer country in the migration movement from the Middle East to Europe, especially since 2014, will no longer be sustainable in this context. At this point, migrants in Turkey, as well as Turkish citizens, tend to leave the country at the first opportunity. The route that this tendency will take is well known to everyone. Therefore, as stated in the title of this study, the "winter" of Turkey as a buffer country due to the migrant problem cannot be the spring of Europe in the long term.

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Chapter 4

Weaponisation of Migration: Russia, Middle East, and Gaza

Agil Aliyev

Abstract

Migration has been a fundamental part of human history. Depending on the circumstances of the move, International Law defines them as voluntary, involuntary, and internally or externally displaced. As a result of the world's alteration, a new understanding of migration evolved. Following the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan after 9/11, the Arab Spring, the overthrow of regimes, the civil war in Syria, the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (ISIS), and the resulting European Refugee Crisis, the explicit purpose of this chaos became evident. International society has accepted these conflicts as a consequence of politics; other voices are ignored as conspiracies. Western countries have become home to more migrants, while migrant-producing countries have seen their populations decline. Aside from the military and humanitarian pressure that Europe and its allies are facing following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the countries of the former Soviet Union are also experiencing migration issues. Russia, "Big Brother," remains active in these countries' policies despite their independence after the USSR collapse. The Middle East has not yet restored its former designation as the "Cradle of Civilisation." In light of the weaponisation of migration, this chapter analyses patterns and approaches to ongoing conflicts.

Keywords: refugees, post-Soviet states, middle east, Europe, religion

1. Introduction

> *Mass Migration is a weapon with the world changing capacity by using millions of humans instead of bullets. Its danger changes with the hands on the trigger.*
>
> *Dr. Agil Aliyev (PhD)*

People have been on the move since the first human beings were born. Humanity and its history would not have evolved without relocations. The reasons for such moves have been associated with different factors as well as fear since the early days of homo sapiens. Due to natural disasters and attacks by wild animals, they altered their places of residence. Following the settlement of the first human groups, human origin fear became the primary cause of replacement. Human civilisations were eventually formed as a result of the movement of humans across a vast area of land. By then, the reasons behind the migration had been developed simultaneously with the advancements in culture and technology. The reasons for migration are often diverse and depend on a wide range of factors, both in the place of origin and the

place of destination, but also fear of socio-economic instability and oppression of different political views remains at the core of migration. It is possible to define people from the point of fear to gain an understanding of their susceptibility to exile. I would argue that in recent years, one of the significant types of migration has been accompanied by fear; however, the scale of fear is the most essential characteristic of each type of move. Voluntary migration refers to one's free choice to move to another country regardless of any concerns of persecution or the need for economic improvement. This type of migration is still affected by the fear of losing property, employment, or finances due to personal reasons, although the degree of fear is less than that caused by other types of migration. Involuntary migration or forced displacement is of different types. Internal displacement or internal forced migration occurs within a country of origin where internally displaced people are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised state border [1]. However, moving to safer places within a country mitigates the problems. In contrast, externally forced displaced persons or refugees cannot relocate to a safer location within a country. Because of their fear levels, these migrants are among the most vulnerable. Understanding human security is crucial in today's definition of refugees or external forced migration. It is not always the case that displaced people are at risk of losing their lives if they do not flee their country of birth to another country to escape the turmoil there. Even amid conflict, people can live with a minimum standard of living through the aid of international, non-governmental organisations. There are exceptions to natural disasters such as the rising ocean level, which threatens the lives of inhabitants of small islands, Arakan Muslims in Myanmar, Palestinians in Gazza, who are in a limbo of life or death, and countries with inhumane policies towards particular religions, ethnicities, and political ideologies. International Law, however, recognises humanitarianism as a fundamental value and protects the rights of externally displaced people or refugees through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), [2] Geneva Conventions [3] 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, [4] and 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. Furthermore, a number of international organisations and countries have enacted refugee protection legislation.

A refugee is a person owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it. Refuge or refugium, defined as "shelter and asylum," was the name given to Protestants who had left France following the abolition of the Nant Decree in the seventeenth century. In 1685, nearly 400,000 French Protestants crossed the English border due to religious considerations [5]. As a result, refugees were treated like immigrants from neighbouring states, whose religious and political judges outraged them.

The improved transportation and travel routes have enabled refugees to migrate to further countries rather than just to their neighbouring states. Besides legal migrations, illegal moves have also been developed. Unlawful activities of clandestine groups trap refugees and offer multiple routes, including deadly journeys such as crossing the Mediterranean Sea on plastic boats, to those who do not have access

to safer countries. In light of the increasing number of refugees, the death toll has reached a disturbing level. Between 2014 and January 2024, approximately 37,000 migrants including refugees were drowned in the sea whilst attempting to reach Europe [6]. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2024 Global Planning estimate, the number of forcibly displaced or stateless is more than 130 million globally. Among them, 62,960,690 (48%) are internally displaced persons (IDPs), and 32,574,812 (25%) are refugees [7].

Different factors contribute to external forced migration. Theories characterise movements with the "Push and Pull" element [8]. Everett Lee stated that migration is determined by attracting pull factors at the destination and repelling push factors at the origin [9]. Push factors include humanitarian crises, armed conflicts, environmental catastrophes, poverty, social exclusion, or unemployment, whereas pull factors assure safety and human treatment. Consequently, current refugee movements aim to reach the final destination with maximum opportunities rather than sheltering in areas with limited economic prospects. Because, besides the promising standards of Europe and the United States or Global North, the circumstances of the displaced people's region do not give hope for the future. Those states with similar political systems and war zones lead migrants to the Global North. Various factors also contribute to the attraction of migrants to the Western world. The different ideologies influence the socio-economic and political situations as important components for indicating the difference between the West and the East. Under the shadow of capitalism and socialism, refugees fleeing from the Soviet Union were used as a tool to target socialism as a violator of its citizens' human rights during the Cold War. In response, particularly during the 1950s and 1960s, the communist bloc regarded the UNHCR as an illegitimate tool of Western imperialism and rarely cooperated with it [10]. The migrants were eventually referred to as "refugees fleeing Communism," but in reality, people fled from the political oppression of Iron Fist.

One of the strongest factors that attract migrants is economic and political globalisation, which spreads as one of the components of Western values, and no nation has been spared from this phenomenon. Today, globalisation is unquestionably dominant with Western characteristics. It is impossible for even conservative nations to avoid adapting to the globalised culture. Westernisation or liberalism is not limited to the way of life but has also significantly reshaped international law and understanding, protecting human rights. This is one of the main reasons why the Liberal World is regarded as a fortress of human freedom. Meanwhile, the ongoing situation in world politics exhibits that globalisation, with its Western approach to human rights, is rapidly giving way to a non-liberal worldview, where the liberal values are undermined and controlled by the governments, as in the Soviets. Soviet-like systems filter the flow of liberal ideologies and dictate or decide good and bad for society. It is true that some elements of modern Western liberal ideology are incompatible with the East's conservative values, from individual self-determination to one's decision of choosing gender to rulings of governments. Since International Law is based on classical liberalism principles, the threat to its modern version is aimed at all liberal ideologies and their universal rights. In addition to soft power, the West is unafraid of using hard power to impose liberalism. In North Africa, the Middle East, and Afghanistan, for example, destruction led to mistruths, which in turn caused resistance. A lack of adequate comprehension of regions' cultures, history, and society led to the Global South becoming an opposing force. The result of disabling the regions with conflicts has been a source of mass migration, the transformative power of the globe. The issue of mass migration is an issue of individual, national, and international security.

Managing the masses and implementing migration policies pose challenges to international organisations such as UNHCR and international organisation for migration (IOM). Due to deficiencies in migration policy-making and control, unilateralism gained popularity, and migration was utilised as a weapon in geopolitics and global affairs. Currently, the use of traditional weapons of destruction can be dangerous and a violation of International Law; therefore, mass migrations of forcibly displaced people are a more effective and alternative approach than conventional weapons. World politics has already demonstrated the consequences of war through migration. Brexit, Europe's vulnerability to migration, anti-migration policies in the Netherlands, India's escalation of exile through political and social discrimination on the Muslim population as a means of maintaining a monoethnic Hindu nation, change in Türkiye's demographics, and Russian involvement in the Ukraine conflict are some examples. The dynamic nature of world politics creates a new ownership interest in hybrid weapons. More migrants equate to more powerful weapons in the non-classical military war. Although migration studies have been conducted for many years, the use of mass migration by non-governmental and criminal organisations has not been explored well. The world's society will be unable to take protective measures if it does not understand the aggressor's mindset and purpose behind this weapon. The significance of the investigation is based on finding the pawns in the game of directing migration, particularly in post-Soviet States after the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war, the current situation of the Middle East and refugees from the region, and Israel's aggressive warfare against Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. Thus, this chapter provides an illuminating analysis of the intentions of the actors who play with the fates of millions of forced migrants and examines the types of weaponisation of migration in the three most important locations.

The research was conducted using qualitative methods and historical analyses of the events that impacted migration. Applying Kelly Greenhill's definitions of "weaponisation of migration" on the three regions is the main method of investigating the issue. Although the understanding of migration is derived from International Law, the primary sources are based on the statistics of UNHCR, articles and other sources such as news agencies.

2. Background

As a result of the emergence of new conflicts in the twenty-first century, new weapons and tactics have also been developed to destabilise opponents and gain more power. Although mass migration is associated with political disorder, the root causes for creating such turmoil have been increasing under different actors for the new frontiers. Using migration as a tool of "those cross-border population movements deliberately created or manipulated to induce political, military and economic concessions from a target state or states" for the first time contributed by Kelly Greenhill [11]. Historically, many different states have used this type of new war tactics. However, the concept of strategically weaponising mass migration is new in migration studies and has not been theorised in these fields. Generally, before Greenhill, scholars like Michael Teitelbaum [12], Myron Weiner [13], Robert Mandel [14], and Charles Keely [15] identified the root causes and purposes of migration by different states [16]. Despite this, if migration or forced displacement is examined from a weaponisation standpoint (use of migration flow as a weapon to destabilise and gain power over the target or enemy state), it would clearly demonstrate the targets of the

masterminds, as well as provide insight into the reasons for modern warlike conditions. According to Greenhill, "Coercive engineered migrations" (or coercion-driven migrations) are exercised by generators, provocateurs, and opportunists, and can be characterised by success or failure for various reasons [17] and the outcomes depend on the policies and power of the target states. Additionally, she views the states as mere engineers of migration. As a result, new players have emerged, in addition to countries, through mass migration, such as terrorist groups, human smugglers, and traffickers, whose actions are prolonging wars and threatening the safety of citizens worldwide. It also leads to an increasing number of users of this hybrid weapon in various regions and actors, making the development of alternative solutions more challenging. Also, it is essential to note that the weaponisation of migration can be classified into seven types: coercive (forcing policy), dispossessive (ethnic cleansing, appropriation territory), exportive (expel dissidents, destabilisation of an enemy), economic (exploitation of migrants for cheap labour, importation and exportation of forced labour), fifth-column (gain of political power on target states through sympathisers), militarised (infiltration, disruption enemy of support), and political (passportisation, propaganda)l [18]. In Kelly Greenhill's view, users of these types can consequently lead to resistors and restrictionists (anti-migrant) and protectors and promoters (pro-migrant) in target countries. By means, wars and conflicts are not coincidental occurrences but are deliberately orchestrated by actors and changes in tactics to facilitate the flow of people. Examples of the weaponisation of migration become available for the exercisers to achieve their agendas. The strategy can be utilised by minor actors such as distinct groups in migrant producer and receiver countries with varying political beliefs to unseen forces beyond the states that aim to alter the established global order. Nevertheless, the chapter aims to identify the origin and consequences of the migration flow that occurred both in the West and in the post-Soviet states following Russia's war with Ukraine. Western countries, mainly Europe, have become vulnerable after the World Refugee Crisis, which scholars have extensively studied, yet the Russian displaced people in post-Soviets have not been investigated. The research aims to identify Russia's interests in Russian-forced migrants in the post-USSR world by using different types of migration weaponisation. Another sensitive geography is the Middle East, where diversity empowers weaponisation actors. Türkiye's problems with migration as a crossroads country for mass migration and the large number of refugees are being incorporated into the Middle East as an essential factor. The chapter also examines the current stage of the Israel-Palestine conflict, the violence in Gaza, the reasons for such violence, and future purposes with the application of weaponisation variants.

3. Weaponisation of migration

3.1 Russia

The history of the twentieth century has significantly altered the course of politics. Early in the twentieth century, the world witnessed the resurrection of the Russian Empire in the form of the USSR, but with more ambitious and forceful ideologies. The world was divided into two fronts, democracy and capitalism, which were challenged by opposing principles. After the collapse of the Russian empire, newly independent countries were once again invaded by communist-socialist rebels. As a result of the union of 15 heterogeneous nations, the USSR was formed. Until

Khrushchev's rule, massive movements of people, persecution of scholars and poets, transfer to gulags, and prohibition of cultural and religious identity were characteristics of the Soviet Union. Consequently, the violently imposed "cultural reform" born a Soviet Man. In the last year of its existence, the Soviet Union occupied nearly one-sixth of the Earth's land area, covering 8,650,000 square miles (22,400,000 square kilometres). Approximately 290 million people lived within its borders, representing 100 nationalities [19]. Following the collapse of the USSR, world politics experienced a slight shift from bipolarity to polarity. The former 15 Soviet states could regain independence, and Russia was considered a successor of the former USSR, though, the international society saw this desendancy as they accepted other post-Soviet states. Facing economic and social issues, the newly formed Russian Federation had no choice but to adopt democracy and a market economy. Indeed, a similar situation devastated all former Soviet states, and the only solution was to versatile the policies of the developed countries of the West.

The struggle of post-Soviet states was not solely economic but also a search for a new identity for the former "Soviet Man." Religious and national inheritance played a vital role in this process. Despite all the difficulties, Russian society had to refrain from the depression of a weak state and find a solution to become stronger again. The time-lapse brought to the fore different nationalist movements with the principles of Russianism, a return from atheism to Orthodoxy as in imperial Russia. It was one of the ways to counter the result of the demise of the USSR. In contrast, they did not want to live under the "tsar's rule" because the 1990s Russians' formulation as a nation was influenced by Soviet nostalgia. Although other nations secretly preserved the traditions and faith during the Atheist dictatorship, the post-Soviet characteristics had been constructed from Moscow in the one language, Russian, and the goal of making Slavs superior to non-slavs under the USSR. Because of this, Russians found it more difficult to identify themselves than their counterparts in other former states. During this time of limbo, a search for Russianism between imperial Russia and the USSR, the saviour of the Russians, was required to acquire both values. In the following years, Vladimir Putin, a former lieutenant colonel of the KGB, ascended to power. The person who demonstrates his faith by visiting churches, celebrating religious festivals with the patriarch of Orthodoxy, seeing the Soviets as a destructor of historical Russia, the reason for the loss of 1000 years of culture, and at the same time criticising Stalin's policies, yet who still thinks downfall of the Soviets as the "greatest geopolitical catastrophe" and the Russian population in the post-Soviet countries as a "major humanitarian tragedy" of the twentieth century [20]. Thus, Russian society evolved from both imperial and Soviet elements. Interestingly, post-Soviet states possessed similar methods of defining their identities, restoring religious beliefs, establishing a tradition based on history, and longing for a Soviet style of government. In the eyes of the older generations, the Soviet Union was a place of flowing "honey and milk," they opposed democracy and capitalism due to the policies of the newly independent governments. Post-Soviet states adhered to democracy; however, their heads of government ignored democracy in favour of one man's rule or that of particular groups. The other 13 states, including Russia, except for Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, are governed in a Soviet-style manner with a few differences. Two factors contributed to the Soviet presence in independent states: the leaders who were once members of the Soviet Union's ruling elite and the geographical proximity to Russia. Therefore, authorities of these states, directly and indirectly, have ties with Russia, and it opens entities to Russia in geopolitics. Further, the post-Soviet states' population is another key factor that prevents them from escaping the Russian "eye."

By area, the Russian Federation remains the largest country in the world. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the population of Russia has undergone a dramatic change. According to the most recent statistics, 143,957,079 people live in Russia [21]. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, mass migration occurred within former Soviet states, which impacted the Russian population. Many nationalities migrated to their ethnic countries and other countries from the former union republics. The fall of the "Iron Curtain" left some 30 million Russians outside the borders of the Russian Federation. While ethnic Russians made up the majority of the populations in Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and the Baltic countries [22], yet ethnic Russians were a minority in other post-USSR republics. Although these states were free, the Russian-speaking population was enough to create a Russian-speaking world. Besides, there were universities and theatres, and to some extent, Russian was the language of education in academia due to a lack of resources translated from English, which contributed to Russia's soft approach towards newly independent post-Soviet states.

The fall of the Soviet Union brought not only freedom but also conflicts in Ukraine, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. These issues provided an opportunity for Russia to leverage its interests in the region and take advantage of its interests. It is noteworthy that Russia's appointment of a "loyal man" in Chechnya after the Chechen War is one of the manifestations of its dominance in the former republics. When Georgia decided to remove the Russian political circle and institute democratic reforms, it lost 20% of its internationally recognised territory. Russian government added another conflict, Ukraine, when Ukrainians took a course of democratisation, yet Ukrainians' expectations fell and lived the fate of Georgia. Despite Russian dictation, the Ukrainians refused to accept the invasion, and by moving further along, they retaliated with a full-scale invasion by Russia. The Russian-Ukrainian war is not considered a conflict between two countries but rather a clash between democracy and dictatorship. It also gave hope to the post-Soviet population of full freedom from Russia. Conversely, if the war results in the triumph of democratic allies, the influence of modern liberal values will concern these societies because of religious and cultural diversity from the West.

3.1.1 Weponisation of migration in post-Soviet countries

Russia has been using and possibly threatening to use different variants of weaponisation of migration in post-Soviet countries. One of the most practised weapons is *coercive,* and it occurs when a challenger uses human migration or threats to use it to change certain behaviours of the targeted subject or extort certain concessions (mostly political) from them [23]. The actors of this variant disobey International and Humanitarian Laws and forcibly use migration. Through time, Russian authorities did not allow the Russian population of the Donbas region, Crimea, South Ossetia, and Abkhasia to immigrate into its borders massively. They intentionally remained within states for the further advancement of Russia, as seen in the ongoing conflict. Instead of accepting migration from these regions into its lands, Russia started the passportisation of South Ossetia and Abkhasia in 2002 and increased the policy after the revolution in Georgia. By 2006, 90% of the population of Abkhasia and South Ossetia already had Russian passports. The Georgian refusal to allow the Abkhasian population to use a neutral UN laissez-passer contributed to the demand for Russian passports. Moreover, both Abkhasia (since 2005) and South Ossetia (since 2006) allow for dual citizenship only with Russia [24]. A similar strategy happened in Ukraine by providing Russian passports in Crimea and Donbas,

which neglects International Law. In addition to the coercive type of weaponisation of migration, Russia used a *dispossesive* variant of weaponisation in Crimea and Donbas. In this type, the actor uses migration to capture territories and destabilise the target country [25]. Passportisation can also be considered a *political and propaganda* type of engineering migration. Indeed, Russia often uses this method of campaign to increase the power of Russians abroad and consider the federation as a protector of all ethnic Russians in the world. The interesting fact is that Russia legitimises such action within its Federal Law in Article 14, "*Admission to citizenship of the Russian Federation under a simplified procedure*," 15 "*Support for compatriots in the field of fundamental human and civil rights and freedoms*" [26]. This law has been used as a legal tool in the invasion of Georgie and Ukraine and was in the rhetoric of Russian authority. In 2020, one of the longest conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan ended after 44 days of military escalation; however, as a director of the issue, the peace agreement was also signed in Russia. It was the indirect message of Russia's control over the post-Soviet to the West. The multinational environment in Russia provides an opportunity to use the *economic* version of the weaponisation of migration. Ethnic Russians make up the majority of the Russian population, yet the consistency of other nationalities is from the post-USSR for various reasons, mainly economic/financial. The data (in thousands, 1000) of 2022 demonstrates that migrants from Tajikistan are the leading country of immigrants' origin with 186.56, while immigrants from Ukraine 121.82, Kazakhstan 64.38, Kyrgyzstan 62.36, Armenia 59.53, Uzbekistan 54.03, Azerbaijan 31.77, Moldova 23.54, Belarus 18.82 and Turkmenistan 12.13 people [27]. However, the number of illegal immigrants is predictably higher. Thus, the size of immigrants from the former Soviets gives another powerful opportunity to use the *economic* version of the weaponisation of migration. The category aims to pull and push migrants for economic profit [28]. Additionally, to benefit, the form can put economic pressure on the targeted country. Russia's vast area, convenient business climate, and easy work documentation attract economic migrants from the post-Soviet countries. The condition is a win-win for both Russia and immigrant-origin states. However, it turns into a disaster when Russia decides to deport or impose harsh policies on migrants, which ends by returning. Consequently, the condition increases unemployment in the immigrant-origin country and creates Russian sympathisers abroad. For instance, in 2017, Kazakhstan was challenged by the inflow of millions of immigrants from the neighbouring countries, mainly Kyrgyz migrants from Russia who have been expelled due to a strengthening of the Russian immigration legislation [29]. Another way to exploit economic migrants is by using them as an actor of demographic changes to advance the enemy. It has been reported that Russia sent more than 100,000 migrants, mainly from Central Asia, to change the social structure of the occupied Ukrainian territories [30]. Furthermore, these migrants may be granted Russian citizenship and used in the military.

Since the war started in 2022, approximately 1 million Russians left the country [31]. The exodus from Russia happened due to military mobilisation, the rule of a repressive government, and the war in Ukraine. The more tolerant environment of Russians in Europe forced many Russians to flee the Soviet zone. Among them are highly talented people in IT and other sectors who could find employment in these countries. Although it eases the problems of migrants, it also creates job shortages in arrival countries, which can escalate anti-Russian sentiment. On the other hand, those who do not have a chance to flee Russia have been sent to the frontline of the war, mainly ethnic minorities of the country from the poorest regions of Russia. Before the war, Russia had already used *exportive* types of migration weaponisation.

The category is labelled as “opposition” to the ruling [32]. The migrants from Russia in the post-Soviet, to some extent, could be defined as opposers to the war and regime. However, among them are possibly the people who use the war as an excuse and remain to return as an option. From this point, the *fifth column* (overseas sympathisers and supporters) [33] of migration engineering appears in the post-Soviet countries by Russian migrants and certain groups of Russia’s supporters. They can create anti-migrant sentiment, which is inevitable in the present economic downturn of the world. Such a strategy can end up with hatred or intolerance through igniting nationalistic movements, as was seen after the collapse of the USSR. Results can allow Russia to implement similar tactics in Georgia and Ukraine. Also, Russia’s present stand in the social sphere allows immigration from the post-Soviet countries. By the *propaganda and fifth-column* strategy, former USSR men, particularly the generations before the 90s and the conservative part, judge democracy and human rights from the gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights perspective. By means, for this generation the comprehension of democratic values and human rights are limited and these are equal to disrespect to order and flow of movement such as LGBT. In addition, Europe and the West have always been places that have breached the power of conservativism. Time by time, TV programmes use protests and any form of opposing the regime as a breakdown of the West or insufficiency of democracy.

The prolonging of the war jeopardises the future of the post-Soviet nations. The result of the war is significant for these countries. If the conflict changes in favour of Russia, the post-Soviet will face of new Soviet away from democracy. Russia’s weaponisation of migration will have a huge impact on the policies of the Post Soviets and create a new communist-socialist front.

3.2 Middle East

Once the cradle of civilisation, the Middle East was a dominant power, with important contributions to humanity from architecture to medicine, philosophy, and various types of science. Additionally, the region was distinctive because of its cultural diversity and the birthplace of all the prophets of the Bible and the Quran. However, in modern times, the Middle East is associated with terrorism, war, and mass migration. Unless the region were at the centre of conflicts, the present state of the world would not be as chaotic. According to UNHCR reports, the number of refugees from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is estimated to be 15.8 million by the end of 2024 [34] Among the Middle East countries with the highest refugee outflow is Syria (6.5 million), while Türkiye and the Islamic Republic of Iran host the majority of refugees (3.4 million), and Germany (2.5 million) [34]. In the past, forcibly displaced people from the Middle East were attempting to find refuge in Europe prior to the war in Ukraine, which caused 5.9 million refugees. However, the more hospitable treatment towards Ukrainian refugees made Middle Easterners an old guest. Changing the world order began in the Middle East, an important place for the process. Diverse cultures in the region are the first seeds of problems to germinate. Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, these issues were exacerbated by British and French colonisation. There were even maps of the Middle East drawn by colonisers, such as British Mark Sykes and French Francois Picot [35]. In contrast, Arab nationalism has gained popularity. In order to ensure their security, Arab nation-states took allies as a guarantee of security, as pan-Arabism was one of the forces that contributed to the breakup of the Arab nation-states by ignoring reunited factors such as Islam and Arab identity. In 2003, most Iraqis believed they would be

accepted in the West, but these expectations were not realised, leading to the endless tragedies of today. Adversity can be traced back to the governing regimes of the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphate after the death of Prophet Muhammad. The two dynasties regarded themselves as the successors of the Prophet Muhammad's teachings of Islam; however, Islam was merely used to stay in power.

Throughout the history of Middle Eastern wars, the *coercive* weaponisation of migration has been employed. After attacks in Iraq and followed by the Arab Spring, the majority of the displaced people took a route to neighbouring countries and Europe. Türkiye was one of the targets. To prevent criminals and smugglers from crossing the Turkish-Syrian border, Türkiye laid 615,419 anti-personnel mines in a 350–400 m wide band in 1954 [36]. An area of approximately 22000 hectares (220,000 km^2) was minefield. The idea of clearing the mined land and opening it to agriculture came to the fore after removing the PKK (Turkish abbreviation of the Kurdistan Workers' Party) terrorist organisation from Syria. On the other hand, Türkiye joined the Ottawa Convention or Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty on 25 September 2003, and the agreement became effective on 1 March 2004. Thus, Türkiye obliged to clear all mines by 1 March 2014. For 7 years, mines were gradually cleared along the Turkish-Syrian border [36]. As a result, actors were able to use force to allow migrants to reach Türkiye easily. The consequences of coercive weaponisation can be seen in the changing demographic situation of the country and the number of Arab-origin residents living in the Turkish cities that border Syria. The coercive engineering of migration in Jordan and Lebanon had resulted in economic difficulties. With the start of the war, the economy collapses along with the country's other organs. Then, economic migrations of weaponisation take place. The Turkish government has been experiencing unemployment and economic difficulties as a result of the refugee population living within its borders, although some groups may also benefit by exploiting refugees as illegal labourers. At the same time, Turkish society views refugees as burdens, and the idea of deporting them has become a political agenda of opposition parties. Türkiye has suffered both economically and socially as a result of some refugees' illegal actions, for example, sexual harassment, sexual abuse of children, theft, injury, murder, and immigrant smuggling [37]. Alongside coercive and economic, exportive weaponisation has been used in the conflict. Assad's government has persecuted opposition leaders and forced them to exile those who oppose his ideas. As a result of such persecution, migration is accelerated, and more refugees are produced. The weaponisation of migration in Syria and Türkiye serves the purpose of establishing an independent Kurdistan, according to Ümit Özdağ [38]. The country that will be the buffer zone between Türkiye and the Arab world will also play a crucial role in reducing Iran's influence. Another category of the weaponisation of migration is militarised, when people who plan to engage in terrorist activities infiltrate the target territory via migration or asylum, legally or illegally, or recruitment of dislocated civilians, generally by force, to increase the military workforce [39]. For instance, this type was the primary tactic of the ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Sham) to force people by using killings as a threat. Similarly, in December 2015, after Türkiye shot down a Russian Su-24M aircraft on the Turkish-Syrian border, Russia began bombing the area, displacing thousands of internally displaced Syrians. As a result, a new migration flow was created towards Türkiye [39]. The Arab Spring has also led to a massive exodus from the region as a response to the regimes' oppression. Demonstrators demanded that democratically elected leaders replace dictators. Millions of people have been dispersed through the use of political or propaganda

methods of weaponising migration, yet democracy has not yet arrived in the region; instead, it is struggling with economic problems and a new form of dictatorship similar to that which exists in Egypt.

Like the Middle East, refugee-hosting countries in Europe also faced challenges. The refugee crisis in Europe was indeed a result of the weaponisation of migration by several actors. Refugee issues indicate the weak sides of Europe or liberal democracies. A refugee is not simply a flow of people but also a force of foreign customs, beliefs, and lifestyles. In balancing humanitarian concerns and legal obligations with potential strains on social fabric, financial resources, and political stability, there are no good answers, only vulnerabilities [40]. Migration also divides the power of pro- and anti-refugee parties in Europe. Even though Europe has external borders, it is more fragile than other liberal democracies due to its location on the accessible routes. The discrepancies and anti-refugee environment in some countries threaten not only policies but also the fundamental principles of human rights. Europe is also subjected to a military version of migration engineering where certain groups engage in terrorist attacks to disrupt the region, as has happened several times in Europe, as in terrorist attacks in Paris 2015, Brussels 2016, and Nice 2016. ISIS also gained sympathisers through propaganda and fifth-column weaponisation of migration by seducing the youth of Europe. Only in 2015, more than 5000 fighters from European countries joined ISIS, and four Western European countries produced 3700 fighters: France (1700), Germany (760), the United Kingdom (760), and Belgium (470) [41]. In following the footsteps of refugees, lone-wolf terrorists also enter Western and other countries to destabilise the region, force people out of this area, weaken neighbours' peace, especially Türkiye, disrupt Europe or liberalism (democracy, human rights, International Law), and bring religious fanaticism.

Although it may sound contradictory, two types of the New World Order are competing for supremacy. One has already been clarified with liberalistic approaches. This front requires the destruction of old traditions and the liberalisation of religions and faith to spread its ideas. Migrants are also influenced by Western thoughts and traditions, subscribing to this version of the New World. By following the steps of migrants, Middle Easterners reach the West, where even Christianity is losing its influence in society today. While Middle Easterners are not being forced to convert to Christianity, their religious standards are being altered by Western social forms. It is important to note that the functioning of the mosques or the demands of some groups of people for the implementation of the Sharia law amount could result in the growth of islamophobia, which could also be a way of losing adherence to the religion among some youngsters. The second version of the New World Order contradicts the first. This versus of the new world promises human freedom within a limited definition and constitutes massive surveillance and authoritarianism and also opposing religions. However, individual' control does not occur in an Orwellian manner. Instead, people are influenced through manipulation and the Internet. Faith or beliefs are not eliminated or forbidden but are retained within ordered frames using religious leaders, popes, pastors, imams, monks, etc., instead of a fundamental approach. It is the same treatment for all religions in both orders. Many countries have established special religious administrations to manipulate or guarantee their policies to the general public. Mobile applications track people at every step, from walking to purchasing goods, instead of classic spying. The USSR has already practised some elements of the second type of order and will be spread around the globe under Russia and China if the current wars glorify Russia.

3.3 Gaza

The conflict between Palestine and Israel is an integral part of both past and present history. Until the Ottoman Empire fell, Jews and Arabs lived together in the same area known as Palestine. From Morocco to Yemen, from Iraq to the Caucasus, Jews have historically lived in almost every corner of the Middle East. Therefore, the concept of a Jewish homeland created by the Zionist movement itself was contradictory to the Jewish people of the Middle East. Under the Zionism umbrella of Rotchild's sponsorship, "aliyah" or Jewish migration to the region, began in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Following the Jewish genocide, the Holocaust, Zionists used the consequences as a basis of propaganda promoting the survival of the Jewish state. In the twentieth century, other massacred nations, such as native Americans or indigenous Canadians, Arabs exiled from the Iberian Peninsula, Mongols that conquered nearly half of Eurasia, or Iranians that succeeded the Sassanid empire, were considered insane if they claimed to return to the lands of their ancestors. Jews, however, enjoyed exceptional privileges due to the British presence in the Middle East. In addition to Jewish nationalism being at the root of the Palestine-Israel conflict, Arabs must also be held responsible. Over the years, Arabs have been shackled by policies that have been implemented. The Arabs refused to agree to the creation of two states, Arab and Jewish, and so the conflict began. In the years following the creation of the state of Israel, the conflict has escalated to a new level. Currently, the siege of Gaza and the genocide of Palestinians represent the last stages of Palestinian death or loss of their homeland. Despite Israel's repeated attacks on Gaza and the limited lives of Palestinians in the West Bank, the current conflict is the most horrifying and profoundly affecting war in human history. As a consequence of the Jewish lobby in the world, the conflict name has already been changed from Palestine-Israeli to Hamas-Israel. This is particularly the case in non-Arab Muslim-majority and some Arab countries, where all necessary actions must be taken, including creating sympathisers, financing schools, igniting nationalism in non-Arab countries through Arab migrant hatred, and implementing normalisation. Indeed, the war was never a religious conflict. In spite of the Christian-Jewish conflict, Islam as a religion does not declare holy war either on the Jews or Christians. As it is written in the Quran, the holy book or constitution of Islam:

> *"But they are not all alike. There are some among the People of the Book, who are upright, who recite God's revelations during the night, who bow down in worship, [114]who believe in God and the Last Day, who order what is right and forbid what is wrong, who are quick to do good deeds. These people are among the righteous [115], and they will not be denied [the reward] for whatever good deeds they do: God knows exactly who is conscious of Him" [42].*

As evidence, historically, Jews have lived in Muslim-majority countries such as the Ottoman Empire, Yemen, Morocco, Uzbekistan, Algeria, Iraq, and Iran, and a small minority of Mountain Jews are still present in Azerbaijan. Despite the Quran's clear articulation, some Muslim-majority nations and movements in the past and recent history have targeted Jewish identity and resulted in a decreasing number of Jewish population. It is also important to note that the massacre of Israelis on Palestinians is not seen as part of a war between Judaic Jews and Muslims but rather as part of Zionism's war on International Law through Palestinians.

The current siege of Gaza continues to threaten the health and lives of millions of Palestinians. Since 7 October, Israel has killed more than 29,000 Palestinians in Gaza, marking another grim milestone in one of the deadliest and most destructive military campaigns in recent history [43]. As a result of the attack of Harakat Al-Muqawama al-Islamiya (HAMAS) on 7 October 2023, the ongoing conflict has entered its most disastrous phase since 1948. Nevertheless, the reason behind the attacks is Israel's attack on the Al Aqsa compound, undermining International Law and self-determination of Palestinians, and the military attack on the Gaza Strip, making it the biggest open prison in the world. However, it is vital to indicate that Hamas's sudden attack on civilians is similar to immorality and violation of the law. As Newton's third law defines, "For every action (force) in nature, there is an equal and opposite reaction." In contrast, the primary cause is also the deserting population of the Middle East, which began after the wars started and resulted in millions being displaced. The rulers of these countries always neglect to apply the principles of human rights, which is another undeniable fact. As a result, the Middle East places little importance on the individual lives of its citizens, and as a result, it loses its population to societies that place more value on human life.

However, Israel has been engaged in a variety of activities related to the weaponisation of migration. Throughout the history of the conflict, Israel has not hesitated to use coercion as a weapon of war. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, there were approximately 14.3 million Palestinians around the globe in mid-2022, of whom only 5.35 million resided in the State of Palestine (estimated population of the West Bank was 3.19 million, and the Gaza Strip was 2.17 million) [44]. As a result of Israel's yearly coercive policies, more than half of the Palestinian population lives in exile. Economic issues are another consequence of forced migration. There is no alternative to migration when schools, hospitals, and infrastructure are deliberately targeted [45]. In addition, the report indicated that over one-fourth of the participants in the labour force were unemployed in 2021, with the percentage reaching 26% (15% in the West Bank and 47% in the Gaza Strip) [46]. As well as coercion, another variant of weaponisation of migration, dispossession, has been used by the Israeli government with the support and financing of settlers' migration since 1967 [32]. At the same time, settlers are being used as a force mechanism to drive Palestinians from the West Bank and other historical residential areas. In front of the eye of international society, Israel is using a dispossesive version of the weaponisation of the migration in the Gaza Strip. Due to the heavy military bombardment of North Gaza, Gaza, the Middle Area, and Khan Younis, approximately two million Palestinians are currently stranded in Rafah. Additionally, the Israeli government does not only use the military to carry out its operations, but it also blocks aid from international organisations from reaching Gaza, which is another example of coercive and dispossessive methods of weaponising migration.

4. Conclusion

Both governmental and non-governmental entities persistently employ the utilisation of migration as a tool for political leverage in the contemporary era. Challengers are causing significant displacement and restructuring the global order to align with their aspirations. The current International Order is on the verge of collapse due to tensions between the Global South and North. Russia intentionally employs

various forms of weaponising migration to rationalise its actions in Ukraine. Russia's objective extends beyond Ukraine, as seen by its ability to prolong the conflict over time with the support of China and countries in the Global South. The participants in the conflict between Russia and Ukraine extend beyond the two nations involved, encompassing entities that reject the established International Order. Russia's engagement in conflict with Ukraine serves to intimidate former Soviet Republics, effectively maintaining control over them through the weaponisation of migration. The Middle East has experienced diverse forms of orchestrated migration that have heightened the region's instabilities. The area has already witnessed the loss of millions of lives, prompting those who remain to view migration as an opportunity. The Middle East also implemented alterations in policies towards the Western nations and Israel through coercive means. Having applied normalisation to their political situation, the Middle East's subjugation by the West has been finalised. The sole opposition to the occupation originates from Gaza—the location where around 29,000 individuals, including women and children, were slain by the Israeli military. The conflict in Gaza represents the culmination of destabilisation in the region. Israel's unequivocal utilisation of force is severely eroding International Law and compromising the principles of global governance. Therefore, conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza prompt a reevaluation and establishment of new parameters for the international legal framework within the current global system. As the time of the chapter is written, more than a million Gazans are displaced and confined to Rafah, facing shortages of food, medical aid, and basic security.

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Conflict of interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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Chapter 5

Crisis Framing of Immigration Politics in United States Newspapers, 1980–2022

Allan Colbern, Shawn Walker, Katie Marie Glenn, Rockell Schmidt and Jaime Harrigan

Abstract

The United States (U.S.) news media is a critical actor in the deeply contested arena of immigration politics. Using an original dataset of 100,521 news articles that mention "crisis" alongside references to "(im)migration," "border," "(im)migrants," "refugees," and "asylum," this chapter identifies multiple crisis frames and their connections to U.S. immigration politics from 1980 to 2022. We combine Latent Dirichlet allocation (LDA) topic modeling, Social Network Analysis (SNA), corpus linguistics (collocates), and qualitative content analysis to scale and triangulate our analysis across the corpus, topic, and news article levels, allowing us to reveal prominent crisis frames and ground them in context. We show how Democrats and Republicans construct a series of crisis counter-frames that center partisan division in the news. We also find a bi-partisan construction of a migration crisis frame. We argue that this frame ascribed to migration reinforces the dehumanization and exclusion of different categories of (im)migrants. The news media's uncritical reporting of this bi-partisan migration crisis frame, we argue, further reinforces the absence of humanity and dignity in framing (im)migrants while legitimizing (by not scrutinizing) the U.S. migration regime's violence.

Keywords: crisis, framing, immigration, immigrants, American politics, political parties, media, newspapers, communication, United States

1. Introduction

In the run-up to the 2024 presidential election, former President Donald Trump referred to migrants as "poisoning the blood of our country" [1]. According to *The Hill*, "While Trump's rhetoric quickly drew condemnation from Democrats and the Biden campaign, the front-runner for the GOP presidential nomination in 2024 faced little resistance from members of his own party" [1]. Republican Senator Lindsey Graham argued that Trump's words were unimportant and emphasized focusing on the U.S.-Mexico border. When entering the presidential race in 2015, Trump built

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a campaign calling people crossing the border from Mexico rapists and criminals. Today, Trump promises to "carry out the largest domestic deportation operation in American History" if elected for a second term in office [1].

Words matter. They frame immigration and (im)migrants during critical moments in American electoral contests, policy debates, and events. This has significant implications for the (in)visibility of (im)migrants' humanity and dignity and legitimacy of the U.S. migration regime's violence. At the 2024 State of the Union address, President Joe Biden clarified that Republicans and Trump were not the only ones capable of dehumanizing immigrants for political gain. Biden called Jose Ibarra, a Venezuelan immigrant who entered the U.S. without authorization, an "illegal." Democratic Representative Nancy Pelosi responded, "Now he should have said 'undocumented,' but it's not a big thing" [2]. Biden's reference to illegals was made in response to Ibarra being arrested and charged for the murder of U.S. citizen Laken Hope Riley, who was killed while jogging in a park on the University of Georgia campus on February 22, 2024.

Trump and Biden's rhetoric illustrates a lack of humanity among both political parties' framing of immigration politics and their shared perception of a border crisis. In February 2024, Biden packaged a bi-partisan $20 billion border security proposal to hire 1500 new Customs and Border Protection agents, 4300 Asylum Officers, 100 immigration judges and staff, and to invest in immigrant detention centers and border technologies [3]. According to Time magazine, Trump is branding the "border crisis as his successor's failure," calling it "a Joe Biden invasion" [4]. Crisis framing of immigration and (de)humanizing references to immigrants have significant consequences for public opinion, voting behavior, and public policies. They also shape our understanding of the nation-state, citizenship, and who has the right to have rights.

This chapter offers the first comprehensive analysis of how the term *crisis* has been used to frame U.S. immigration politics from 1980 to 2022. We use an original dataset of 100,521 news articles querying "crisis" and references to "(im)migration," "border," "(im)migrants," "refugees," and "asylum." Combining Latent Dirichlet allocation (LDA) topic modeling (an unsupervised machine learning technique) and Social Network Analysis (SNA), we identify, visualize, and analyze term patterns across and within 100 distinct topics spanning the corpus. The chapter also explores two topics highly relevant to the border and immigration by combining qualitative content analysis, corpus linguistic analysis, sub-topic modeling, and SNA. This mixed-method approach allows us to reveal prominent patterns in crisis framing over the past four decades and their contexts. Our approach scales and triangulates analysis across corpus, topic, and news article levels by connecting linguistic and term patterns with detailed qualitative descriptions and explanations of how crisis frames are grounded in the events, policies, and key actors covered in the news.

Crisis framing in the U.S. media produces crucial understandings of immigration. We reveal how Democrats regularly advance a humanitarian crisis frame, health crisis frame, and legal and housing infrastructure crisis frames. This is directly countered by Republicans who advance a border crisis frame, immigration crisis frame, and American resources crisis frame. The chapter also reveals how both political parties co-construct a migration crisis frame, with immigrant rights organizations providing the only counter-frames. We unpack the implications this has for understanding the news media's role in recognizing (im)migrants' humanity and dignity and holding the U.S. accountable for global migration patterns and the violence it enacts on (im) migrants at the border and interior of the country.

2. Literature review

Scholars examining media and public opinion capture a highly politicized framing of immigration issues and immigrants. Harmful binaries (citizen/immigrant, refugee/migrant, legal/illegal) are overwhelmingly highlighted as prevailing frames in the media [5–10]. These binaries can explicitly frame immigrants as criminals and threatening, playing a critical role in framing immigration politics [7–9]. Alvord and Menjivar [5] highlight a range of language in the news that frame groups by examining the *Arizona Republic* before and after it ended its use of "illegal" immigrant(s). They show how news coverage was consistently negative in tone and applied anti-immigration rhetoric regardless of the term illegal being used. Papakyriakopoulos and Zuckerman [10] examine news articles covering President Trump from 2013 to 2019, highlighting the weaponization of references to immigration, Latin people, and identity politics. Moreover, through analyzing word embeddings, they show that the media adopted President Trump's negative and racializing terminology like "Mexicans" when covering immigration.

Crisis framing in the news is not only shaped by harmful binaries but also by the news source's proximity to migration and border dynamics. Looking at the European refugee crisis in 2016, Heidenreich et al. [11] find that media from countries geopolitically removed from the country-origin of the migrants are more likely to use a humanitarian crisis frame. By contrast, they show that media sources proximally near the country-origin of the migrants are more likely to construct a border crisis frame. Similarly, Greussing and Boomgarden [12] examine how the news portrays the European reception of 1.25 million refugees between 2015 and 2016, highlighting narratives of security threat and negative economic impact as the two most prominent frames, followed by humanitarianism and administrative capacity frames. Finally, Branton and Dunaway [13] examine immigration framing by combining content analysis, geographic information systems data, and contextual data to reveal that newspaper ownership and proximity to the U.S.–Mexico border shapes news framing of immigration and immigrants. They also show that the frequency of articles negatively framing immigrants and of news stories covering illegal immigration both increase the closer news sources are located to the US-Mexico border.

Framing immigration is not inconsequential. Scholars highlight framing as significantly affecting public opinion, agenda setting, and voting behavior. Merolla et al. [14] and Haynes et al. [8] highlight that when coupled together, equivalency frames (framing immigration as illegal or undocumented) and political issue frames have a strong causal effect on public opinion. They show how framing statements based on a policy or constitutional law, or children or adults, changes how individuals perceive immigration-based equivalency frames and whether they support or oppose a policy. Other scholars show how media framing operates within a broader context that links with political agenda-setting and voting behavior [15, 16]. Mathieu Couttenier et al. [17], for example, show that news coverage of crimes committed by immigrants is causally linked to the passage of a local Anti-Muslim ban in Switzerland. Similarly, Gilbert [18] highlights how local Canadian media framing of a Mexican refugee crisis influenced the Canadian government's visa policy by encoding Mexicans as illegal, criminals, and undeserving aliens.

The news media is selective, which results in issues, people, and problems being constructed as visible and invisible to the public [19, 20]. The media also frames what is visible through its coverage [21]. Communication scholars highlight the

power and influence of political actors and sources reporters rely on [22–24]. These power dynamics are shaped by journalists' professional norms of objectivity, which prevent them from intentionally diversifying their sources or expressly including sources that challenge powerful actors and perspectives in politics and society [23, 25]. Indeed, Robison [26] highlights the power held by political elites when they share views that are reported as shaping news coverage around a universal, unchallenged understanding of policies, events, and issues. This uncritical feature of journalism is exemplified by Bennet et al.'s [27] analysis of the media's coverage of Abu Ghraib. Despite having evidence of torture occurring, the media generally reported only the official U.S. government frame of "mistreatment" and "abuse" by low-level military personnel. The power dynamics behind the news media's coverage and framing shield nation-states and governments from being challenged, scrutinized or held accountable.

Social movement scholars emphasize a similar relationship. Gitlin [28] exposes how the media broadly applied a "law and order" frame of the 1960s and 1970s U.S. protests, emphasizing the violence of the protests against the Vietnam War. Protesters were framed as extremists. Gitlin highlights the media's shift over time to covering more violent protests and referring to protestors as communists and unpatriotic while simultaneously centering its coverage on right-wing opposition. Although the news media is regularly shown to entrench power relations and shield governments from criticism, it can become a critical asset to social movements, which Meyer and Tarrow [29] highlight in their concept of "social movement society." The media has repertoires of anti-authority frames that can critique the nation-state, law enforcement, and other authorities as responsible for injustices. Indeed, the institutionalization of popular protest is one indicator of consolidating the formation of new democracies [30].

Drawing on the interdisciplinary scholarship on framing, media, and immigration, this chapter reveals how Democrats and Republicans construct multiple counter-crisis frames that center partisan divisions in the news. We also reveal a bipartisan migration crisis frame, which we argue reinforces the dehumanization and exclusion of different categories of (im)migrants over time. Notably, the migration crisis frame opens up the possibility for the news to cover the U.S. migration regime's violence and injustices, including its foreign policy connections to migration patterns. We find that the news media offers little additional context or nuance to framing the migration crisis, confirming the interdisciplinary scholarship that highlights the media's complicity role in legitimizing the nation-state's monopoly over law, order, and violence.

3. Data collection and mixed-method approach

We analyzed 100,521 news articles from 1980 to 2022, collected by querying the ProQuest, NexusUni, and WorldBank news databases for:

> *crisis AND (asly* OR refugee* OR immigra* OR migra* OR border* OR ((illegal* OR criminal* OR undocumented OR unaccompanied OR irregular) NEAR/3 (famil* OR mother* OR child* OR bab* OR minor* OR resident* OR alien* OR student*)*

Figure 1 provides an overview of the number of news articles collected from each publication source. Our corpus includes four national news sources from the U.S.,

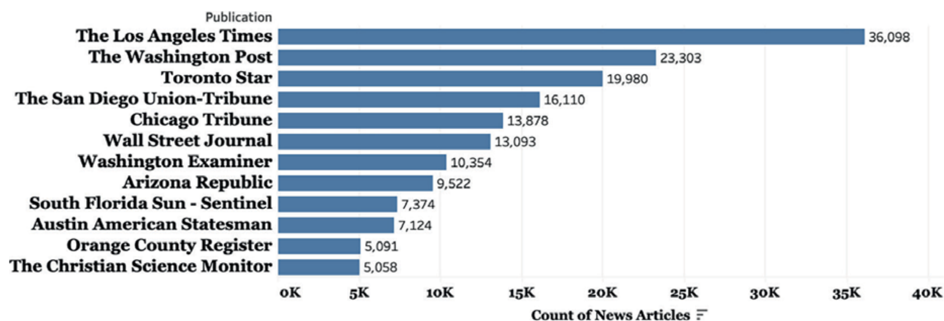

Figure 1.
Corpus count of news articles for each news source.

with one considered liberal/progressive (*Washington Post*), two considered moderate/centrist (*Wall Street Journal*; *The Christina Science Monitor*), and one considered conservative (*Washington Examiner*). We include one Canadian national news source considered liberal (*Toronto Star*) to capture crisis framing at the U.S.-Canadian border. Finally, we include eight regional/local news sources from salient U.S. states located on the U.S.-Canadian and U.S.-Mexico borders and who are the most policy active on immigration, varying from states like California and Illinois that have actively expanded the rights of undocumented immigrants and resisted federal immigration enforcement (e.g., enacting sanctuary policies), and states like Arizona, Texas, and Florida, who have passed the most restrictive laws on immigrant rights and to enforce federal immigration law. We selected state-level news sources that varied the most on a liberal/conservative scale to capture more crisis frames.

Our original dataset and approach to analyzing crisis framing of immigration contrasts much of the scholarship. Immigration framing is often explored through highly specific temporal and political contexts and frames, such as how Covid-19 constructed health crisis frames of the border and (im)migration [31, 32]. By contrast, we collected a large corpus of news articles that mention the term crisis while referencing immigration, the border, (im)migrants, refugees, or asylum seekers. Our corpus spans three decades of political context in the U.S. and covers international, national, state, and local levels. This allows us to examine crisis framing across numerous immigration contexts and periods.

To construct our corpus, we downloaded all news articles from the databases as HTML files. We processed them using a custom scraper in Python that extracted the metadata (author, title, outlet, and publication date) and full text. We then structured our data by running a Latent Dirichlet allocation (LDA) topic model, a natural language technique, to create 100 unique topics based on highly related terms and documents (news articles). LDA topic modeling leverages unsupervised machine learning and Bayesian statistics to group related documents in the corpus into unique topics. By comparing one topic's group of documents with the other 99 topics' documents, we provide a snapshot of prominent terms occurring across topics and their associated within-topic terms. Another crucial feature of the topic model is it assigns the relevant news articles from the corpus to each topic, allowing us to explore each topic's corpus. Our approach combines corpus, topic, and news article levels of analysis, allowing us to capture the dynamism and complexity of how and why crisis framing occurs around immigration, the border, and different reference groups for (im)migrants.

We used the topic model to clean the corpus iteratively. Since our analysis focuses on the U.S. context, we identified topic terms referencing foreign countries, including: *africa, arab, bosnian, delhi, eu, euro zone, europe, european, gaza, german, germany, gulf, hong kong, iran, iraq, iraqi, ireland, islamic state, israel, israeli, kim jong, korea, middle east, north korean, palestinian, persian gulf, russia, russian, saudi, south africa, soviet, sudan, tel. aviv, united arab, united kingdom, west bank, yasser, nato*. We excluded documents containing these terms and then ran the topic model with the filtered corpus, structuring our dataset and analysis to focus on the U.S. immigration and border context. We also applied the standard stop words list from the Python NLTK library to exclude terms like 'the', 'and', and 'I', because they offer no meaningful information to each topic. The LDA model can identify multiple topics within a single news article, and in these cases, the same news article is added to all corpora of relevant topics. This expanded the overall number of news articles because the 100 topics are composed of unique and duplicated news articles. **Figure 2** highlights the count of all news articles (166,986) across all 100 topics from 1980 to 2022, illustrating numerous peaks and lulls in crisis framing over time.

Our query required the presence of the term *crisis* in all news articles. This is methodologically important because LDA topic modeling offers an efficient and systematic approach to identifying multiple, prominent patterns in the terms surrounding *crisis*. Our topic model created 100 unique topics, each with 30 highly related terms. We leverage this to identify and unpack the many crisis frames and their contexts (un) explored in interdisciplinary scholarship.

The following sections analyze patterns at the corpus level and within individual topics to capture and explore crisis framing around the border, immigration, and immigrants. We examine the corpus level through social network analysis (SNA) to reveal term patterns through their frequency and co-occurrence across all topics. We then turn to the two most salient topics based on the presence of the following terms: *border(s), immigration, asylum, undocumented, immigrant(s), migrant(s),* and *refugee(s)*. Topics 9 and 72 were selected as the most relevant. We unpack these two topics through additional topic modeling, network analysis, and qualitative content analysis using MAXQDA to code for framing crisis in context, events, policies, and politics [33]. Our approach and methods are described more fully in the sections below.

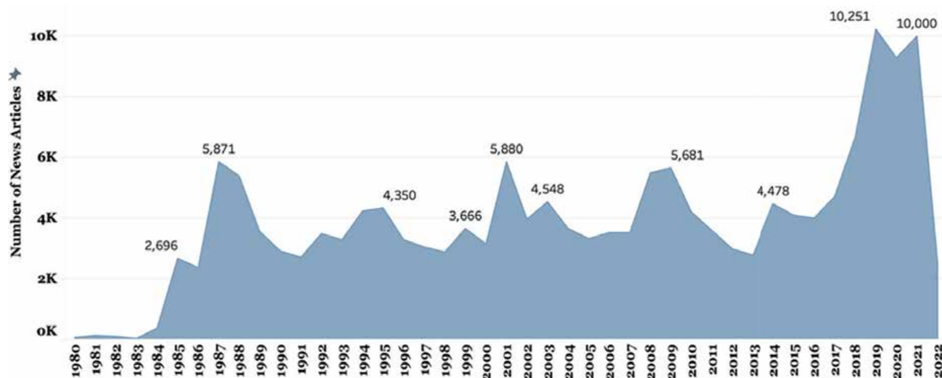

Figure 2.
100 topic's count of news articles.

4. Crisis framing at the corpus level of analysis

SNA allows us to explore crisis framing through the connections between each topic's 30 terms and across topics. We used Gephi's (an open-source network analysis and visualization software package) community detection algorithm [34, 35], which captured 30 unique communities composed of highly connected nodes and edges (shown in **Figure 3**). Each node (circle) represents a term in the topic model. An edge (line) between nodes occurs when two terms appear together in the same topic—the more times the two terms appear together, the higher the weight of that connection. We iterated this process through all topics. This allows us to explore the entire corpus of news articles for salient patterns in the language and topics that we can interpret as crisis frames. The clustering of terms and communities detected in Gephi's algorithm allows us to see how crisis framing occurs around immigration, the border, and various references to (im)migrants, including crisis framing around health care, Covid-19, the economy, education, housing, and more. It also allows us to contrast the location of framing, including whether they are located domestically in the U.S., at the U.S.-Mexico border, or internationally. SNA provides an essential snapshot of the crisis frames in the corpus and their relations to one another.

Our network contains 1296 nodes (terms) and 2753 edges (term co-occurrences). To provide a clear visual of the network, we applied Gephi's degree filter to show only

Figure 3.
Corpus level network (with degrees greater than 6).

the node names and edges with a degree (direct connections to other nodes) greater than 6. This allows us to highlight only the most prominent features of the network visually in **Figure 3**, which highlights 225 (17.36%) of the nodes by name and 915 (33.24%) edges.

The top left of **Figure 3**, colored in purple, is the “domestic crises” community (163 nodes; 12.65% of the network). This community references numerous terms that capture a range of domestic crises not directly connected to immigration or the border. Prominent features include employment and the economy, the postsecondary education system, public debt, and social welfare services, all referenced through the terms *new, city, million, work, public, home, day, family, old, community, help, school(s), services, residents, social, food, workers, university, parents, students, industry, job, homes, debt, college, education, agency, jobs, pay, welfare, domestic.* This community also features the terms *California*, *York* (likely referencing New York), *Chicago, states, district,* and *mayor*, which connect terms that highlight potential domestic crises to different impacted communities and jurisdictions. The domestic crises community includes 163 nodes, many with degrees less than 6, and are therefore not named in **Figure 3**. These hidden nodes expand the kinds of domestic crises that Gephi’s community detection algorithm identified by highlighting other jurisdictions (*Colorado*, *Chandler* (a city in Arizona)) and the terms *gangs*, *rape*, *domestic*, *corona, fauci*, *tent*, *homelessness*, and *smugglers*. Notably, *immigrant* and *Hispanic* (both with degrees = 2) are part of this community, signaling possible demographic references to the communities impacted by these domestic crises. Their small degree also highlights that these two groups are not likely centered in the news articles. By contrast, *family* (degree = 32), *parents* (degree = 8), and *students* (degree = 8) are prominent within the community.

Colored in green and located at the center-top of **Figure 3** is the “immigration crisis” community (140 nodes; 10.8% of the network), highlighting the federal government on multiple issues across international and national levels. The community captures crises at global and national levels through the terms *illegal*, *immigration,* and *refugee*. These connections are also revealed through the community’s nodes with a degree below 6, including the terms *immigrants, asylum,* and *citizenship*. Importantly, the community centers the responsibility on the U.S. federal government. This is represented by the terms *white, administration, Washington, government, world, federal, administration, Washington, international, province, Canada, nation,* and *country*. Although word relations offer a limited snapshot, they pick up essential patterns on the kinds of crises, their locations, and related actors.

Colored in red at the center of the network is a “border crisis” community (95 nodes, 7.33% of the network). Notably, this community has strong connections to the “immigration crisis” community but has distinctive features. Both communities emphasize the U.S. federal government, but the border crisis community features terms specific to American presidential and partisan politics. It also focuses on U.S. domestic politics, whereas the immigration crisis community emphasizes foreign countries and global migration. In the border community, the terms *violence*, *death*, and *camp* stand out as capturing news coverage of a crisis that asylum seekers face, including persecution in their home countries and violence they experience at the U.S.-Mexico border. U.S. sovereignty and militarized enforcement are also highlighted in the community through the terms *nations, patrol, coronavirus, Tijuana, wall, island, Haitian(s)*. Importantly, the community connects border crisis to partisan and electoral politics and public policy, through the terms *officials, president(ial), political, support, Clinton, policy, voters, republican, REP, democratic, republicans, committee, spending, senate, liberal,* and *agreement*.

The communities and word relations in **Figure 3**, span many historical periods, presidencies, and events. They offer a snapshot of the word patterns across the corpus of news articles covering these historical periods and the politics of immigration. Importantly, topic modeling and network analysis allows us to focus on the most relevant parts of the dataset. We identified 27 communities composed of nodes (terms) with very small degrees, represented by unnamed circles in **Figure 3**, that appear to have very little connection to immigration, the border, and (im)migrant communities—which we leave out of our analysis.

Gephi's community detection algorithm is only one way to structure our network analysis. In **Figure 4**, we take a different approach, using Gephi's ego filter to show only nodes representing the terms *border(s), immigration, asylum, undocumented, immigrant(s), migrant(s), refugee(s)*, *Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals* (*DACA*). Terms directly connected to these ego terms across the topic model are highlighted by name, and all others are hidden. Unlike **Figure 3**, the ego network in **Figure 4** shows all nodes and edges regardless of their degree, allowing us to identify all relevant co-occurring terms (74 nodes (5.71%); 108 edges (3.92%)). This reveals a more apparent connection between *crisis* and immigration, border, refugee, asylum, unaccompanied, and undocumented, among other essential terms for understanding crisis framing in immigration contexts. We also see small clusters appearing within the communities, including: (1) *migrants, agents* and *children* in the bottom right of the network;

Figure 4.
Corpus level ego-filtered network.

(2) *state*, *unaccompanied*, and *number* in the middle left of the network; (3) *unitedstates, disease*, *migrant*, *rwanda* and *yuma* in the middle right of the network. As we explained earlier, we leverage this approach to filter out irrelevant parts and focus our analysis on highly relevant parts of the corpus. The ego network captures 74 terms (out of 1296 total) as highly related and specific to immigration and (im)migrants.

5. Triangulating corpus, topic, and news article levels of analyses

This section unpacks crisis framing through a mixed-method approach that combines qualitative coding of news articles to capture the contexts and construction of crisis frames with analysis of a new topic-model-based network and linguistic analysis using word collocates. We selected two topics from the model most relevant to immigration, the border, (im)migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. Topics 9 and 72 had the highest number of statistically significant terms across all 100 topics, making them ideal cases for further analysis. We based our topic selection on the terms highlighted below. The score to the left of each term represents a statistical measure of the term's unique connection to the topic.

> *Topic 9 (30 terms): 0.040* "border" + 0.013* "migrants" + 0.012* "children" + 0.011* "immigration" + 0.011* "administration" + 0.009* "mexico" + 0.008* "asylum" + 0.007* "texas" + 0.007* "biden" + 0.007* "trump" + 0.007* "crisis" + 0.007* "security" + 0.006* "president" + 0.006* "officials" + 0.005* "patrol" + 0.005* "central" + 0.005* "families" + 0.004* "illegal" + 0.004* "migrant" + 0.004* "homeland" + 0.004* "unitedstates" + 0.004* "southern" + 0.004* "number" + 0.004* "unaccompanied" + 0.004* "department" + 0.004* "federal" + 0.004* "country" + 0.004* "policy" + 0.004* "customs" + 0.004* "house""*

> *Topic 72 (30 terms): 0.038* "immigration" + 0.023* "immigrants" + 0.017* "illegal" + 0.008* "country" + 0.008* "president" + 0.008* "legal" + 0.007* "undocumented" + 0.007* "unitedstates" + 0.006* "trump" + 0.006* "new" + 0.006* "border" + 0.006* "policy" + 0.006* "immigrant" + 0.005* "status" + 0.005* "law" + 0.005* "program" + 0.004* "government" + 0.004* "refugees" + 0.004* "work" + 0.004* "refugee" + 0.004* "citizenship" + 0.004* "workers" + 0.004* "million" + 0.004* "biden" + 0.004* "crisis" + 0.004* "congress" + 0.004* "federal" + 0.004* "administration" + 0.004* "enforcement" + 0.003* "reform"")*

Term associations in the two topics reveal a Southern border-located migration and security crisis, a federated partisan crisis over who can and should enforce federal immigration law at the Texas border, an immigration policy crisis over legalizing or removing immigrant residents without federal legal status, and a fraught partisan debate over a federal capacity crisis due defined by the inability to welcome or deport new migrants and refugees.

We begin our analysis of the two topics by qualitatively unpacking the contexts and histories of how crisis is framed. Topic 9 had 4200 news articles, and Topic 72 had 4118 news articles (see **Figures 5** and **6**). The two topics' corpora comprised 6837 unique news articles (and shared 1401 news articles). Using MAXQDA, we human coded random samples (20% per year) of the news articles of each topic from 2012 to 2022 (1012 out of the 5061).

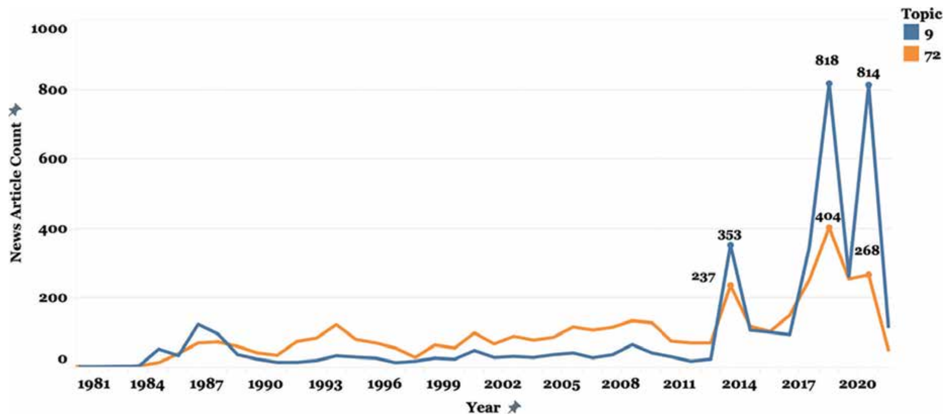

Figure 5.
Topics 9 and 72 news article corpus count over time.

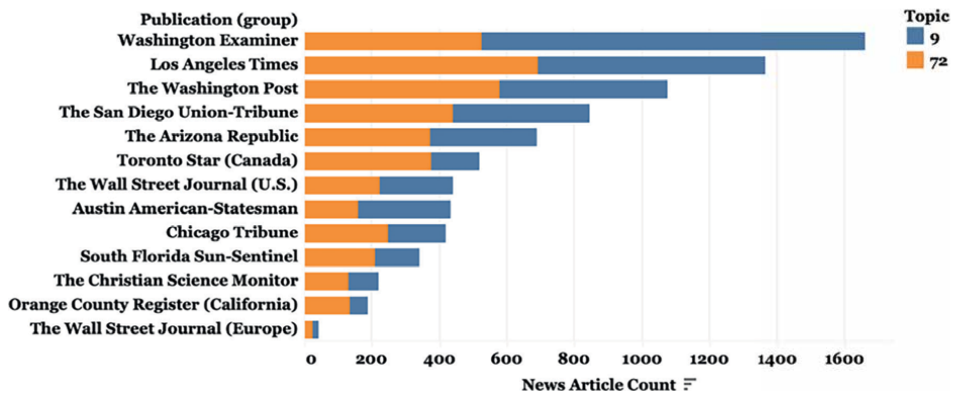

Figure 6.
Topics 9 and 72 news article corpus count by publication source.

6. Competing crisis framing

Our qualitative analysis reveals the development of competing crisis frames driven by partisan contexts. This is not surprising, as the Democratic and Republican parties have used immigration and the border as critical electoral wedge issues at the national, state, and local levels since the 1980s. Indeed, the most recent Gallup Poll in 2024 highlights immigration was viewed by the American public as the most critical issue leading up to the Presidential election [36]. All our qualitative descriptions of the history, politics, and policies in this section are grounded in the news articles we coded for Topics 9 and 72, allowing us to triangulate our SNA analysis from Section 5.

In 2014, President Barack Obama introduced a $3.7 billion emergency spending bill request to Congress to allocate funds to provide resources for shelters to house migrants temporarily, to increase security at the border, and to increase deportation proceedings. This bill quickly became a partisan issue. Senator Martin Heinrich of New Mexico, who led the Democratic effort, explained: “If we don’t pass [Obama’s] supplemental, we’re going to see this little stretch of the Rio Grande pull resources from elsewhere and undermine years of progress in effectively securing the border.”

He went on to explain, “Obstruction from Republicans is a serious threat to our border security. We need these resources to deal with the refugee crisis” [37].

Following Obama’s request, the Republican-controlled House of Representatives introduced a new immigration bill, H.R 5230, to reform the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection and Reauthorization Act of 2008 (an anti-trafficking law that provides legal protection to unaccompanied children) by severing protection access to unaccompanied minors from non-contiguous countries. U.S. Rep. Matt Salmon, author of the Republican measure, argued that the best solution is to give federal Customs and Border Patrol officers authority to immediately repatriate “children from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras” to their countries of origin rather than invest resources in the immigration courts to process asylum claims [38]. Republicans framed Obama’s spending request to support temporary shelters as a “blank check” and a problematic use of tax money to fix a situation the Democrats created: allowing unaccompanied minors to cross the border [39]. Republicans also framed the crisis as a “surge” at the border that resulted from the Obama Administration’s “weak” migration policies [40].

Obama’s proposed $3.7 billion emergency spending request sought to fund border security through the immigration court system’s infrastructure by placing much of the $1.6 billion to hire “immigration judges and holding facilities” while responding to the humanitarian crisis by directing “$1.8 billion to pay for caring for the kids while in custody” [41]. Each party seeks to control the narrative through crisis counter-framing, and these frames were woven into bi-partisan compromises by Democrats in 2014 in response to the rising numbers of migrant families and unaccompanied minors crossing the U.S.-Mexico border in search of asylum. Democrats primarily framed the events as a humanitarian crisis and focused on the lack of temporary shelters to house new migrants, especially unaccompanied minors, as the urgent political responsibility of the federal government [40]. A clear example of the humanitarian crisis frame is former Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley, who is covered in the Washington Post as saying that his state would respond by providing more shelters and calling on more lawmakers to be compassionate about sending minors back to the hostile and dangerous countries they fled [42].

Whereas Democrats sought to use the humanitarian crisis to negotiate a political compromise with Republicans, pro-immigrant rights organizations did not. They constructed the humanitarian frame at the same time as challenging the Republican framing of a “wave” of “unauthorized immigrants” crossing the border. Executive director of Alliance of San Diego, Andrea Guerrero said, “We need to respond to the humanitarian crisis with compassion and understanding, not with rejection and hate,” and stressed that this “is about real people whose lives are in danger.” Guerroro also argued, “This is not about politics or policy, and it would be irresponsible to turn people away without a full understanding of the dangers they face” [42]. As these crises developed, pro-immigrant activists emphasized the critical role of shelters in response to the humanitarian crisis. They also linked the humanitarian crisis to the need for a permanent solution through federal immigration reform centered on human rights. In 2015, in a Washington Post op-ed by Crystal Williams, executive director of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, used the term “family crisis” to refer to the “inhumane and abhorrent family-detention policies” [43]. The crisis was framed away from sheltering asylum seekers or humanitarianism to highlighting the unjust policies and practices rooted in the U.S. immigration system, which violated human rights and due process rights through family separations, detention, and deportation.

These crisis frames continued to evolve when President Trump took office in 2017. He was quoted in the news, claiming that "the border has now reached a point of crisis" and that the "lawlessness that continues at our southern border is fundamentally incompatible with the safety, security, and sovereignty of the American people," crisis frames that Trump leveraged politically to justify expanding the construction of a physical border wall. This same news article goes on to highlight Democratic California Governor Jerry Brown as sending 400 state guards to the border, complying with federal requests, and then responding to Trump, saying:

> *This will not be a mission to build a new wall… It will not be a mission to round up women and children or detain people escaping violence and seeking a better life. And the California National Guard will not be enforcing federal immigration laws. Here are the facts: There is no massive wave of migrants pouring into California.*

Los Angeles Times editors of this news article ended by highlighting that "sending the Guard to the border could cost federal taxpayers $400 million" and the fact that "most people living here without authorization didn't sneak in over the border, but came in legally and overstayed their visas" [44].

The shift from a Democratic to a Republican Presidency altered the landscape of crisis framing. Federal funding to shelters for asylum seekers was no longer possible, and federal efforts focused on closing the border entirely. This opened the door for Democrats to frame the crisis as systemic rather than humanitarian. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is covered in the news as comparing shelters to "concentration camps," saying that the shelters themselves are inhumane and symbolic of a broken immigration system [45]. A small number of progressive Democrats moved away from the use of a humanitarian crisis frame. They aligned their messaging with pro-immigrant advocacy organizations by focusing on systemic injustices as causing human crises experienced by families and children seeking asylum.

In 2020, the *Arizona Republic* op-ed by Jan Brewer, former governor of Arizona, highlights how Republicans at the national and state levels have framed the crisis very differently than Democrats and pro-immigrant activists. Brewer reflected on signing Arizona's SB 1070 in 2010, which created comprehensive state powers over immigration enforcement, including empowering state and local officials to target immigrants for removal, making it a state crime to fail to carry proof of lawful status, banning local sanctuary policies, and criminalizing the transporting of an undocumented person as harboring. Brewer describes the past crises as:

> *The challenge facing immigration legislation to balance public safety concerns with humanitarian responsibility is a difficult tension that our country still struggles with today. SB 1070 was in direct response to a real crisis. In 2010, the United States had lost operational control of the southwest border – that fact is what distinguishes today's discussions from the environment 10 years ago.*
>
> *In December 2008, the U.S. Justice Department said that Mexican gangs are the "biggest organized crime threat to the United States." In 2009, Phoenix had 316 kidnapping cases, turning the city into our nation's kidnapping capital. Almost all the persons kidnapped were illegal immigrants or linked to the drug trade. Narcotics prosecutions in Arizona had risen 202% in 16 months, and border apprehensions for Mexican nationals at the U.S.-Mexico border ranged from 800,639 in 2007 to 396,239 in 2010.*

Brewer justified SB 1070 by framing border control, immigration enforcement, and crime control as the defining crises for Arizona in 2010. Her reflection and justification for signing one of the most extreme state policies on immigration enforcement in modern history, to President Trump's extreme efforts to close the border, connected Arizona and the nation's crises as being the same. Brewer then coopted the Democratic framing of crisis, stating that there is a humanitarian crisis in "the dangerous way traffickers took advantage of vulnerable people (today, we call it human smuggling)," leveraging the term humanitarian to justify the need for stronger border and enforcement policies [46].

7. Partisan (dis)agreement in framing migration crisis

Our qualitative analysis reveals a crucial underlying context spread across the 2012–2022 news coverage where Democrats and Republicans generally agree and co-construct migration as a permanent crisis. This migration crisis frame spans events and policies because its origin is often assumed or implied to be external to U.S. policies, practices, and control. Very few news articles covered the U.S. federal government's foreign policy role in causing global or regional migration patterns. This lack of attention to the causes of migration has a significant impact because it constructs an uncritical view of the U.S.'s responsibility towards asylum seekers and refugees when framing crises. It also creates an image of migrants as threatening. Migration crisis frames are constructed explicitly and implicitly by the two political parties and across liberal and conservative news sources.

During President Obama's administration, the liberal *Washington Post* described the migration crisis as "More than 52,000 unaccompanied children and 39,000 women with children have been apprehended on the border this year, officials said, a large increase over previous years. The surge, mostly from Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, has caught the administration off guard and spurred Obama to order a multi-agency response to the crisis" [40]. This implicit construction of the migration crisis frame is a hallmark of the Democratic Party's position and liberal news coverage, which uncritically and regularly refer to large numbers of migrants seeking asylum as a crisis. Rather than unpacking the legitimacy of their asylum claims or the lack of U.S. infrastructure to welcome and receive asylum seekers, the news article contextualized the migration crisis by focusing on the Obama administration's emergency response to the influx of migrants.

The conservative *Washington Examiner* similarly described the migration crisis as a "flood of unaccompanied minors illegally crossing the border," with "more than 52,000 unaccompanied children ... apprehended at the South Texas border alone" [47]. The primary difference between the liberal and conservative news sources' framing is their connection to partisan politics. The *Washington Post* emphasized the Obama administration's efforts to respond to the intake of unaccompanied minors balanced with enforcing the border. The *Washington Times*, by contrast, links Obama as causing the migration crisis and border crisis, stating: the "2012 declaration that his administration would defer, virtually automatically, deportation of minors unlawfully present in the U.S." [47]. Here, the migration crisis is explicitly constructed as a looming, permanent threat to the U.S., justifying more robust deterrence policies, border enforcement, and signaling to all migrants that they are unwelcome. Asylum is delegitimatized under this explicit, conservative construction of migration as a crisis.

8. Crisis framing around Covid-19 and title 42

The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 changed the discourse on immigration. Welfare benefits, worker protection, visa suspensions, and Title 42 were at the front of the news coverage. The federal government passed the CARES Act (March 27th, 2020) and HEROES Act (May 15th, 2020) to relieve American citizens from the economic and health impact of the pandemic. Both relief packages excluded undocumented immigrants. Many immigrants considered essential workers in the U.S. who were on H-1b or J-1 Visas faced additional worry as the State Department announced the cancelation of visa renewals and incoming students were required to put their studies on hold. Responding to these federal exclusions of immigrants, states and local jurisdictions stepped up and took legal recourse to seek federal resources for immigrant residents. In California, the community colleges led a lawsuit against the federal government for discriminating against several categories of students, including undocumented and DACA students. Democratic Governor Gavin Newsom created a $125-million relief fund for undocumented workers in the state. Covid-19 created new contexts for crisis framing. Democrats framed the crisis as an exclusion of essential workers and healthcare providers on the frontlines of the pandemic, highlighting immigrant residents as the most impacted but least supported. Meanwhile, Republicans justified exclusions through a resourced-based "America-first" crisis framing.

Notably, President Trump leveraged Covid-19 to usher in a complete closure of the border and asylum system by implementing Title 42, a 1944 law that allows the federal government to prevent any form of migration across the border to protect the general public's health. The Trump administration and Republicans framed the migration crisis under Covid-19 as a "danger to the public health" that necessitates closing the border. While Democrats framed domestic concerns relating to immigrants' access to relief funds and student visas in a way that countered Republicans' exclusionary frames over resources, the two parties aligned on the public health crisis framing of the border. Despite a transition from Republican to Democratic leadership, early in 2021, President Biden continued to uphold Trump's policies out of concern about "the spreading delta variant and fast-rising numbers of illegal border crossings," which prevented him from ending Title 42. The American Civil Liberties Union sought action through the federal court system to legally force the Biden administration to end its border closure and re-open access to asylum [48].

The *Washington Post* described the Biden administration's opposition to explicitly calling "the situation at the border a crisis." The article goes on to describe the balancing act of the Democratic Party and leadership, explaining how they justified waiting to end Title 42 because of "new pressure on the administration" by "authorities" about there being an "overcrowding crisis inside Border Patrol stations and holding facilities." The article goes on to cite "more than 1 million apprehensions at the southwest border" as of June 2021 and the possibility of "210,000 more individuals" in July alone, which would make that month "the highest monthly encounter number since Fiscal Year 2000" [48]. As in periods before the pandemic, in 2020, while Democrats generally opposed the border crisis frame, they were complicit with Republicans in constructing a harmful migration crisis frame. President Biden demonstrates this in his promise to "reverse the Trump administration's 'inhumane' border policies," but resistance to doing so because of "the spike in crossings and the spread of the disease" [48]. Democrats even questioned President Biden's decision to end Title 42 in 2022, just before the midterm elections, and Republicans called this decision "frightening" [49].

9. Corpus analysis of topics 9 and 72

To triangulate our qualitative content analysis, we used AntConc (version 4.2.4) to conduct a linguistics analysis of Topics 9 and 72's corpora, identifying the most frequent and unique terms near the term *crisis* [50]. **Table 1** highlights collocates within 5 terms to the left and right of the term *crisis*. The term *border* is the most frequent and appears near *crisis* 2748 times across the 8318 news articles across the two topics. The term *humanitarian* is the second most frequent and appears near *crisis* 1163 times. Notably, the humanitarian collocate for crisis has a stronger statistical likelihood and effect than the border collocate for crisis, meaning its relationship is more unique.

Border and humanitarian far exceed the frequency of all other collocates for crisis. Other notable collocates connect to the contexts we uncovered in our qualitative content analysis. President Biden, or the term *biden*, is the sixth-most frequent collocate of crisis, highlighting how Republicans and conservative news sources have engrained partisan politics into crisis framing. We also see other conservative frames through the terms—*immigration*, *economic*, *security*, and *national*—that are often placed near the term *crisis*, likely as leverage for border and immigration enforcement policies. More progressive frames also appear, including *health*, *refugee*, *housing*, *migrant*, and *constitutional,* which likely combine with crisis to center the human experienced crises that asylum seekers face and the constitutional issues these crises raise.

Collocate	Frequency 5 words left/right of "Crisis"	Likelihood	Effect
border	2748	3456.072	1.969
humanitarian	1163	5316.031	4.642
immigration	677	91.729	0.564
economic	469	1015.824	2.787
security	337	143.491	1.053
biden	312	141.712	1.092
health	281	209.978	1.452
national	268	183.716	1.381
refugee	266	416.605	2.267
housing	223	283.75	1.995
migrant	183	138.301	1.462
migration	122	83.312	1.379
coronavirus	104	119.566	1.876
immigrants	97	100.788	−1.256
manufactured	77	361.848	4.742
opioid	73	278.092	4.083
global	73	142.404	2.607
climate	69	102.133	2.19
constitutional	67	137.303	2.691

Table 1.
Crisis collocate analysis of topics 9 and 72 corpus.

Figure 7 highlights corpus-level patterns in Topics 9 and 72 through additional topic modeling and network analysis. We ran LDA topic models on each topic's corpus. This allowed us to produce 20 sub-topics for each topic (40 sub-topics total) containing 30 highly related terms. We used Gephi's community detection algorithm to capture 9 unique communities composed of highly connected nodes and edges (shown in **Figure 3**). Each node (circle) represents a term in the sub-topics. An edge (line) between nodes occurs when two terms appear together in the same sub-topic—the more times the two terms appear together, the higher the weight of that connection. Producing sub-topics and running Gephi's communities' detection algorithm allows us to triangulate the qualitative and linguistic analysis of crisis frames' strong connections to partisan politics. As with our linguistic approach via collocates above, our topic model and network scale our analysis to the corpus level, providing a snapshot of patterns in the terms and term relations for topics 9 and 72.

We only show parts of the network highly relevant to our qualitative and collocate analysis of Topics 9 and 72. Reviewing all terms in the sub-topic network, we created a list of highly related terms connected to political contexts revealed in our qualitative section on crisis framing: *border*, *title*, *flores*, *custody*, *court*, *claims*, *judge(s)*, *detention*, *shelter(s)*, *unaccompanied*, *minors*, *children*, *child*, *families*, *refugee(s)*, and *seekers.* This triangulation between the corpus, sub-topic, and news article levels, allows us to

Figure 7.
Sub-topic network.

infer stronger connections between term patterns, frames, and context. We applied Gephi's ego filter (at 1 depth) to show only parts of the network connecting directly to these terms. **Figure 7** above highlights 105 nodes (30%) and 269 edges (27.09%) of the network (from a total of 350 nodes/993 edges). The ego network's composition reveals how patterns from our MAXQDA qualitative content analysis of 1012 news articles (20%) from 2014 to 2022 strongly reflect the LDA model's 40 sub-topics.

At the center of the sub-topic ego network colored in red, the "crisis" community features the terms *crisis* and *new* together with *million*, *trump*, *policy*, *percent*, *court*, *families*, *democrats*, and *unaccompanied*—all pointing to the migration crisis frame we describe in our qualitative analysis. *The migration* crisis is a powerfully accepted and co-constructed frame of the political parties. Both Democrats and Republicans regularly stress the number of people crossing the border or residing in the U.S. without authorization. This invokes concerns over national sovereignty and security, the economy, and institutional and resource-based infrastructures. It also fuels concerns over the demographic makeup of American society. Our qualitative analysis reveals how Republicans weaponized the migration crisis frame by linking it to the border crisis and pro-enforcement and anti-immigrant frames. Democrats, by contrast, packaged the migration crisis frame with calls for a compromised approach built on short-term humanitarian aid, investing in the legal infrastructure to process asylum claims, and investing in border enforcement.

A migration crisis is often framed in the background of news articles as a generally accepted fact. Neither political party counters the migration crisis frame directly, revealing how crisis framing legitimizes the nation-state's monopoly over law, order, and violence. The U.S.'s deadly border and harsh, violent immigration enforcement are normatively legitimated as a necessary response to unwanted (im)migrants and global migration. Exceptions emerge primarily through immigrant rights organizations covered in the news that frame crises as global and national systemic injustices or center (im)migrants via human crisis frames. Still, the overwhelming focus of the news coverage is on political party leaders and actors rather than advocacy organizations.

The "border" community is in the mid-lower left side of the network, which is colored purple and includes the terms *border, immigrants, migrants, administration, children, minors, shelter, homeless, medical, bus,* and *flores*. These context terms were captured in our qualitative content analysis as key arguments, policies, and budget concerns of Democratic leaders. They also underpinned Democrats' framing of the flow of migrants seeking asylum as a humanitarian crisis, even though the migration crisis frame loomed in the background. In 1997, the US District Court established the Flores Settlement Agreement (a term in the network's "border" community), providing several protections for minors who are detained in the custody of the federal government. These include requiring facilities to meet specific health and safety standards and mandates that minors be released "without unnecessary delay" to a sponsor or a state-licensed facility. The Trump administration challenged Flores, raising the attention in the news to cover the detention of minors (including those who were unaccompanied) and the issue of family separation. Although much of the "border" community appears to capture the issues and contexts that Democrats used to frame crises, the term *border* strongly connects to the "crisis" community highlighted above as capturing the migration crisis framing context.

Just to the right of and below the "border" community is a smaller "health" community colored in dark green, which includes the terms *health*, *employees, care, detention, title,* and *shelters.* This small community highlights the health concerns

Democrats and immigrant rights organizations raised about shelters and detention centers. It also highlights how the pandemic and Title 42 intersect and open additional health concerns, especially for migrants facing high risks of Covid-19 infection in detention centers. This community also captures debates over immigrant healthcare workers on the frontlines of the pandemic yet excluded from federal safety net programs and resources. Finally, in the upper left of the network, colored in a lighter shade of green, is the "immigration" community that features the terms *federal, president, officials, department, state,* and *enforcement*. As we highlight in our qualitative analysis, these key actors and institutions provide a crucial context and source of the crisis frames.

10. Conclusion

This chapter reveals how the term *crisis* is a defining frame and feature of U.S. immigration politics from 1980 to 2022. Our original dataset of 100,521 news articles allows us to connect crisis framing to various contexts and references to (im)migration, the U.S.-Mexico border, (im)migrants, refugees, and asylum. Combining LDA topic modeling and SNA, we identify, visualize, and analyze term patterns across and within 100 distinct topics in the corpus. We then use our model to identify and unpack the most relevant 2 topics featuring border and immigration, where we combine qualitative content analysis, corpus linguistic analysis, sub-topic modeling, and SNA.

Our findings reveal that the media plays a central role in immigration politics via crisis framing. Drawing on the interdisciplinary scholarship on framing, media, and immigration, we show how Democrats and Republicans construct counter-crisis frames around humanitarian aid, access to healthcare and legal representation, housing and shelter infrastructure, border and immigration enforcement, and competition over American public resources. We show how these crisis counter-frames center partisan division in the news on (im)migration. We also find a bi-partisan construction of a migration crisis frame, which we argue reinforces the dehumanization and exclusion of different categories of (im)migrants over time. The news media's uncritical reporting, we argue, reinforces the absence of humanity and dignity in framing (im)migrants. Notably, the migration crisis opens up the possibility for the news to cover the U.S. migration regime's violence and injustices, including its foreign policy connections to migration patterns. However, the news coverage offered little additional context or nuance to the bi-partisan framing of the migration crisis, confirming the interdisciplinary scholarship highlighting the media's complicity in legitimizing the nation-state's monopoly over law, order, and violence.

The news' professional ethic of reporting information has prevented it from becoming more active in exposing unjust features of contemporary immigration regimes or centering the immigrant experiences. We show that immigrant rights organizations provide the primary source of counter-framing that focuses on systematic injustices and centers the humanity of all immigrants. The media's overwhelming attention to partisan officials and partisan politics on the border and immigration prevents these sources and counter-frames from being more visible.

The chapter's findings help situate contemporary moments into a longer history. The 2024 U.S. presidential race features language from the Democratic and Republican candidates that dehumanize and criminalize immigrants in the name of partisan and immigration politics. Our chapter reveals how this has been the norm

rather than the exception to framing immigrants for decades. The chapter focused on the national level, but the politicization of immigration and immigrants is not exclusive to the national level. Colbern and Ramakrishnan reveal how immigration politics spans all levels of government (national, state, and local) and stretches throughout American history [51–53]. Methodologically, this chapter provides a foundation for future scholarship to situate the media and examine framing as a vital component of the contentious multi-level and historical developments of immigration federalism [54].

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Chapter 6

Immigrant Ethnic Enclaves: Causes and Consequences

Tao Song and Mate Szurop

Abstract

This chapter delves into the enduring and expanding presence of immigrant ethnic enclaves in the contemporary world. It examines their distinctive implications for both immigrants and natives within the labor market through a comprehensive survey of the existing literature in the social sciences, with a focus on research in economics. This chapter first introduces the theoretical framework to elucidate the formation and repercussions of these enclaves. Subsequently, empirical evidence is presented, shedding light on the labor market ramifications encompassing immigrants' earnings, employment outcomes, and the socio-economic assimilation of second-generation immigrants. Furthermore, the chapter explores the influence of natives' residential decisions when confronted with the emergence of immigrant ethnic enclaves, revealing how these choices may reinforce the enclaves and their effects.

Keywords: immigrants, ethnic enclaves, assimilation, segregation, labor market

1. Introduction

An ethnic enclave is characterized by a geographically concentrated area where the population density of a particular ethnic group significantly surpasses that of other groups, along with their proportional representation in the broader society [1]. A distinctive category of ethnic enclaves emerges as a result of immigration patterns in countries that receive immigrants (also known as host countries), such as the United States. The formation of these enclaves tends to occur organically, influenced by the location of their port of arrival; examples include Cuban migrants in Florida [2] and Portuguese migrants in New England [3]; subsequently, the challenges in interactions between members and non-members of ethnic groups, mainly due to differences in immigrants' language, culture, or socio-economic backgrounds, serve to further reinforce the development of these enclaves. Conversely, intentional policies may also lead to a deliberate formation, as host countries strategically settle immigrants from specific countries upon arrival [4, 5], and the same barriers of interaction reinforce these enclaves as well.

Scholars have long been studying the consequences of these immigrant ethnic enclaves on both the immigrants themselves and on the native-born in host countries [6, 7]. In particular, social scientists with an interest in comprehending the socio-economic assimilation processes of immigrants have focused on using ethnic enclaves as an instrument of analysis [8–10]. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the

social and economic repercussions of immigrant ethnic enclaves, this chapter surveys the contemporary literature in social sciences, with a focus on economic research. It examines the causes of ethnic enclaves, seeks to understand the diverse motivations behind the residential segregation of immigrants, and explores the mechanisms driving the formation, persistence, and consequences of these enclaves.

This chapter starts with a discussion of the significance of ethnic enclaves, focusing on the motivations behind the ethnic enclave formation. Following that, an investigation into the various ways by which immigrants contribute to the formation of ethnic enclaves. This chapter then explores the theoretical and empirical connection between ethnic enclaves and the monetary and non-monetary outcomes of immigrants. Additionally, we examine how residing in ethnic enclaves might influence second-generation immigrants. Lastly, this chapter reviews how immigrant enclaves could affect the native-born.

2. Significance of ethnic enclaves for immigrants

There are many reasons why scholars might be interested in understanding how ethnic enclaves could affect immigrants themselves as well as the native-born community in host countries. In the last 50 years, the immigrant population has not only witnessed a substantial rise but has also become more diverse in terms of ethnic groups and the countries they choose as their destinations. While the United States continues to be the largest recipient of immigrants, there has been a noticeable surge in immigrant populations in other European nations like Norway, Sweden, and Germany [11]. Concurrently, while the populations of Latin American and Mexican migrants have somewhat leveled off, host countries have experienced a significant upswing in Muslim migrants, likely attributable to the escalation of refugee numbers prompted by political instability and conflicts [11]. As immigrants typically reside within communities of their peers and establish ethnic enclaves, these notable shifts in immigration patterns not only offer valuable empirical tools for scholars to investigate the reasons and consequences of ethnic enclaves for both immigrants and the native population but also underscore the importance of informing policy discussions related to immigrants. Furthermore, examining how immigrants engage within their ethnic communities and across different ethnic groups helps in understanding effective ways to facilitate immigrant assimilation and foster mutual understanding and appreciation of differences.

In order to tackle these questions, some research has found an increase in ethnic segregation in the United States, such as the Hispanic and Asian populations [12]. In other countries, residential segregation varies depending on geographic areas, ethnic groups, and immigration waves [13–15]. These varying trends of immigration suggest a rather complex picture of ethnic enclaves' realities in the world. Therefore, this section starts with theories of ethnic enclaves on immigrants and assimilation.

2.1 Theories of ethnic enclaves formation

After examining historical and empirical evidence, scholars have constructed a framework explaining the development of ethnic enclaves. Essentially, these studies, primarily relying on case studies and interviews, indicate that the establishment of an ethnic enclave through immigration typically necessitates fulfilling three conditions: a significant pre-existing immigrant population, access to sources of capital, and availability of labor sources, with the first prerequisite being the most crucial [16].

First, there are various reasons that could induce an initial significant immigrant population of certain ethnic groups. Examples include approximately 50,000 Jewish immigrants of German origin arriving in Manhattan between 1840 and 1870 due to war, approximately 125,000 Cuban immigrants arriving in Southeast Florida in the 1980s due to political instability in the origin country, and approximately 150,000 Japanese immigrants arriving in the West Coast for economic incentives. Irrespective of the reason for the initial arrival of immigrants, the significance of having a substantial immigrant population from a specific country of origin extends beyond the creation of a strong workforce; it also entails bringing valuable knowledge about operating businesses in the host country [17]. With an understanding of "buying and selling," ethnic groups can initiate small businesses tailored exclusively to co-ethnic clientele. Over time, as capital accumulates, these enterprises expand and diversify. What distinguishes these businesses and fosters the development of ethnic enclaves is their reliance on a level of informal reciprocity in both intra- and inter-business operations, rooted in a collective solidarity that goes beyond the basic contractual obligations of non-ethnic-specific businesses [18].

For instance, consider a scenario where a Japanese immigrant in California secures a loan to establish or expand their business. There's an implicit expectation that the recipient will contribute to the rotating credit when feasible. A failure to adhere to this expectation could lead to being cut off from the sources of funding and co-ethnic patronage, which are crucial for future business success.

In addition to accessing ethnic group-specific capital accumulation, the employer-employee relationship in ethnic-specific enterprises transcends a mere contractual bond, resembling a more paternalistic connection. Beyond providing wages, employers often take on a parental role, offering assistance to co-ethnic employees in training, promotion, transitioning to self-employment, and providing support in emergencies [16]. Employees, in turn, may be called upon to assist with the employer's family matters, such as babysitting or helping with moving. These three crucial conditions—existing host country knowledge, ethnic-specific capital accumulation, and ethnic-specific labor availability, distinctive to the internal dynamics of ethnic businesses—are the driving forces behind the eventual establishment and fortification of ethnic enclaves.

Secondly, enclave businesses tend to be geographically concentrated to cater to specific ethnic groups. This is because they are created in part to facilitate the exchange of information on credit and capital and provide access to co-ethnic labor supplies better suited for ethnic-specific goods, such as food and education [16].

In addition to these conditions within ethnic-specific businesses, the distinctive relationships between these businesses and established native ones also contribute to the reinforcement of ethnic enclaves. First, while ethnic-specific businesses are occasionally engaged as subcontractors in activities like construction or garment production [19], they frequently engage in direct competition with native enterprises. This means that businesses operated by groups such as Japanese, Cuban, or Jewish, for example, prioritize their own business interests rather than complementing native businesses [16]. Consequently, their willingness to assimilate into native economies beyond competition is limited.

Due to these distinctive features of ethnic businesses, ethnic enclaves may emerge from ethnic neighborhoods by fostering a welcoming environment where new immigrants can lead their lives entirely within the community. This is possible not only because they can tap into local labor market opportunities [16] but also because they can enjoy non-monetary benefits such as ethnic cuisine, linguistic convenience, easy

access to religious institutions, and entertainment [20]. Once immigrants can live and thrive within the confines of a community without the necessity for cultural assimilation into the native communities of the host country, the ethnic enclaves will become stable and self-reinforcing.

2.2 Theories of immigrant economic assimilation

Assimilation refers to the gradual erosion of ethnic or racial distinctions at the group level. On an individual level, it entails transformative changes for members of a minority, reducing social and economic gaps between them and the broader society. This process enables individuals to effectively integrate and thrive within the mainstream societal framework [21]. Classical assimilation theories originated from the observation of various ethnic groups and neighborhoods, revealing that immigrants initially exhibit characteristics distinct from those of the native-born population in the host country. However, as immigrants spend more time in the country, they progressively align culturally and economically with the native population [22]. Subsequent research, upon observing the varying assimilation patterns of immigrants from diverse backgrounds in the host economy, proposes an alternative assimilation theory. This new perspective acknowledges a multitude of factors influencing immigrants' assimilation, including discrimination, prejudice, and segregation. Consequently, immigrants from various backgrounds may undergo upward, downward, or unchanged assimilation tendencies over time, leading to segmented assimilation among immigrant groups [23].

It is no surprise that following the segmented assimilation theory, immigrants could economically assimilate at various speeds depending on the availability of ethnic enclaves in the host country and whether they live in ethnic enclaves. On one hand, ethnic enclaves could provide job market advantages that help immigrants economically assimilate into the host country. First, there could be higher returns to ethnic-specific human capital skills such as ethnic language and ethnic-specific cultural knowledge. These skills are more marketable in ethnic enclaves because, for example, fluency in Spanish increases marginal productivity and wages of employees working in businesses in Cuban enclaves as they predominantly cater to Cuban customers. The same linguistic skill, however, would not increase marginal productivity by the same magnitude outside of ethnic enclaves as businesses would be more likely to cater to a wider range of customers [8, 24]. Second, ethnic peers might have better information about job vacancies, the establishment of ethnic businesses, sources of loans, or potential good matches between prospective workers and employers [25, 26]. Lastly, accomplished co-ethnics can also help less skilled enclave members improve their marginal productivity through knowledge and experience sharing [27, 28] and promote better work ethics [29–31].

On the other hand, many theories arguing immigrants who live in ethnic enclaves might experience a slower economic assimilation. To begin, ethnic enclaves may impede the acquisition of skills in the host country. Immigrants residing in such enclaves tend to have limited interactions with native populations, leading to reduced motivation to acquire essential host country social skills, including language proficiency and knowledge of social norms and laws. This lack of skill acquisition could, in turn, hinder the chances of securing better employment opportunities or higher earnings [32]. Social networks within enclaves might also convey information that is not conducive to success in the labor market. For instance, being surrounded by individuals who speak the same language has been linked to increased welfare usage

among those from high welfare-utilizing groups [33], and the uptake of public programs like Medicaid is closely correlated within specific race/ethnicity groups and neighborhoods [34]. Such behaviors could potentially lead to a higher probability of unemployment and lower marginal productivity.

Moreover, historical housing discrimination, as proposed by the spatial mismatch hypothesis [35, 36], may compel minorities into ethnic enclaves, creating additional barriers to their success in the labor market. Studies show that extended and costly commutes to areas with better job prospects significantly hinder inner-city minorities, leading to higher unemployment rates and lower wages. Given that immigrants often settle in urban neighborhoods and are susceptible to this impact, it is unsurprising that immigrants in ethnic enclaves face a greater likelihood of unemployment and lengthier commutes compared to those outside such enclaves [37].

In summary, the theoretical consensus remains inconclusive regarding whether ethnic enclaves contribute to or impede the economic assimilation of immigrants. Crucially, the influence of ethnic enclaves on immigrant assimilation is contingent upon various factors, including the characteristics of the immigrants, the nature of the ethnic enclaves, and the societal perception of the specific ethnic group. Consequently, the necessity of empirical evidence becomes apparent to comprehensively grasp the impact of ethnic enclaves and to formulate informed policies that foster both the economic success of immigrants and social cohesion.

3. Empirical evidence on consequences of ethnic enclaves

In this section, we offer a comprehensive examination of contemporary economic and sociological empirical literature delving into the consequences linked with immigrant ethnic enclaves. These inquiries utilize independently collected data across various countries' labor market outcomes, encompassing factors like nationality, place of residence, wages, and employment status. Employing diverse empirical methodologies, particularly through econometric regressions, these studies aim to unravel the correlation and causation connections between immigrant ethnic enclaves and the varied outcomes affecting immigrants, their descendants, and native populations.

3.1 Consequences of immigrants

Among the extensively researched aspects of ethnic enclaves, a prominent focus lies in examining how residency in such enclaves influences the labor market outcomes of immigrants. The popularity of this research theme is unsurprising, given the innate tendency of immigrants to settle among those who share similar ethnic characteristics. The significance of investigating the correlation and causation between enclave residency and labor market success is underscored by its pivotal role in shaping not only the individual achievements of immigrants but also in informing public attitudes that, in turn, can influence policy formulations.

3.1.1 Identification challenges

Assessing the impact of ethnic enclaves on immigrants' labor market outcomes encounters two principal challenges. First, the absence of clearly defined boundaries for ethnic enclaves, coupled with the possibility of immigrants living and working in different regions, complicates the task of delineating these enclaves. In practice,

scholars typically adopt one of two defining criteria to explore this impact. The first criterion focuses on immigrants engaged in businesses owned by individuals of the same ethnic background [38]. Alternatively, the second criterion examines the influence on wages and employment patterns for immigrants residing in areas characterized by a high concentration of co-ethnics, as exemplified in [27, 39, 40], among others. Notably, the latter methodology has gained prevalence in contemporary research, primarily due to better data accessibility. Additionally, certain studies posit that the enclave effect is more discernible when enclaves are defined based on the place of residence, as evidenced by the author in [41], lending further credence to this approach.

The second challenge in assessing the labor market impact of ethnic enclaves involves the "sorting" problem. This issue arises because whether certain immigrants reside in ethnic enclaves is influenced by various characteristics of theirs that also play a role in shaping their labor market outcomes. For instance, those with less desirable labor market skills could potentially "sort" into ethnic enclaves due to difficulties integrating into the host society [36, 42]. Conversely, individuals with higher education levels, who are more likely to migrate in response to economic incentives, might be motivated to move out of ethnic enclaves to access a broader range of employment opportunities [43]. As a result, a naïve empirical analysis that uncovers a negative relationship between the size of ethnic enclaves and the average wages of immigrants residing in those enclaves may not establish a causal link. It is, therefore, crucial to consider the complex interplay of factors contributing to immigrants' decisions to live in ethnic enclaves and how these decisions impact their labor market outcomes.

3.1.2 The causal link between ethnic enclave size and labor market outcomes

One potential method to address the sorting problem is by adopting an instrumental variable approach. Using rainfall of the origin community to instrument the network size, one study [44] finds that Mexican immigrants with larger network sizes in the host country have better labor market outcomes, suggesting a positive network effect. This means that although the average labor market outcomes of these Mexican immigrants residing in enclaves are lower than those who do not reside in enclaves, their outcomes would have become worse should they reside outside of enclaves.

Due to limitations on ideal instrumental variables, an alternative, and perhaps better, approach to addressing the sorting problem may involve adopting a quasi-experiment. In this scenario, immigrants could be randomly distributed across different regions and neighborhoods, with limited choice in the host country. The objective would be to study the net changes in wages and employment between immigrants residing in co-ethnic-dense areas and those who do not have such density in their living environment. This method aims to minimize the impact of self-selection and provide a more robust evaluation of the influence of ethnic enclaves on labor market outcomes.

Over time, numerous Western countries, including Sweden, have implemented refugee placement policies that facilitate quasi-experimental identification. Prior to 1985, refugees arriving in Sweden had the autonomy to choose their settlement neighborhoods, resulting in an uneven spatial distribution and the emergence of ethnic enclaves. However, between 1985 and 1991, the Swedish government, primarily constrained by housing availability, instituted a placement policy. Under this policy, incoming refugees were exogenously assigned to neighborhoods, leading families to randomly reside either inside or outside of enclaves.

Pioneering this quasi-experiment approach, one study leveraged this variation to investigate the impact of ethnic enclaves on immigrants' labor market outcomes [27]. Their findings validated the hypothesis that, when accounting for self-selection factors, ethnic enclaves contribute to a nearly 13 percent increase in immigrants' earnings—a figure that further rises with enhanced enclave quality. The analysis of a similar policy in Denmark not only offers further evidence in support of this theory but also reveals that the source of the positive effects lies with ethnic information networks that improve employment through matching and information dissemination [25, 45]. Further support for this mechanism is provided by the author [5], who uses a similar refugee placement policy in the United States to demonstrate that enclaves only improve newcomers' labor market outcomes when there is an already established network through long-tenured co-ethnics.

Another relevant, perhaps indirect, aspect influencing the economic assimilation of immigrants within the context of ethnic enclave size pertains to intermarriage.[1] The theory of marriage suggests that while marriages within the same ethnicity are considered optimal due to shared characteristics such as language, culture, and religious affiliations—factors conducive to successful unions—intermarriage may occur due to a lack of co-ethnic peers or a desire to seek characteristics not specific to ethnicity. Consequently, there exists a negative relationship between ethnic enclave size and intermarriage [46–49]. Intermarriage, in turn, can play a role in immigrants' assimilation, fostering linguistic and cultural assimilation [50] and providing access to enhanced professional networks [51]. Addressing the endogenous marriage sorting through instrumental variable methods reveals that intermarried immigrants tend to experience higher wages [52–54], improved employment prospects [55], and greater success in entrepreneurial endeavors [56]. Therefore, it is likely that, ceteris paribus, immigrants who reside in ethnic enclaves could face a potentially negative labor market outcome effect due to their lack of ability or motivation to intermarry. Consequently, by exploring the interplay between intermarriage and ethnic enclaves, a more nuanced understanding of the multifaceted effects of ethnic enclaves on immigrants' labor market outcomes emerges, underscoring the importance of further investigation into different types of ethnic enclaves.

3.1.3 Quality vs. quantity

Recent studies have expanded our understanding of the factors influencing the labor market success of immigrants within ethnic enclaves. It is now recognized that not only the quantity of co-ethnics in these enclaves but also the quality of these individuals play a crucial role. One significant aspect is the average skill level of ethnic enclaves, as demonstrated by research in Sweden [27] and the United States [28]. In Sweden, highly educated immigrant groups experienced greater wage benefits from ethnic segregation, while similar outcomes were observed in the United States when accounting for endogenous ethnic segregation intensity. On the other hand, lower equality ethnic enclaves, measured in education and income, could be detrimental to the immigrants' labor market success [5].

A recent study delves deeper into the interplay between the quality of ethnic enclaves and the skill levels of individual immigrants in the United States [57]. Utilizing a triple difference model, the study reveals that the overall impact of ethnic

[1] Here, intermarriage refers to the union of an immigrant with a native-born individual, regardless of whether the native-born partner shares the same ethnicity.

segregation depends on the alignment of immigrants' education levels with the average education levels of their ethnic group. Specifically, highly educated immigrants can offset the adverse effects of segregation on their earnings when surrounded by similarly well-educated co-ethnics. Conversely, for less-educated immigrants, while being isolated to co-ethnic could in general induce a higher average wage, mostly due to network effects, this positive effect could be dampened if the co-ethnics are also largely lower educated. This research underscores that the impact on immigrants' labor market outcomes is not solely determined by the quality of ethnic enclaves per se. Instead, the most crucial factor is the alignment or misalignment between immigrants' education levels and the educational composition of the ethnic enclaves in which they reside.

Interestingly, most studies could not find any significant effect of ethnic enclaves on employment prospects of immigrants. The only exception is a UK-based study, which uncovered that residing in close proximity to a concentrated group of employed co-ethnics can enhance immigrants' job rates [58]. This reinforces the need for a more comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted factors at play in the complex relationship between ethnic enclaves and immigrants' labor market experiences.

3.2 Consequences of second-generation immigrants

In the study of ethnic enclaves, we often consider how enclave residence might impact a given immigrant's eventual assimilation. This question becomes even more pivotal when discussing the children of immigrants—second-generation immigrants—who are native-born citizens potentially growing up in an ethnic environment.

Fluency in the host country's language and culture is a particularly important determinant of second-generation immigrants' assimilation and one that is profoundly impacted by growing up in an ethnic enclave. A study [59] demonstrates that children of immigrant families that reside within an enclave are less likely to have an English mother tongue, an effect that is pronounced enough to be detected even for the third generation. The enclave functions as its own society in which the origin country's language and culture serve as the facilitating medium, thus eliminating the necessity of and limiting exposure to the host country's language. This study, however, also points out that the effects of the enclave on language significantly weaken when parental exogamy is present, as intermarriage introduces the need for the host country's language at the household level.

These findings regarding language acquisition are confirmed and further strengthened by a number of studies that exploit a quasi-experimental [60] or an instrumental variable [61] identification strategy. One study use an exogenous placement policy of German guest workers to further prove the detriments of high ethnic concentration on immigrant children's language proficiency while also demonstrating that the mediating factor is the parents' language proficiency—or the lack thereof [62].

Another noteworthy discovery highlighted in [62] is the correlation between high ethnic concentration and an increased likelihood of immigrant children dropping out of school. This finding aligns with expectations, given that schools attended by second-generation immigrant children growing up in enclaves are often characterized by ethnic segregation and potentially face social and political discrimination. Therefore, educators in the host country frequently lack the necessary resources to adequately support the substantial number of students grappling with language and cultural challenges.

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The empirical research indicates that second-generation immigrant students in enclave schools often face difficulties, leading to a higher likelihood of dropping out [62]. Additionally, they consistently attain lower levels of education compared to their counterparts in schools with lower concentrations of ethnic students [63]. This trend becomes more pronounced, especially when the school has a significant proportion of first-generation students [64].

The restricted assimilation in terms of language and culture, coupled with educational outcomes, can potentially yield enduring impacts on intergenerational mobility and labor market performance. Examining linked historical data, research indicates that offspring of immigrants who departed ethnic enclaves tend to outperform counterparts in relevant socio-economic and assimilation metrics [60, 61]. Conversely, another study reveals that while second-generation immigrants from ethnic enclaves exhibit lower levels of educational attainment, their earnings and employment outcomes show no statistically significant effects [63]. This lack of impact is likely attributed to the robust network within the enclave economy mentioned before.

In summary, residing in ethnic enclaves tends to have adverse effects on the linguistic and cultural assimilation of second-generation students, potentially impacting their educational and, subsequently, labor market outcomes. However, it is conceivable that the enclave's economic activities and network dynamics alleviate these penalties, preventing the children of immigrants from lagging behind in the labor market. Importantly, akin to the considerations for the first generation, the qualitative aspects of a specific ethnic enclave are as pivotal as its quantitative dimensions. Notably, higher levels of average human capital within a particular ethnic enclave positively influence the educational attainment and labor market performance of the second generation, thereby contributing to increased intergenerational mobility [65].

3.3 Consequences of native-born migration and residential segregation

A considerable body of literature has delved into the effects of immigration on the labor market outcomes of native-born individuals,[2] a topic that falls beyond the purview of this chapter as it does not directly pertain to ethnicity. However, it is noteworthy that immigrants' establishment of ethnic enclaves has impacted natives through their residential choices, which could, in turn, affect the residential segregation and integration of immigrants.

The spatial assimilation of immigrants extends beyond their individual residential choices. The concentration of the foreign-born population in specific neighborhoods can impact the mobility patterns of the native-born, influencing the development and persistence of ethnic enclaves. In theory, the growth of an ethnic enclave may lead natives to relocate, a phenomenon termed "native flight," potentially exacerbating segregation and assimilation challenges discussed earlier. This inclination to cluster with co-ethnics, as suggested in [71], may contribute to the formation and continuation of ethnic enclaves. The cultural and linguistic nuclei created by immigrant enclaves may not align with characteristics sought by native-born individuals in their living environments, prompting them to move away from areas with a significant presence of ethnic enclaves.

The decision to relocate from ethnic enclaves might persist beyond considerations of discriminatory factors, as natives could also be driven by economic considerations.

[2] See Refs. [66–70] for a survey of seminal works.

Immigrants may be associated with lower average income and education levels, potentially linked to negative neighborhood characteristics such as higher crime rates and lower quality of local services [72]. Consequently, natives may choose to move from ethnic enclaves for reasons unrelated to race or discrimination [73].

Conversely, research also highlights that the influx of immigrants and the expansion of ethnic enclaves can drive up housing demand, leading to increased rents and housing prices in host cities [74, 75]. This economic impact could motivate natives to either remain in or move to ethnic enclaves to capitalize on economic advantages. Alternatively, the rising costs associated with ethnic neighborhoods may prompt some natives to seek more affordable living options elsewhere.

Many empirical studies support the native flight phenomenon. One study employed a geographical diffusion model and an instrumental variable approach in their empirical study [76]. They discovered that an exogenous increase in the immigrant population in a neighborhood led to a significant decrease in the native population, indicative of native flight. This phenomenon was attributed to the lower socio-economic status of the immigrant population and their ethnicity. Examining the quasi-natural experiment of the Swedish state-run placement policy for refugee immigration from 1990 to 2010, researchers also found that natives with high mobility levels tended to move away from areas with concentrated immigrant populations. Socio-economic homogeneity, rather than ethnic homogeneity, was identified as the primary reason for this native flight phenomenon [77]. One other interesting study uses comprehensive data on residential moves within Stockholm municipality from 1990 to 2003, and observed that immigration enclaves acted more as deterrents for Swedes considering moving into these neighborhoods, rather than catalysts for natives already residing in ethnic enclaves to leave [78]. While examining the UK labor market, researchers found that high-earning natives tended to move away from areas with a concentration of lower-educated immigrants [79]. This migration pattern resulted in reduced demand and real estate values within ethnic enclaves. Additionally, analyzing district-level data from 20 large Italian cities, research also revealed that immigration raised housing prices in receiving cities [80]. However, districts with a high concentration of immigrants experienced slower housing price growth compared to districts without such concentration, indicating native flight from immigrant-dense areas. Similar results of lower housing values associated with immigration inflows were also found in the United States [20]. This reduction in real estate values within ethnic enclaves could exacerbate segregation, diminishing the attractiveness of these neighborhoods due to lower investment prospects.

Contrary to these findings, researchers who examined the Spanish data found that, during the migration surge in Spain from 1998 to 2008, established neighborhoods experiencing an increase in the immigrant population saw minor displacement of natives. However, these disruptions were absorbed by flourishing suburban areas, resulting in no noteworthy change in residential segregation [81].

To sum up, immigration inflows and the subsequent formation of ethnic enclaves have been found to cause a certain degree of "native flight," where native-born either move away or avoid residential areas where immigrants congregate, mostly due to lower socio-economic characteristics of immigration ethnic enclaves. This phenomenon creates further resistance to ethnic integration within local labor markets and could cause slower economic and cultural assimilation of immigrants.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the ongoing presence of immigrant ethnic enclaves is a significant area of interest in both academic and policy circles. This chapter provides a thorough overview of the state-of-the-art literature in the social sciences, shedding light on the impact of ethnic enclaves on both immigrants and natives within the labor market. Starting with a theoretical examination, ethnic enclaves emerge as crucial in understanding immigrants' socio-economic assimilation, serving as both outcomes and catalysts.

Turning to empirical evidence, after accounting for immigrants' residential sorting behaviors, ethnic enclaves contribute positively to immigrants' earnings, largely due to informal networks. However, the role of ethnic enclaves in influencing immigrants' employment prospects lacks substantial empirical support. Moreover, the chapter emphasizes that the relationship between ethnic enclaves and labor market outcomes is nuanced, influenced by the quality of enclave members in terms of education and labor market success.

Examining second-generation immigrants, evidence suggests that living among co-ethnics may negatively impact their educational and linguistic assimilation, potentially reinforcing ethnic segregation. Similar to the effects on immigrants, the quality of ethnic enclaves plays a crucial role in the offspring of immigrants.

Additionally, the chapter discusses how immigrant ethnic enclaves might be further exacerbated due to native flight, acknowledging the potential impact of natives' residential choices on enclave dynamics.

In summary, this chapter contributes valuable insights into the multifaceted dynamics of immigrant ethnic enclaves, underscoring their relevance in understanding labor market outcomes for immigrants and natives. These findings have implications for informed policymaking and academic research in the field of immigration and integration.

5. Future questions

A potential future research direction concerning ethnic enclaves could involve a deeper exploration of the connection between these enclaves and the employment prospects of immigrants. In contrast to the observable wage effect associated with ethnic enclaves, existing research has generally failed to uncover empirical evidence indicating differential employment prospects for immigrants residing within and outside of ethnic enclaves. The question arises: does the absence of such evidence stem from a perfect offsetting of benefits and costs within the job searching process in ethnic enclaves, or is it that the network effect of ethnic enclaves only comes into play after the job search stage? This question remains unanswered and warrants further investigation.

Additionally, against the backdrop of heightened political discord surrounding immigration and refugee crises arising from war and conflict, it is imperative for governments to forge policies that not only navigate cultural intricacies but also align with economic considerations. Consequently, a promising avenue for future research involves delving into the impact of government policies on ethnic enclaves, encompassing cultural centers and training programs, and their effects on enclaves with diverse characteristics.

Compelling evidence underscores that immigrants in ethnic enclaves reap both monetary and non-monetary benefits, contingent upon the nature and quality

of these enclaves. Recognizing the necessity for policies crafted with precision to resonate with specific immigrant groups is crucial. Neglecting this aspect may have adverse consequences on the economic assimilation and social well-being of immigrants, particularly those prioritizing the acquisition of labor market skills without severing their cultural or economic roots.

Conducting a thorough examination of the distinctive features characterizing diverse ethnic enclaves and soliciting input from immigrants regarding potential public policies within these contexts holds the promise of yielding valuable insights. This approach may unveil effective strategies for the meticulous design and implementation of policies that not only acknowledge the diversity inherent in ethnic enclaves but also attend to the distinct needs and aspirations of immigrant communities.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Chapter 7

Experiences of a Group of Venezuelan Migrant Women: An Analysis from Coping and Intersectionality

Eduardo José Sánchez Uzcátegui

Abstract

The research was based on understanding the experiences of a group of Venezuelan migrant women in Spain. Method followed was mixed research, whose objective was to analyze the complexity of the migratory experience from coping and intersectionality. There were 20 intentionally selected women. Instruments used were an inventory of coping strategies and an interview script. Results: average age 42.60 years. General average in coping strategies used by migrants was 18.25 for problem solving, 4.95 for self-criticism, 12.75 for emotional expression, 12.35 for illusions, 13.55 for social support, 14.45 for cognitive restructuring, 7.00 for problem avoidance, and 7.20 for social withdrawal. The stressful situations were categorized as economic, family, social, and migratory. Also, they are identified as a vulnerable group intercepted by the axes: gender, class and social origin, rationalization, and ethnic and cultural diversity. Likewise, three categories were identified: access to work and working conditions, forms of linguistic rejection, and stereotypes based on hypersexualization. Migrants have similar sociodemographic characteristics compared to other studies. Likewise, they face migratory stress through a problem-solving strategy. On the other hand, from an intersectional perspective, the axes and categories identified are related to the dynamics of power and exclusion that impact migrants and make them vulnerable.

Keywords: migrant women, migratory experience, coping, intersectionality, coping strategies

1. Introduction

Migration processes do not constitute a recent situation in the contemporary globalized world. In fact, current civilizations are the result of these processes, so it could be said that migration dates back to population movements related to the history of humanity. However, the migratory flow has become a relevant and controversial aspect for many countries. Furthermore, it is a topic of current debate that has sparked interest in the scientific field due to the impact and implicit challenges that are being generated internationally.

Although migratory processes do not encompass a specific group of people, they are weighed by a series of triggering factors that determine and induce them. In this sense, the International Organization for Migration [1] defines these processes as a consequence of population movements toward the territory of another state or within it. This same organization defines mobility human as "the mobilization of people from one place to another in the exercise of their right to free movement, motivated by various reasons, voluntary, or forced."

Migration is a complex phenomenon related to multiple economic, social, political, and security aspects that encompasses a great diversity of movements and situations that affect citizens of any condition and social origin. According to the World Bank, more than 180 million people, 2.3% of the world's population, live outside their native country, which represents an urgent challenge for global development and the well-being of the population [2].

Some authors point out that the migration of Venezuelans occurred mainly from 1998 to the present [3]. Emigrating for a Venezuelan was a phenomenon that occurred very sporadically since Venezuelans considered that their future standard of living was not at risk [4]. This statement has changed in recent years because of the political diaspora and the social and economic situation in Venezuela today. It is estimated that there are more than 7 million people from Venezuela as refugees and migrants [5]. This migratory phenomenon has not only spread at a regional level but has also reached an intercontinental level. According to data from the National Institute of Statistics of Spain (INE), there are more than 300 thousand people from Venezuela in Spain, of which more than half are women [6].

Starting from this premise and the statistical data, the research focused on the study and understanding of the role of women as migratory subjects [7], their development in the chosen destination, and their position regarding their current reality from a feminist and intersectional perspective.

1.1 Intersectionality

The development of the concept of intersectionality is linked to American black feminism and the need to understand the situation of discrimination and inequality suffered by black women from a feminist and anti-racist perspective [8, 9]. At this point, the differentiation between gender and race could not explain inequality by itself, but it was necessary to understand how they were interrelated and configured in a specific experience of oppression [10]. There are different positions. However, beyond the debates about how it should be defined, some authors, such as Collins and Bilge, describe that:

Intersectionality is a way of understanding and analyzing the complexity of the world, people, and human experiences. The events and circumstances of social and political life and the person can rarely be understood as determined by a single factor. In general, they are shaped by many factors and in diverse ways that influence each other. When it comes to social inequality, people's lives and the organization of power in a given society are best understood as something determined not by a single axis of social division, be it race, gender, or class, but by many axes that act together and influence each other. Intersectionality as an analytical tool offers people better access to the complexity of the world and themselves [11].

This paradigm represents a way to recognize the privileges of people in society, the way they interact, the social groups in which they are found, and the networks established in different interconnected classifications. In addition, according to Collins,

there is an intersection between the systems of oppression that are articulated and defined from axes of control: (1) structural, inherent to power relations in society; (2) disciplinary, which manages the oppression that originates from the first axis and is represented by institutions; (3) hegemonic, which validates control mechanisms of individual and collective subjectivities and which is expressed in beliefs, prejudices, and values; and (4) interpersonal, which is configured through collective relationships that define life trajectories and which condenses the three previous axes into subjectivities personal [9].

1.2 Coping

Coping refers to the series of thoughts and actions that enable people to handle difficult situations [12]. It consists, therefore, of a process of efforts aimed at managing in the best possible way (reducing, minimizing, tolerating, or controlling) internal and environmental demands. Coping occurs through changing cognitive and behavioral strategies or processes that are developed to manage specific external or internal demands that are evaluated as surplus or overflowing people's resources [13].

Coping strategies are understood as psychological resources that the person uses to deal with stressful situations. Although the implementation of these does not always guarantee success, they serve to generate, avoid, or reduce conflicts in human beings, attributing personal benefits to them and contributing to their strengthening [13].

In the field of migration, stress and the use of coping strategies could play a determining role when facing various situations. Migratory stress is characterized by being multiple because it affects many areas of life; chronic because it can last for years; intense and relevant for its strength; disorganizing, due to the loss of control in permanent situations [14]. Consequently, stress could occur in the face of the adaptation experience due to various personal, cultural, or adaptation characteristics [15]. Some authors point out that there are sources of migratory stress, such as the search for documentation to be able to work and have money to cover basic needs, where to live, and facing ideological and cultural prejudices, among others [16].

In the above context, there are a wide variety of scales for measuring coping; among them: the Ways of Coping Inventory (WCI) by Lazarus and Folkman [17], the Multidimensional Coping Estimation Inventory (COPE) by Carver et al. [18], or The Coping Strategy Indicator (CSI) by Billing and Moos [19], among others that have been generated and adapted to the local realities. These instruments constitute useful tools not only to study the cognitive and behavioral resources that the person must deal with stress but also to generate models or proposals for feasible intervention and prevention in coping with stress [16].

2. Methodology

The methodological approach used was mixed, that is, qualitative and quantitative, through the implementation of two instruments that generated statistical processing and analysis of the data and content, as well as analysis of the interviews. The purpose of what was described above was to answer the following questions: (1) What strategies do the women in the study use to face the migratory dynamic? (2) What axes or dimensions produce vulnerability or discrimination from an intersectional perspective in the women in the study?

To answer the questions and under the premise of addressing new dimensions of Venezuelan female migration, in this case to Spain, the objective was to understand the experiences of Venezuelan migrant women in Spain from coping and intersectionality. The methodological phases that were developed are described below:

a. Phase I: Secondary Data (*Historical/documentary)*: Involved a thorough review of documentary, historical, bibliographic, and research sources to elucidate the aspects inherent to Venezuelan migration, migratory stress, and coping. For this phase, triangulation, description, and documentary analysis were used.

b. Phase II: Primary Data: A mixed approach was used to collect primary data. In this phase, quantitative data was collected through the survey. Moreover, interview, a qualitative method, led to obtaining qualitative data through primary sources. The population and sample consisted of 20 migrant women from Venezuela (**Table 1**) [20]. The selection was based on a typological box aimed at controlling the heterogeneity of the sample and the variability of the experiences. The selection criteria were: (1) age over 35 years, considering the data from the INE of Spain and the background on the research, and (2) immigration status of the participants (irregular or under international protection).

The instruments used were two. To analyze coping strategies, the Coping Strategies inventory of Cano et al. was applied due to its excellent proven validity and reliability [21]. The technique for applying this inventory included an interview, previously with the consent of the participants. Also, the evaluation of eight primary coping strategies, among them: (1) problem resolution, related to cognitive and behavioral strategies aimed at eliminating stress and modifying the situation that produces it. (2) Self-criticism, inherent to strategies based on self-blame and self-criticism for the stressful situation or its inadequate management. (3) Emotional expression, strategies aimed at releasing emotions that occur in the stress process. (4) Wishful thinking, cognitive strategies that reflect the wish that reality was not stressful. (5) Social support, strategies related to the search for emotional support. (6) Cognitive restructuring, cognitive strategies that modify the meaning of a stressful situation. (7) Problem avoidance, related to strategies that include denial and avoidance of thoughts or actions. 8) Social withdrawal and withdrawal strategies from friends, family, colleagues, and significant people associated with emotional reactions in the stressful process [21]. For the statistical analysis of the information obtained, the SPSS 27.0 program was used. The grouping of items related to each of the coping strategies of the instrument was considered, as well as the identified categories and the Lazarus and Folkman [17] model that differentiates coping in two ways: the first focused on the problem, which involves the attempt to resolve or reduce the threat, and the second focused on the emotion, which is generated from the situation and involves its non-resolution or modification [13].

The second instrument applied was an interview script for migrant women. This script was self-developed, and its purpose was to investigate migration and aspects that would allow intersectional analysis. Its validity was obtained through a psychometric study of content validity by experts. The quantitative analysis of this instrument was obtained by calculating Aiken's V coefficient and the Content Validity Coefficient (CVC). The coefficients of the questions exceeded what was established as minimally acceptable, with the total average being Aiken's V 0.90 and the CVC 0.92. This instrument is made up of 55 open questions, in a structure of three blocks related

to the dimensions: life before emigrating, the process prior to migration, and the migratory process [22]. The data was analyzed in line with the quantitative data using thematic analysis. For the protection of women's data, a pseudonym or an assigned number is identified with the letter P (P1 to P20).

3. Results

3.1 Profile of the participating women

Table 1. The age of the women interviewed was between 35 and 56 years, with an average of 42.60 years. In relation to the educational level, 75% have a university education, and 25% have completed high school. On the other hand, 50% have lived in Spain for 3 years, 35% for 2 years, 10% for 4 years, and 5% for 1 year.

When analyzing **Table 1**, the average age and educational level of the women participating in the research coincides with some reference studies related to the migration of Venezuelan women in Spain [16]. In relation to the length of residence in Spain, more than half currently have more than 3 years. The above leads to the deduction that studies with phenomenological perspectives are a group with a profile and particular characteristics of interest.

3.2 Results of the application of the inventory of coping strategies (CIS)

Table 2 presents the average obtained in the eight coping strategies as a result of the application of the CIS [21]. For the interpretation of the results, the ranges indicated by the author were taken, where an average between 0 and 6.6 indicates the use of the strategy at a low level, from 6.7 to 13.2 at a medium level, and from 13.3 to 20 at a high level. In the general average obtained, problem resolution (18.25) is identified as the coping strategy most used by all participants. This is followed by cognitive restructuring (14.45) and social support (13.55) as high-ranking strategies. While in the medium range, they are emotional expression (12.75), wishful thinking (12.35), social withdrawal (7.20), and problem avoidance (7.00), and in the low range is the self-criticism strategy (4.95).

The results of **Table 3** indicate four dimensions identified in the group of migrants during the interview: economic, family, concreteness, and immigration status. In this context, the coping strategies that migrant women use according to the CIS are problem resolution (PR) has a high level of application in all identified categories: economic (18.10), family (18.75), concreteness social (19.25), and immigration status (16.00). In self-criticism (SC), the level presented is low in the stressful economic situation (6.60), family (3.00), social concreteness (1.25), and presents a medium level in immigration status (8.00). In emotional expression (EE), it presents a high level in family (19.25) and in social concreteness (13.50); a medium level in economics (10.10) and immigration status (11.50). In desiderative thinking (DT), the level is high in the family situation (17.25) and immigration status (15.50) and medium in the economic situation (10.60), as well as in social concreteness (10.25). In social support (SS), the level was high in the family situation (15.50) and economic situation (14.90). It presented a medium level of social concreteness (10.25) and immigration status (9.50). In cognitive restructuring (CR), the level was high in all situations: family (16.50), social concreteness (14.25), immigration status (14.00), and economic (13.80). In problem avoidance (PA), the level was medium in social concreteness (8.50) and in the

Pseudonym	Age	Educational qualification	Marital status	Time in Spain (years)	Occupation	Housing condition
P1	46	University professional	Single	3	Unemployed	Room
P2	46	University professional	Single	3	Intern in a family home	Room
P3	56	University professional	Single	2	Intern in a family home	Apartment
P4	44	University professional	Single	3	Businessman	Apartment
P5	44	University professional	Single	3	Intern in a family home	Apartment
P6	35	Bachelor	Single	3	Prostitute	Apartment
P7	47	Bachelor	Single	2	Unemployed	Apartment
P8	36	University professional	Married	2	Nurse	Apartment
P9	50	Bachelor	Married	2	Unemployed	Room
P10	54	Bachelor	Divorcee	3	Teleoperator	Apartment
P11	35	University professional	Single	3	Waitress	Apartment
P12	35	University professional	Single	2	Businessman	Apartment
P13	40	University professional	Single	4	Warehouse worker	Apartment
P14	42	University professional	Single	4	Warehouse worker	Apartment
P15	38	University professional	Single	3	Warehouse worker	Apartment
P16	35	Bachelor	Single	3	Unemployed	Room
P17	55	University professional	Single	3	Intern in a family home	Room
P18	38	University professional	Single	1	Unemployed	Room
P19	36	University professional	Single	2	Unemployed	Room
P20	44	University professional	Single	2	Caregiver	Room

Source: Participant files.

Table 1.
Profile of the participating women.

economic dimension (7.10), and it presented a low level in immigration status (6.00) and family status (5.75). Finally, in relation to social withdrawal (SW), the level was medium in immigration status (10.00) and economic status (8.20); however, it presented a low level in social concreteness (6.25) and family (4.25).

Coping strategy	Medium
Problem resolution	18.25
Self-criticism	4.95
Emotional expression	12.75
Wishful thinking	12.35
Social support	13.55
Cognitive restructuring	14.45
Problem avoidance	7.00
Social withdrawal	7.20

Applied instrument: Coping Strategies Inventory by Cano et al. [21].

Table 2.
Mean of the study sample.

Strategy	Economic (n = 10)	Familiar (n = 4)	Social concreteness (n = 4)	Immigration status (n = 2)
PR	18.10	18.75	19.25	16.00
SC	6.60	3.00	12.52	8.00
EE	10.10	19.252	13.50	11.50
DT	10.60	17.25	10.25	15.50
SS	14.90	15.50	10.25	9.50
CR	13.80	16.50	14.25	14.00
PA	7.10	5.75	8.50	6.00
SW	8.20	4.25	6.25	10.00

Applied instrument: Coping Strategies Inventory by Cano et al. [21].

Table 3.
Means of the study sample.

The stressful situations described by the migrant women allowed us to categorize four dimensions: economic, family, social concreteness, and immigration status. It is evident that these situations are closely related to the feminization of poverty, characterized by the segregation of the labor market and the role assigned to migrant women, along with their key role, mainly in the private domestic sphere and, in many cases, in the sexual exploitation industry [23].

In this context, generalized segmentation with few or no job opportunities related mainly to femininity through caring for people, cleaning, or sexual services [24], in addition to the lack of legal protection or procedures inherent to access to documentation, among others, they will generate inequality and make women a vulnerable group at the intersection with the immigration and nationality regime [25].

It should be noted that each participant experiences vulnerability individually, as well as their characteristics. In this context, the linking of social and institutional causes could reduce the ability to respond, adapt, and react to adverse natural, social, or institutional situations, an aspect that invites intersectional reasoning.

The most used coping strategy in all identified categories and in a high range was problem resolution. This strategy indicates that migrant women use cognitive and behavioral processes aimed at finding effective solutions to deal with the situation [21]. Although its use indicates adequate management of an adverse situation, this does not necessarily reduce psychological discomfort [15]. On the other hand, the emotional expression strategy indicates that migrants channel coping through verbal expressions of their experiences toward other people [21]. Consequently, releasing emotions using expressions or talking about what happened constitutes a strength for adaptation. Some recent research inherent to Venezuelan migration shows that through testimonies, migrants express and make visible their feelings, as well as the situations they have had to face [26, 27].

Migrant women use social support strategies as a family and economic strategy, which involves the execution of actions aimed at seeking support in the face of stressful events. In this regard, social support networks, defined by relationships of friendship, affective, or exchange of help, allow migrants to cope with situations or sources of stress, including access to employment, housing, or obtaining domestic help, among others [28].

Likewise, the cognitive restructuring coping strategy also presented a high level of application, which indicates that migrants cope with conflict or problem situations by adapting stressful negative thoughts and incorporating positive thoughts [15].

Coping strategies associated with inadequate management of the situation do not show a high level of execution in self-criticism, problem avoidance, and social withdrawal. On the contrary, the wishful thinking strategy, presenting a high level of application, indicates the desire for reality not to be stressful, as well as the presence of feelings of avoidance [21]. At this point, wishful thinking will be considered inadequate management focused on the problem, as it is an 8type of passive and maladaptive coping.

3.2.1 Intersectional analysis

The migrant women participating in the research are identified as a vulnerable social group intercepted by three axes: gender, social class, origin, racialization, and ethnic and cultural diversity. Three new categories were identified: categories that represent a system of oppression/domination/discrimination: (1) access to work and working conditions, (2) forms of linguistic rejection, and (3) stereotypes based on hypersexualization that were the product of the content analysis of the interviews. They are described below, along with some experiences:

3.2.1.1 Access to work and working conditions

The lack of documentation, work permits, job insecurity, and lack of employment led the vast majority to enter mainly the domestic and care labor market in precarious conditions. In this context, it was necessary to conceptualize gender as a social structure that is configured differently depending on the context and time, and that is built and maintained at the intersection with other fundamental axes of social organization such as sexual orientation, sexual processes, of racialization, ethnicity, religion, nationality, immigration status, educational and occupational level, health, and age [29].

Some experiences of the participants are described below:

Below are some excerpts from the participants' experiences.

"In relation to work, first they don't give you permission quickly to be able to work, you have to get papers, make appointments, everything is late. Also, adapt to the language, the food, the slang, the people, everything." (P3)

"My work experience has been bad, bad, because the work they offer us immigrants is low-skilled, cleaning the home, cooking, caring for the elderly, picking fruit in the fields. I am a professional, but the system does not make things easier for you to approve or practice as a professional." (P5)

"I have worked as a waitress, as a saleswoman, as a warehouse girl, as a caregiver, all of them have been very strong experiences, the physical aspect, I have felt very exploited, they have involved many hours of work, a lot of physical effort, a lot of exhaustion mentally, I have suffered a little bit of everything, abuse, exploitation, harassment." (P16)

In this context, the experiences of migrant women are closely linked to the globalization of the capitalist system and are based on the generalized segmentation of the labor market. In this way, the work niches for many migrant women are those that are undervalued and have high rates of informality, greater vulnerability, and economic precariousness [29].

These jobs are associated with femininity, such as cleaning, caring for boys, girls, the elderly, and sex work, among others [30]. These labor sectors are demanded by the host society that responds to structural factors and institutional policies, in which this sector is commercialized and externalized [24]. In this scenario, gender inequalities intensify at the intersection with the immigration and nationality regime and place migrants [25].

3.2.1.2 Forms of linguistic rejection

In this category, the forms of linguistic and phonetic rejection related to the axis of origin, rationalization, and ethnic and cultural diversity intersect. In this sense, the sociolinguistic integration of migrants due to their origin should not be constituted as a limitation due to differentiating elements that generate segregation, discrimination, or rejection, since the language is the same, that is, Spanish [31]. Some experiences are described below:

"As for communication, it was difficult for me at first and there are still times when I stay silent, now I think about things more to say them, I have to be very precise to be able to communicate with them." (P8)

"I have had cultural differences. As for language, although we all speak the same language, we have certain very different words, colloquial jargon, for which they point at us and say that we do not know how to speak, they dare to correct us." (P15)

"I feel like I have to take care of my expressions, change my language to be understood and not be corrected." (P20)

The experiences described could be interpreted in a context of difficulty for migrants in the process of interaction and sociolinguistic integration with local people who, in many cases, would not accept differences in language. Consequently, their

own linguistic instrument, their individual and group identity, would take them away from discrimination and exclusion [31].

3.2.1.3 Stereotypes based on hypersexualization

The intersectionality of oppression through discrimination is interrelated with other forms of domination such as sexism, aporophobia, and racism. In this aspect, hypersexualization would have its connection with the colonial exoticization of racialized identities, where women could be stereotyped by imaginaries associated with sexual pleasure, with the respective consequences [32]. Some experiences are described below:

> *"Many people here think that just because we are Latin American and are here, we need a man who, in exchange for sex, will support us." (P9)*

> *"I think they perceive us in different ways, there are some who think that we are working women and there are others who think that we are whores, that we come to prostitute ourselves." (P11)*

> *"I have spoken in confidence with people here about us foreign women and many of them think that Latinas are like prostitutes." (P17)*

In this category, the ideas of a corporalization and sexualization of gender for reasons of ethnicity or origin, through the exacerbation of sexual attributes, would project the erroneous and sexist idea that foreign women would have a more active sexuality, reducing them to simple bodies that are objects of desire, which constitutes a central mechanism of symbolic violence [33].

The results obtained led to generating the following intersectional analysis model: Intersectional analysis model of vulnerable people or groups.

3.2.2 Basic concepts

Intersectionality: Paradigm that allows the interpretation of the inequalities that people experience in their interaction with systems of oppression/domination/and discrimination that are configured and feedback dynamically in space and time.

Systems of oppression/domination and discrimination: They are ontological, structural, and unforeseen structures that are constituted and interrelated and, in whose dynamics, inequalities, oppressions, dominations, or discriminations (axes or dimensions) are generated in people, which makes them vulnerable.

Intersectionality axis or dimension: It is a referential framework that can be variable and be present in systems of oppression/domination and discrimination. It refers to the configuration and experience of discrimination.

The intersectional analysis model in **Figure 1** allows us to represent some traditional axes of intersectional reference, in this case, gender, social class, origin, rationalization, ethnic, and cultural diversity that are constituted and interrelated with the dimensions: work and working conditions, forms of linguistic rejection and stereotypes based on hypersexualization, and in whose dynamics inequalities, oppressions, dominations, or discriminations are generated; that is, they make up a systems of oppression/domination and discrimination that intersect women migrants who represent a social group.4

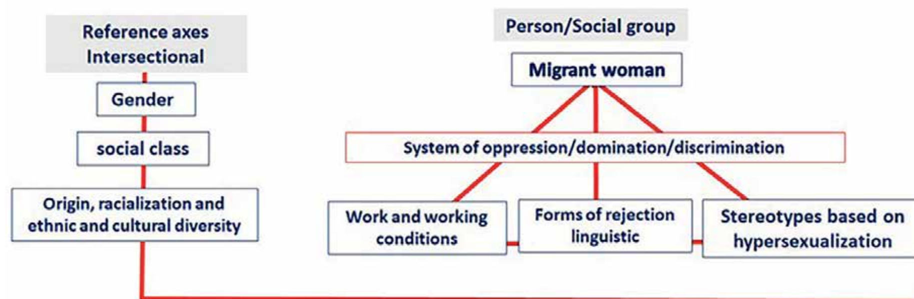

Figure 1.
Self-developed intersectional analysis model.

4. Conclusion

Given the short and recent trajectory of female migration from Venezuela to Spain and despite the various reports, articles, information, and books on migration, currently, there are a limited number of investigations with a gender perspective inherent to the topic in question. Therefore, this research is based on the need to make visible the experiences of immigrant women from Venezuela and the challenges that it implies from a psychological perspective, facing the new reality. In this context, facing migratory stress leads to constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts. Consequently, starting from the questions raised became a fundamental aspect that allowed us to identify the participants with a profile that is related to references similar to other investigations. On the other hand, the stressful situations inherent to migratory experiences are related to dimensions: economic, family, social concreteness, and migratory status. The categorization allowed the analysis of the coping strategies used. In this context, there was adequate management of these situations through the use of medium- and high-level coping strategies, especially the coping strategy: problem solving. But wishful thinking represents the only inadequate coping strategy used by immigrants.

Likewise, rescuing the lived experiences of this group of women provides greater understanding through intersectional analysis and identification of connections of axes/categories that interact and generate dynamics of inequality, exclusion, marginalization, and multiple discriminations that occur as a consequence of complex interaction of the diverse systems of domination and subordination that affect them (sexism, racism, aporophobia, economic exploitation, restriction of rights according to the migrant status, etc.) and that cannot be analyzed from a single singular perspective or from a single dimension.

In this sense, from a feminist perspective, intersectionality is perhaps the paradigm that provides a higher level of complexity in the identification of inequalities, since it allows us to understand, through the interaction established between them, the persistence of systems of oppression, subordination, discrimination, or defenselessness. This research aims to provide a contribution from a perspective intersectional, since it is necessary to go beyond the classical and formalist visions of the migratory phenomena, especially when there are axes or dimensions (sex, ethnic origin, social conditions, among others) that do not interact separately, but rather constitute in complex inequalities that women have to face.

The migrant women in the study are identified as a group located in different axes of inequality (gender, social class, origin, racialization, and ethnic and cultural diversity interrelated with dimensions identified) as access to work and working conditions, and forms of linguistic rejection and stereotypes based on hypersexualization that reveal the multiplicity and simultaneity of some systems of oppression (patriarchy, capitalism, racism, and classism). What is described denotes exclusion, discrimination, and forms of violence that are present in the lives of the participants and indicates that the position they currently occupy in society is a consequence of the current systems of domination. In short, it can be said that the understanding of the intricate and complex nature of migratory feminization, inequalities, job insecurity, and living conditions, among others, requires constant review, support, and establishment of measures and actions by the different entities involved in the formulation of policies and intervention programs in all areas of discrimination.

The limitation of the research was the lack of willingness to participate on the part of many women contacted. Despite this, with the 20 participants in the study, saturation and structuring for theoretical construction were achieved from a methodological point of view. The study will continue to be expanded.

The results obtained allowed us to generate a model of intersectional analysis that could serve as a reference framework in different contexts that involve analysis and interpretation from an intersectional perspective that involves studies on migrants.

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Chapter 8

The Impact of Socioeconomic Factors on the Mental Health and Integration of Refugee and Asylum Seekers in Kenya

Abulogn Ojulu Okello

Abstract

This chapter examines the intricate dynamics of asylum seeking in Kenya, where a significant population seeks refuge from various African nations due to conflicts, persecution, and other challenges. The chapter describes the historical context of refugee hosting in Kenya, particularly the establishment of camps like Dadaab and Kakuma to accommodate Somali refugees and South Sudanese "Lost Boys." It explains the asylum procedure overseen by the Department of Refugee Services (DRS) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), detailing the challenges of registration and the prolonged asylum determination process. Moreover, the chapter delves into the concept of local integration for asylum seekers and refugees, emphasizing its significance in providing fundamental rights and opportunities for displaced individuals. It underscores the importance of integration in fostering safety, stability, and psychological well-being, while also contributing to social cohesion and economic participation. Additionally, the chapter explores the socioeconomic factors impacting the mental health and integration of asylum seekers in Kenya, including limited access to resources, economic hardships, conflict, displacement, and climate change. Through a combination of primary interviews and secondary data sources, the chapter provides a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by asylum seekers and refugees and advocates for evidence-based policies and interventions to address their unique needs and promote their well-being and integration in Kenya.

Keywords: asylum seekers, mental health, refugees, socioeconomic, integration, Kenya

1. Introduction

Kenya serves as a host to a significant population of asylum seekers. According to the UNHCR [1], as of October 30, 2023, the number of registered refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya stood at 676,332 persons as of October 30, 2023, which comprises 537,359 (79%) refugees and 138,973 (21%) asylum seekers, primarily accommodated in two main refugee camps: Kakuma and Dadaab. Additionally, the newly established Kalobeyei settlement camp and urban centers including Nairobi,

Mombasa, Nakuru, and Eldoret provide safe heaven to refuge and asylum seekers from diverse African nations such as South Sudan, Somalia, Congo, Burundi, Ethiopia, and Uganda. These individuals flee their home countries due to various factors including conflicts, economic challenges, and natural disasters. Kenya's history of hosting refugees dates back to 1991 and 1994, with the establishment of Dadaab and Kakuma camps to accommodate Somali refugees escaping civil war and South Sudanese refugees, notably known as the Lost Boys [2].

In Kenya, the Department of Refugee Services (DRS) assumes responsibility for coordinating protection and assistance to refugees, operating as a division within the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government. The department oversees the processing and adjudication of all asylum applications. The asylum procedure in Kenya is multifaceted and primarily overseen by the Department of Refugee Services in tandem with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Upon arrival in Kenya, asylum seekers are required to register with either the DRS or the UNHCR, typically at designated refugee reception centers or offices situated in camps such as Kakuma and Dadaab [3]. For those entering through the Moyal border or finding themselves in Nairobi, direct access to DRS or UNHCR offices is not available. Instead, individuals are directed to a hotline, known as 1517, through which appointments can be scheduled for initial registration. This initial registration process entails providing personal information, detailing reasons for fleeing their country, and providing biometric data. Upon completion of initial registration, asylum seekers are issued an Asylum Seeker Certificate, granting temporary legal status within Kenya [4].

This certificate initiates the evaluation process to determine whether an asylum seeker qualifies for refugee status under both international and national laws. The DRS, supported by UNHCR, conducts thorough interviews to assess the credibility of asylum claims, scrutinizing personal histories and reasons for displacement. The asylum determination process in Kenya is marked by significant delays, with asylum seekers waiting several months to several years for a decision on their claims. Administrative procedures, backlogs of applications, and legal challenges contribute to the prolonged processing times, exacerbating the uncertainty and economic hardship faced by asylum seekers during this period of dilemma. Despite the passage of time, the influx of asylum seekers into Kakuma and Dadaab continues due to ongoing conflicts, economic instability, and the adverse effects of climate change. However, the establishment of new settlements and urban centers presents unique challenges, particularly concerning access to resources and services, which significantly impact the mental health and integration prospects of asylum seekers. In addition, asylum seekers face many challenges, including a lack of economic and democratic participation, as well as employment restrictions, which create a reliance on non-state and state actors for basic needs such as allowances, food, and housing [5].

Local integration for refugees in Kenya refers to the process by which refugees become fully integrated members of the local community. This includes access to rights, services, and opportunities similar to those enjoyed by the host population. For refugees and internally displaced persons forced to flee their homes, there are three durable solutions: voluntary return, resettlement, and local integration. Ideally, local integration affords refugees and IDPs opportunities to protect their fundamental rights, to participate fully in the economic, social, and cultural life of the local community, and to enjoy a basic standard of living. Those who flee persecution and conflict often lose everything. Providing them with an opportunity to access education, employment, training, and social services builds their capacity to return home,

if conditions allow, and rebuild their communities [6]. While asylum seekers may share some similarities with refugees in terms of their need for safety and assistance, the legal status and rights accorded to them may differ. Local integration is typically not applicable to asylum seekers until they have been officially recognized as refugees or granted another form of protected status. Until then, they may be provided with temporary assistance and support while their asylum claims are being processed. Once their refugee status is confirmed, they may then begin the process of local integration if they choose to remain in the host country rather than returning to their home country.

Integration is paramount for asylum seekers as it offers them a crucial pathway to safety, stability, and rebuilding their lives in a new environment. By becoming part of the local community, asylum seekers gain access to essential rights and services, including education, health care, and employment opportunities, which are fundamental for their well-being and successful integration. Moreover, integration fosters social cohesion by promoting interactions between asylum seekers and the host community, contributing to mutual understanding and acceptance. Economically, integration allows asylum seekers to contribute to the local economy through their skills and labor, benefiting both themselves and the broader society. Psychologically, integration provides asylum seekers with a sense of belonging and purpose, alleviating feelings of isolation and uncertainty. Legal protection and stability are also vital aspects of integration, ensuring that asylum seekers have long-term security and rights within their host countries. Overall, integration plays a pivotal role in facilitating the successful resettlement and inclusion of asylum seekers, enriching the diversity and vibrancy of societies worldwide.

In addition to the challenges mentioned above, this chapter will also explore the socioeconomic factors affecting the mental health and integration of asylum seekers in Kenya. Specifically, we will delve into the lack of access to resources in refugee camps and urban centers, the economic challenges faced by asylum seekers, the impact of conflict, displacement, and climate change, the challenges of integrating newly established asylums, and the barriers to sustainable living conditions.

Through a detailed examination of these factors, I aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding the experiences of asylum seekers and advocate for policies and interventions to address their unique needs.

2. Research methods

This is chapter is based on a combination of primary and secondary data sources. Primary data collection methods involved conducting interviews with asylum seekers in Kalobeyei settlement camp, selecting two asylum seekers from each of the three villages (Village 1, 2, and 3), as well as two participants from both Ruiru and Kasarani County, with gender participation considered. In total, 10 asylum seekers were interviewed, out of which 5 were men and 5 women. These interviews helped gather firsthand insights into their experiences, challenges, and needs, providing a direct understanding of their viewpoints and enabling a more thorough analysis of the socioeconomic factors affecting their mental health and integration. Additionally, I utilized secondary data sources to understand and analyze the social and economic situation, as well as government policies, that impact refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya. This included existing research studies, reports from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Kenyan government publications, and academic

literature on refugee issues, mental health, socioeconomic factors, and integration strategies. The combination of primary and secondary data offered a comprehensive and multidimensional understanding of the complexities surrounding the experiences of asylum seekers in Kenya, helping to advocate for evidence-based policies and interventions to address their unique needs and promote their mental health and integration in the country.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed to capture the exact information shared by the participants. Each interview transcript was analyzed for major ideas and shared themes. In my analysis, I assessed the content of the collected data and literature and then identified patterns of specific relationships [7]. I then identified meaning in each interview and finally grouped them thematically to address the study. Participants' consent and voluntary participation were fundamental aspects of this study. Each participant was fully informed about the nature of the study, and their participation was entirely voluntary. The participants were taken through the consent form and signed it. There were no direct benefits to the participants of this study; however, the potential addition of new information may contribute to the understanding of the socioeconomic factors affecting the mental health and integration of refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya.

In conducting this study, strict ethical procedures were followed to ensure the safety, security, and confidentiality of the participants. By adhering to these ethical standards, the study aimed to protect the dignity, rights, and welfare of the participants, ensuring their safety and security throughout the study. This commitment to ethical research practices underscores the importance of maintaining trust and integrity of this process. To ensure confidentiality, all information supplied during the study was held in strict confidence. Pseudonyms were assigned to participants whose data were used in this study to ensure that participants' identities remained protected. Confidentiality was provided to the fullest extent possible by law. The data were safely stored in a locked facility, and I was the only person with direct access to identifying data, including audio recordings and transcripts containing identifying information. The data were securely stored in password-protected electronic form on computer to allow for the development of detailed analyses consistent with the objectives of this study.

3. Lack of access to resources in refugee camps and urban centers

The lack of access to resources in refugee camps and urban centers presents a myriad of challenges for asylum seekers, exacerbating their already precarious situation. One critical aspect is the availability of food, where insufficient supplies and inadequate distribution channels often lead to widespread food insecurity among asylum seekers. Access to clean and safe drinking water is another pressing concern, as limited infrastructure and unreliable water sources increase the risk of waterborne diseases and dehydration. Additionally, asylum seekers face immense challenges accessing timely medical treatment and essential healthcare services due to the scarcity of healthcare facilities and medical resources. In both refugee camps (Kakuma and Dadaab), there is limited access to healthcare infrastructure exacerbates refugee vulnerability, leaving them with inadequate support to address their medical needs [8]. Often confronted with long wait times for appointments and consultations, asylum seekers struggle to receive timely medical attention, compounding the severity of their health conditions. Furthermore, as stated by Jemutai, Muraya, Che Chi,

and Mulupi [8], safe motherhood in refugee contexts, three main delays have been associated with maternal mortality. These are delays in seeking care, reaching care, and receiving care.

For example, a UNHCR field brief on improving maternal care in the Dadaab refugee camps suggests that some of the key issues in accessing care are due to the camps being located in insecure areas and unavailability of public transport to enable refugees to reach health services, particularly at night; health agency vehicles having been previously attacked and therefore not operating at night; and cultural factors which mean that many Somali women opt to deliver at home and are reluctant to consent to an emergency cesarean section even when critically indicated [8].

The socioeconomic impact on mental health among asylum seekers is profound and multifaceted. Not only do they face barriers in accessing timely medical treatment and essential healthcare services due to the scarcity of healthcare facilities and resources but they also encounter significant financial constraints that impede their ability to afford necessary medical services. This financial burden forces many asylum seekers to forgo essential health care or resort to inadequate self-treatment methods, thereby exacerbating their health conditions and increasing their vulnerability [9]. The lack of access to specialized mental healthcare services leaves many individuals vulnerable to conditions such as anxiety, depression, and trauma-related disorders, which can severely affect their well-being and ability to adapt to their new environments. Furthermore, these challenges are compounded by the limited access to basic necessities such as clean drinking water, proper sanitation, and preventive healthcare measures. The absence of adequate infrastructure and resources increases the risk of preventable diseases and health complications among asylum seekers, adding to their already precarious situation. To address these interconnected issues effectively, comprehensive healthcare reform and support systems tailored to the unique needs of asylum seekers are urgently needed. Implementing holistic approaches that encompass both physical and mental health services is essential to promote the overall health and well-being of this vulnerable population and ensure their successful integration into society.

Therefore, lack of access to these essential resources compounds the challenges faced by asylum seekers, exacerbating their vulnerability and hindering their ability to rebuild their lives and integrate into society. As Muhereza [10] highlights, asylum seekers in Nairobi often confront formidable challenges, including restricted access to education, primary health care, housing, and clean water. These obstacles can impede their ability to integrate meaningfully into their new environment, leading to feelings of alienation and psychological distress. The situation in Nairobi serves as a stark example, illustrating the multitude of hurdles faced by asylum seekers which results to feelings of isolation, hopelessness, and low self-esteem among asylum seekers.

Overall, lack of social needs can contribute to mental health challenges among asylum seekers by exacerbating feelings of isolation, limiting opportunities for personal development, and increasing the stress associated with displacement. Therefore, addressing these barriers is crucial for promoting the mental health and well-being of asylum seekers and facilitating their successful integration into host communities.

4. Economic challenges faced by asylum seekers

In Kenya, the legal landscape regarding the employment rights of asylum seekers is complex, with provisions outlined in international conventions such as the 1951

Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, as well as domestic legislation including the Refugee Act [11] and Refugee Regulations [12]. While asylum seekers theoretically have the right to seek employment and engage in income-generating activities, practical barriers often hinder their access to formal employment opportunities. My research indicates that some of the challenges include discrimination, documentation requirements, and limited access to education and vocational training programs. Many asylum seekers lack formal work permits, restricting their access to formal employment opportunities. Additionally, even when they are legally permitted to work, they often encounter challenges in finding suitable employment due to limited job openings and competition with local residents. As a result, this poses significant challenges for asylum seekers seeking to integrate into the labor market.

According to the WFP, many refugees and asylum seekers across the world depend on international humanitarian assistance, such as refugees in Kenya rely on humanitarian aid provided by international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and government agencies to meet their basic needs [13]. While humanitarian aid plays a crucial role in alleviating immediate hardships, such as food insecurity and shelter needs, it does not address the underlying economic vulnerabilities faced by asylum seekers. Moreover, reliance on aid can create a cycle of dependency and erode the dignity and self-esteem of asylum seekers, contributing to psychological distress and a sense of powerlessness.

The combination of high unemployment rates, limited job opportunities, and reliance on humanitarian aid exacerbates financial insecurity among asylum seekers in Kenya. Constant uncertainty about their future, inability to meet basic needs, and lack of opportunities to improve their economic situation contribute to psychological distress, anxiety, and depression among asylum seekers. The pervasive sense of hopelessness and despair stemming from economic challenges undermines the mental well-being and resilience of asylum seekers, further hindering their ability to integrate into society and rebuild their lives.

In conclusion, economic challenges, including high unemployment rates, limited job opportunities, and reliance on humanitarian aid, pose significant obstacles to the well-being and integration of asylum seekers in Kenya. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive policies and interventions aimed at improving access to employment, promoting economic empowerment, and fostering self-reliance among asylum seekers. By addressing the root causes of economic vulnerability, Kenya can create more inclusive and supportive environments for asylum seekers to thrive and contribute positively to society.

5. Impact of conflict, displacement, and climate change

The trauma endured by asylum seekers from past experiences, coupled with the ongoing instability and environmental hazards they face, deeply affects their mental well-being [14]. Many asylum seekers have fled conflict-ridden regions or experienced persecution, violence, and loss in their home countries, leaving them with profound emotional scars and psychological trauma. The memories of traumatic events, such as war, displacement, and persecution, often haunt asylum seekers, triggering symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression. Moreover, the uncertainty and insecurity of their current situation exacerbate feelings of vulnerability and powerlessness, compounding the psychological distress experienced by asylum seekers [15]. The lack of stable living conditions, inadequate

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access to resources and constant fear of deportation or rejection further contribute to their sense of instability and insecurity, undermining their mental well-being. Additionally, environmental hazards, such as extreme weather conditions, natural disasters, and unsanitary living conditions in refugee camps, pose additional threats to the physical and mental health of asylum seekers [16]. Exposure to such environmental stressors can exacerbate existing trauma, increase feelings of helplessness, and erode resilience among asylum seekers, making it even more challenging for them to cope with their circumstances and rebuild their lives. Overall, the cumulative impact of past trauma, ongoing instability, and environmental hazards severely deteriorates the mental well-being and resilience of asylum seekers, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive psychosocial support and mental health services to address their complex needs and promote healing and recovery.

6. Challenges of integrating newly established asylums

Integrating asylums refers to the process of incorporating individuals seeking asylum into the host society in a manner that promotes their inclusion, dignity, and well-being [17]. In the context of Kenya, "asylum seekers" refers to the period during which individuals await the determination of their refugee status by government officers from the Department of Refugee Services and UNHCR. While awaiting your status determination, there are some services to which asylum seekers are not entitled: acquiring a case for a third-country opportunity and scholarships [18], but they provide basic needs such as shelter, food, and basic health care. From a theoretical perspective, integrating asylums aligns with principles of human rights and humanitarianism [19]. It recognizes the inherent dignity and worth of every individual, irrespective of their legal status or nationality, and emphasizes the importance of providing them with opportunities to rebuild their lives with autonomy and dignity. Integrating asylums also reflects the values of solidarity and compassion, as it acknowledges the responsibility of host communities to support those fleeing persecution and violence. In the context of Kenya, integrating asylums presents unique challenges and opportunities. Kenya hosts a significant number of refugees and asylum seekers, primarily from neighboring countries such as Somalia, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. However, the integration process for these individuals is often hindered by legal, economic, and social barriers. Referring to specific literature or data can provide insights into the situation of refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya and inform strategies for their integration.

The inadequacy of infrastructure and services in newly established Kalobeyei settlement camps poses significant challenges for asylum seekers and refugees, hindering their well-being and integration [20]. These camps, often hastily set up in response to surges in refugee populations in Kenya, frequently lack essential facilities critical for the health and livelihood of asylum seekers. Basic amenities such as schools are overcrowded, and healthcare centers and sanitation systems are often absent or insufficiently provided, depriving asylum seekers of access to education, medical care, and sanitation facilities. The absence of schools deprives children of their right to education, impeding their academic development and future prospects. Likewise, the lack of healthcare centers and medical services exacerbates health disparities and increases the risk of untreated illnesses and preventable diseases among asylum seekers. Additionally, inadequate sanitation systems contribute to unsanitary living conditions, posing health risks and diminishing the dignity and well-being of asylum seekers.

7. Barriers to sustainable living conditions

Barriers to sustainable living conditions pose significant challenges for asylum seekers in Kenya, impacting their ability to establish stable and fulfilling lives in the host country. The lack of livelihood opportunities compounds these challenges, as asylum seekers in Kakuma and Dadaab struggle to secure employment and generate income to support themselves and their families. Asylums seekers in Kakuma and Kalobeyei are restricted in many respects. Under the Kenyan government's encampment policy, they are not legally allowed to move outside the immediate surroundings of Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei settlement without the permission of DRS. Furthermore, refugees are not allowed to take up formal employment or to own land, such that, informal jobs, low-paid incentive work with NGOs, and self-employment are the only economic activities available to refugees [21].

The persistent economic insecurity faced by asylum seekers undermines their ability to achieve self-sufficiency and integrate into society. Additionally, unstable living conditions contribute to mental health challenges, perpetuating cycles of vulnerability, and marginalization among asylum seekers in Kenya. Addressing these barriers requires comprehensive strategies that prioritize access to affordable housing, promote inclusive economic opportunities, and foster supportive environments that empower asylum seekers to thrive and contribute positively to their communities.

In Kakuma, the occurrence of suicidal acts often stems from the dire lack of access to food. The provisions supplied by the World Food Programme (WFP) are insufficient, leaving many refugees struggling to sustain themselves adequately. Through the introduction of Electronic Cash Transfers for Refugees in Kakuma Camps, a system known as "bamba chakula" in Sheng, refugees now receive a portion of their monthly food ration in the form of cash [22]. However, this transition has brought its own set of challenges. Upon exhausting their food supplies, many asylum seekers turn to local traders contracted by WFP to purchase additional provisions. Unfortunately, this reliance on food credit, where individuals obtain their food share before receiving funds from WFP, has become commonplace. Tragically, some asylum seekers are denied access to food by these traders, exacerbating their already precarious situation and driving them to desperate measures, including suicide [23].

8. Uncertainty surrounding durable solutions

The uncertainty surrounding durable solutions compounds the challenges faced by asylum seekers, prolonging their wait for resettlement, repatriation, or integration and undermining their sense of security and belonging. Asylum seekers often endure lengthy and indefinite periods of limbo as they await decisions on their asylum claims. The process of RSD can take quite a long time, unfortunately, because of limited resources government has and the huge number of the new arrivals, who rewire full RSD. Although asylum decision should be given within 3 months, it might delay up to a year or more [24]. This is due to a backlog in asylum applications, and it currently takes much longer to be scheduled for an interview and receive a decision. DRS is taking steps to address this issue with the support of UNHCR.

This prolonged uncertainty amplifies feelings of anxiety, stress, and disillusionment, as asylum seekers grapple with the uncertainty of their future and the lack of control over their circumstances [25]. The inability to plan for the long term and the constant fear of rejection or deportation further exacerbate psychological distress

and diminish resilience among asylum seekers. In Kenya, the deportation of asylum seekers is governed by specific procedures outlined in the law. An asylum application may be rejected by the Commissioner if serious reasons, as defined by relevant sections of the Act, are found within the application [26]. To ensure fairness, the Commissioner oversees that refugee officers possess the necessary knowledge to conduct exclusion interviews effectively. Moreover, refugee officers are instructed to expedite the refugee status determination process for asylum seekers whose claims have triggered exclusion criteria, as outlined in established guidelines. It is mandated that asylum seekers are formally notified of the exclusion reasons in writing and are given an opportunity to respond. Even if their claim for refugee status is rejected based on exclusion, asylum seekers maintain the right to appeal as provided by the Act. However, for those asylum seekers who have exhausted the appeals process unsuccessfully or have chosen not to appeal, the Commissioner is required to notify the Director of Immigration for their removal from the country.

This perpetual state of uncertainty undermines their sense of security and belonging, as they struggle to forge meaningful connections and build stable lives in their host country. The protracted wait for durable solutions not only prolongs separation from loved ones but also exacerbates feelings of isolation and loneliness among asylum seekers. Often, when the asylum status is finally accepted, it paves the way for individuals to reunite with their families in the host country. Addressing the uncertainty surrounding durable solutions necessitates expedited and transparent asylum processes. In Kenya, when asylum seekers' statuses remain undetermined for extended periods, they are encouraged to seek legal support from organizations such as the Refugee Consortium of Kenya and Kituo Cha Sheria. These non-governmental organizations employ legal experts who advocate for refugees and asylum seekers in legal matters. Once concerns are raised, they liaise with UNHCR and DRS, and if necessary, pursue legal action through the courts. Furthermore, these organizations strive to increase access to legal assistance and information while enhancing support services to alleviate the psychological and emotional toll of prolonged uncertainty on asylum seekers. By fostering greater predictability and security in the asylum process, policymakers can alleviate the burden of uncertainty and empower asylum seekers to navigate their journey toward safety and stability with resilience and hope.

9. Gender-specific challenges

In addition to socioeconomic factors, gender plays a crucial role in shaping the experiences of asylum seekers in Kenya. Women and girls often face heightened risks of gender-based violence, including sexual assault and exploitation, both during their journey to safety and within refugee camps or urban centers [27]. Furthermore, cultural norms and patriarchal structures may restrict women's access to education, employment, and health care, exacerbating their vulnerability. Similarly, men and boys may face challenges related to traditional notions of masculinity, which may hinder their ability to seek help for mental health issues or access support services. The intersectionality of gender and socioeconomic status among asylum seekers in Kenya is crucial for understanding their diverse needs and vulnerabilities. Asylum seekers arrived in Kenya from a variety of backgrounds, each with their own unique experiences and challenges. To address these disparities, targeted interventions are necessary, tailored to the specific needs of different groups within the asylum seeker population. This may include providing gender-sensitive support services, economic

empowerment programs, and culturally appropriate resources. Additionally, an intersectional approach promotes inclusivity and diversity within humanitarian responses, ensuring that all asylum seekers, regardless of their gender or socioeconomic status, have equal access to protection, support, and opportunities for integration. By examining the intersectionality of gender and socioeconomic status, we can gain deeper insights into the unique needs of different gender groups among asylum seekers and develop targeted interventions to address these disparities.

10. Access to mental health services, community resilience, and coping mechanisms

Access to mental health services remains a critical issue for asylum seekers in Kenya. While some humanitarian organizations provide psychosocial support and counseling services, there are often significant barriers to accessing these services, including stigma, language barriers, and limited availability of trained mental health professionals [28, 29]. Moreover, traditional healing practices and cultural beliefs often played significant roles in influencing help-seeking behaviors, shaping individuals' preferences for alternative forms of support like using herbal medication and counseling and consulting ancestral spirits for the treatment of various illnesses [30]. This highlighted the importance of acknowledging and integrating indigenous knowledge systems into mental health programming for asylum seekers. To address these challenges, it was essential to invest in culturally sensitive mental health programming that not only recognized but also respected traditional healing practices while incorporating evidence-based interventions. Collaborative efforts between government agencies, NGOs, and community-based organizations were vital in improving awareness, reducing stigma, and expanding access to mental health services direct to the unique needs of asylum seekers [31]. By embracing African indigenous knowledge and fostering partnerships across sectors, stakeholders could effectively address the complex mental health needs of asylum seekers in Kenya and promote holistic well-being within these communities.

Despite the adversity they face, asylum seekers often demonstrate remarkable resilience and resourcefulness in navigating their circumstances. Community support networks, including religious groups, cultural associations, and informal support systems, play a crucial role in providing emotional, social, and practical assistance to asylum seekers. For example, as Wambua [32] noted, women groups may offer solidarity and mutual aid to survivors of gender-based violence, while youth organizations may provide opportunities for education and skill-building. By acknowledging and amplifying these community-driven initiatives, we can harness the strengths of refugee communities to foster resilience, promote social cohesion, and empower asylum seekers to overcome challenges and rebuild their lives.

11. Conclusion

In this book chapter, I aim to explore the intricate interplay between socioeconomic factors and the mental health and integration of asylum seekers in Kenya. By examining the challenges stemming from limited access to resources and the uncertainties surrounding durable solutions, I seek to provide insights into the complex realities faced by asylum seekers in their quest for refuge and stability. Through a

nuanced examination of these issues, we hope to advocate for policies and interventions that address the unique needs of asylum seekers, promote their well-being, and facilitate their successful integration into Kenyan society [33].

In this book chapter, I have delved into the intricate interplay between socioeconomic factors and their profound impact on the mental health and integration of asylum seekers in Kenya. Through a comprehensive examination, we have shed light on the multifaceted challenges stemming from limited access to resources, including food, water, health care, education, and livelihood opportunities, within refugee camps and urban centers. Additionally, I have explored the uncertainties surrounding durable solutions, such as resettlement, repatriation, and integration, and their detrimental effects on the well-being and sense of security among asylum seekers.

My analysis underscores the urgent need for targeted policies and interventions that address the unique needs of asylum seekers and promote their holistic well-being. Efforts to improve access to essential resources, enhance infrastructure and services within settlement camps, and expand economic opportunities are crucial for alleviating the hardships faced by asylum seekers and fostering their successful integration into Kenyan society. Furthermore, initiatives aimed at reducing the uncertainty surrounding durable solutions, such as streamlining asylum processes, providing timely legal assistance, and offering psychosocial support, are imperative for mitigating the psychological toll of prolonged uncertainty on asylum seekers.

By advocating for these policies and interventions, I can create more inclusive and supportive environments that empower asylum seekers to rebuild their lives with dignity and resilience. Ultimately, by addressing the complex realities faced by asylum seekers in their quest for refuge and stability, I can work toward building a more compassionate and equitable society for all individuals, regardless of their backgrounds or circumstances.

12. Policy recommendations

In light of the intersecting challenges faced by asylum seekers in Kenya, policymakers must adopt a multi-dimensional approach that addresses the root causes of vulnerability and promotes holistic solutions. Policy recommendations may include:

1. Strengthening legal frameworks to protect the rights of asylum seekers, including access to education, health care, and employment opportunities.

2. Enhancing coordination and collaboration among government agencies, international organizations, and civil society actors to improve service delivery and ensure the effective implementation of policies.

3. Investing in livelihood programs and vocational training initiatives to empower asylum seekers economically and reduce reliance on humanitarian aid.

4. Prioritizing gender-responsive programming that addresses the specific needs of women, girls, men, and boys within refugee communities.

5. Integrating mental health and psychosocial support into primary healthcare services and community-based initiatives, with an emphasis on cultural competence and sensitivity.

6. Promoting inclusive approaches to community development that engage asylum seekers as active participants in decision-making processes and foster social cohesion and mutual support networks.

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Chapter 9

Bureaucratic Mismanagement: Understanding Refugees and Asylum Seekers Scapegoating in the Context of Global Policy Shifts and South Africa's Evolving Approach

Siyamthanda Skota

Abstract

Rather than addressing the bureaucratic mismanagement causing system overload, there is a prevalent tendency to scapegoat asylum seekers and refugees. This scapegoating motivates the introduction of new legal and policy changes. Consequently, governments, including South Africa, respond by introducing measures that scapegoat migrants instead of strengthening their bureaucratic asylum seeker systems. This chapter, based on an examination of recent policy and legal documents, contends that South Africa's recent shifts in policy regarding asylum seekers and refugees are indicative of a global trend of restricting the rights of this vulnerable population group. These shifts encompass not only the reduced benefits for applicants but also result from overwhelmed asylum seeker systems. The broader issue highlighted in this chapter is the global perception of migration as a crisis, leading governments worldwide to portray asylum seekers and refugee movements as a crisis. This chapter underscores the need to address this problem, emphasising its impact on asylum seekers, refugees, and international refugee governance systems.

Keywords: bureaucratic mismanagement, scapegoating, refugees, asylum seekers, policy

1. Introduction

While there seems to be a global consensus in political and policy discourse that the West is facing a refugee crisis, de Haas argues that the actual scale of refugee migration is less extensive than what is portrayed in media attention and political discourse [1]. In fact, from 1985 to 2021, the estimated global refugee population varied between 9 and 21 million, representing approximately 7–12% of the total number

of international migrants globally [1]. This means that asylum seekers and refugee numbers fluctuate periodically depending on the displacement drivers (such as wars and conflict, amongst others) in the sending countries. Such countries include Syria, Venezuela, Myanmar, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Ukraine, and recently Palestine.

In 2018, African-born refugees were estimated to be at 6 million, with 5.5 million of those staying within Africa hosted mainly by Uganda, Ethiopia, and Kenya, demonstrating the argument that refugees prefer to remain closer to their home countries and in familiar surroundings culturally, religiously, and linguistically [1]. Literature underscores this argument by positing that the heightened displacement of Syrians, Venezuelans, and Ukrainians put a strain on the asylum systems of neighbouring countries, which lacked sufficient capacity for conflict-driven numbers [2]. Therefore, South Africa's recent policy shifts regarding asylum seekers and refugees should be read in this highly contested global context, which also aligns with the broader thematic outlook of this book.

In South Africa, the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), the national government department tasked with managing international migration, has argued that Zimbabwe, its neighbour, was the leading country in the top 15 countries of origin for asylum seekers [3]. This high number of asylum seekers from Zimbabwe is accredited to the ongoing socio-economic and political crisis in the neighbouring country which goes as far back as the late 2000s [4]. To relieve the pressure on the asylum system, the South African government introduced a special regularisation permit called the Documentation of the Zimbabweans Project (DZP) in May 2010 [4]. Since then, the government has renewed/extended this particular regularisation programme until recently, when it announced permanent termination, a decision which is being challenged and is awaiting final appeal in the Constitutional Court of South Africa.

The DHA further argues that in South Africa, while it receives high volumes of asylum seeker applications, 90% of the applicants do not meet the requirements to be granted refugee statuses because some of them come from relatively stable countries within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region [3]. On the one hand, an asylum seeker is someone who has fled their home country and is asking for recognition and safety as a refugee in another country, while their application is being reviewed. If their request is denied, they must leave voluntarily or face deportation [5]. On the other hand, a refugee is a person who has been officially granted asylum and protection under the Refugee Act of 1998 [5]. They fall under the 1951 UN Convention, which defines them as either a 'convention refugee' fearing persecution due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a social group, or as someone 'in need of protection' who faces torture, risk to life, or cruel treatment if returned to their home country [5].

The country has weaponised the above argument that 90% of the applicants do not meet the requirements to be granted refugee statuses in moving away from the rights-based approach that was seen in the Refugee Act of 1998 to introducing more stringent measures against asylum seekers and refugees to protect what it deems as the abuse of its asylum seeker system, thereby scapegoating asylum seekers and refugees for its bureaucratic inefficiencies.

The movement of asylum seekers and refugees into South Africa has strained the government's ability to uphold human rights while addressing socio-economic challenges, particularly amongst citizens still affected by apartheid [6]. Although there is political intent to accommodate migrants, economic difficulties have prompted frequent changes in laws, often negatively impacting the lives of foreign-born individuals in the country [6]. This has led to high rejection rates of applications for asylum

seekers and refugees. While the 90% rejection rate has been used as justification for stringent measures by the state, refugee rights groups have questioned the quality of status determination processes [7].

Some have labelled these new policy shifts as the disappearance of refugee rights and refugee protection [8]. Others have posited that by introducing these new restrictive and exclusionary policies, the South African government has contributed to generating a significant population of concealed or undocumented refugees and asylum seekers, thereby compelling numerous individuals with genuine refugee claims to stay in the country without proper protection [9].

Other researchers have paid attention to how legislative, policy, and narrative levels all contribute to the deliberate conflation of refugees and other migrants to justify excluding certain unwanted groups of migrants [10]. Some posit that the new paradigm shifts aim to align South Africa with the exclusionary policies observed in numerous countries worldwide concerning asylum seekers and refugees—a broader global trend led by states, intending to impede access to physical territory and refugee protection systems by erecting barriers—be they physical, economic, or social—to entry [11].

Consequently, this chapter aims to build on these previous studies to demonstrate how South Africa's asylum seekers' and refugees' policy approaches have recently shifted from rights-based and progressive policies to restrictive policy approaches in line with global trends. Further, this chapter builds on this demonstration to elevate the discourse by arguing that as a result of recent restrictive policy shifts, South Africa is also scapegoating asylum seekers and refugees instead of fixing its institutional and bureaucratic systems. This trend is similar to global trends. In other words, while South Africa has a historical record of a human rights-based approach on paper to receiving asylum seekers and refugees, this chapter is only grappling with the restrictive measures that have been introduced as a response to the overwhelmed asylum system instead of strengthening the asylum system. This argument and subsequent analysis offer a new academic perspective that needs to be sufficiently explored in research.

The chapter begins by outlining the research methodology employed. Subsequently, it examines international governance systems for asylum seekers and refugees, elucidating their role as a basis for national policy approaches in South Africa. The chapter proceeds to offer a historical overview of asylum seeker and refugee laws and policies in the country, followed by an exploration of recent policy shifts and their implications. The following analysis studied through the bureaucracy management theory, dissects these policy changes, highlighting the justification and legitimisation of such shifts through the global trend of scapegoating asylum seekers and refugees instead of putting more effort and public resources into bureaucratic inefficiencies.

2. Research methodology

The analysis is based on legal and policy documents that are formal instruments for governing the entry and stay of asylum seekers and refugees in South Africa. These are government documents that are publicly available on the Internet. The chapter further used public documents from parliamentary proceedings where bureaucratic issues such as backlogs in asylum seeker applications and institutional arrangements and challenges in addressing such were explained by the bureaucrats to

the South African legislature. Moreover, previous studies and literature that have also grappled with how the recent policy and legislative shifts have contributed to fewer rights for asylum seekers and refugees were used in the analysis. Finally, the chapter also used NGO reports from organisations such as the Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR), who have contributed to legal and policy changes regarding asylum seekers and refugees in the country.

3. Global governance systems on refugees and asylum seekers

South Africa's post-apartheid progressive asylum seeker and refugee protection governance system is founded on several global human rights instruments. These conventions include the following: Convention Against Torture and its Optional Protocol, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1951 Refugee Convention, 1967 Optional Protocol, and 1969 OAU Convention [12]. Since democratisation, the country has established itself as a nation that prioritises the well-being and advancement of refugees by implementing the 1998 Refugees Act, incorporating global refugee safeguards into its national legislation and surpassing international benchmarks in critical areas [11]. Drawing inspiration from international conventions and the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the South African Refugees Act is rooted in fundamental human rights principles, gaining recognition from the UNHCR as 'one of the most advanced and progressive systems of protection in the world today' [9].

However, despite these progressive and internationally recognised policy strides, the country's bureaucratic management of its asylum seeker system has not been without any criticism. According to the literature, the once commendable global acclaim for South Africa's lenient approach has diminished due to persistent delays in processing, inadequate and uninformed decision-making, and the pervasive issues of corruption and mismanagement plaguing the asylum process [11]. As a result, South Africa currently holds one of the lengthiest asylum adjudication periods globally, with some instances lingering unresolved for numerous years [11].

Researchers concur with the criticism by arguing that in the past decade, notable changes in both the attitude and policies of the South African government have led to a significant restriction of access to the asylum process, which has, in turn, resulted in a sizable population of concealed and undocumented refugees and asylum seekers, rendering them increasingly susceptible because the DHA strongly believes that economic migrants are exploiting the asylum system [9]. They further believe that it seems the DHA is intentionally ensuring that all migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, remain without documentation, possibly aiming to classify them as illegal immigrants and subsequently expel them from South Africa [9].

This is not unique to South Africa, as this chapter's overarching argument demonstrates. For instance, researchers argue that the following three problems mainly constrain the whole global refugee governance system [13]:

1. States maintain the ultimate authority over the quantity and standards of asylum granted to refugees within their borders. Despite the refugee regime offering a fundamental definition for those eligible for refugee status and the UNHCR providing guidance on the determination process and supervisory responsibilities, it is the states' responsibility to decide on the status and rights of refugees within their jurisdiction.

2. Political decisions increasingly influence the fate of refugees and displaced populations in areas beyond the refugee regime, such as travel, labour, human rights, humanitarianism, development, and security (see **Figure 1**). Various international institutions have emerged in the last five decades, often with scopes and objectives overlapping with the refugee regime.

3. The refugee regime does not obligate states to cooperate for its functioning. While countries providing initial asylum must avoid forcibly repatriating refugees to persecution, there is no binding obligation on other states to contribute to the costs of providing asylum.

In its new White Paper which seeks to overhaul the country's immigration policies, the DHA criticises how after 1994, South Africa 'blindly' joined the international governance system post-democratisation without any reservations [14]. This criticism culminated in the production and publication of the new 'White Paper on Citizenship, Immigration and Refugee Protection: Towards a Complete Overhaul of

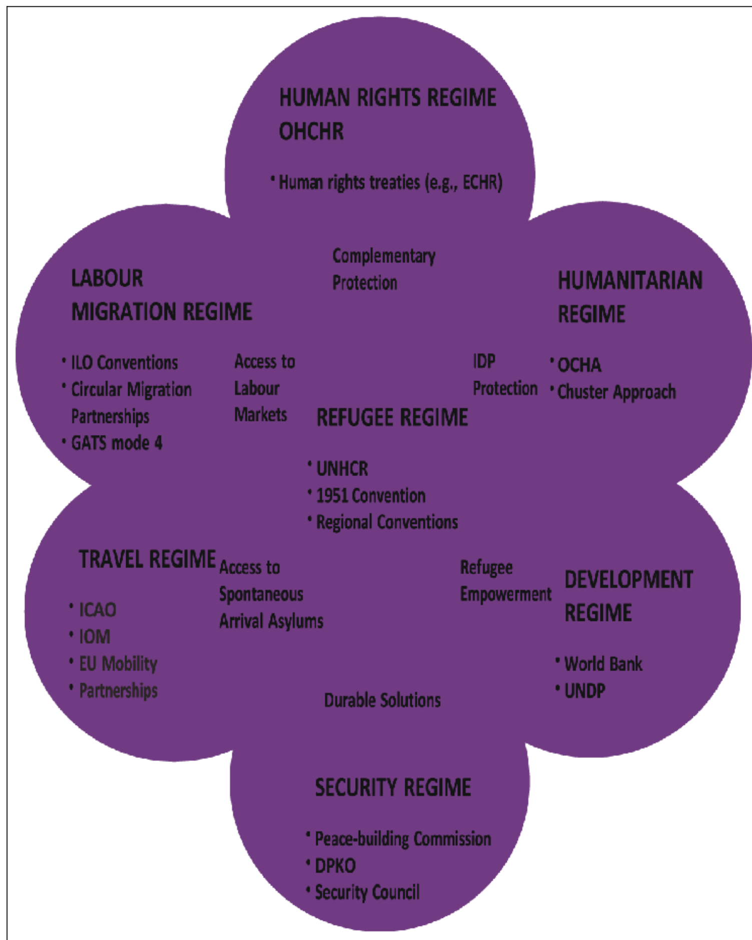

Figure 1.
The global refugee complex. Source: Betts and Milner [13].

the Migration System in South Africa' in late 2023. The main reason behind this policy proposition and call for change in ratified global governance instruments has less to do with bureaucratic mismanagement and failures and more to do with scapegoating asylum seekers and refugees. The paper has since undergone the public comments process and has recently been approved by the Cabinet, and it will be discussed later in this chapter.

Meanwhile, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Global Compact on Refugees in 2018. While South Africa is a signatory to the non-binding Global Compact, this does not necessarily result in actual implementation because the country has not made additional commitments, such as hosting or resettling more forcibly displaced individuals, despite having existing domestic legislative protections [15]. Some have criticised the Global Compact on Refugees rather than signatory nation-states [16]. According to critics, the compact seems to be substituting the Refugee Convention, which is problematic regarding human rights, as the Global Compact inadequately addresses refugees' rights and interests, prioritising those of states instead [16]. In light of global and national policy shifts regarding asylum seekers and refugees, it is essential to pay attention to the developments surrounding the Global Compact on Refugees, even though it is currently a soft law rather than a binging legislative instrument.

4. South Africa's evolving asylum seekers refugees policy changes

The previous section demonstrated how South Africa passed the 1998 Refugees Act partly due to its commitments to international legal instruments such as the 1951 Convention, amongst others. It can be argued that the country's progressive 1996 Constitution also contributed to passing this progressive and advanced refugee law after democratisation. In fact, the DHA asserts that the South African Constitution ensures and safeguards the human rights of individuals seeking asylum and refugees [17]. However, this chapter argues that the country has since regressed in its democratic gains. It continues to do so through different policy and legal changes to the policy paradigms governing individuals seeking asylum and those granted refugee statuses. To this end, the following section will demonstrate how these legal and policy shifts have contributed to the scapegoating of asylum seekers and refugees instead of addressing bureaucratic mismanagement.

4.1 White Paper on international migration

In 2017, the government passed South Africa's policy paper for managing international migration, including asylum seekers and refugees. In the White Paper, asylum seekers and refugees are scapegoated through the following policy arguments [3]:

- The asylum seeker regime is being abused by economic migrants, resulting in over 90% of the claims for asylum being rejected.

- In order to admit asylum seekers into the refugee regime humanely, securely and effectively, South Africa will establish Asylum Seeker Processing Centres. The centres will be used to profile and accommodate asylum seekers during their status determination process.

- The processing of asylum seeker claims will take place. At the same time, the applicant is accommodated in 'Asylum Seeker Processing Centres' or by an individual or an organisation that has made a written undertaking that they will provide for the applicant's basic needs while the department is determining their status.

- Asylum seekers will not automatically acquire the right to work, study or conduct business in the country. At the same time, their status is being determined since their basic needs will be catered for in the processing centres.

- By reducing the incentive for abuse by economic migrants, the asylum system will be transparent and responsive. It will also reduce the cost of managing many asylum seekers who have to reside in the country for extended periods while their application is being considered.

As can be seen in the arguments put forward by the White Paper on International Migration, the country believes that the asylum seeker system and its dysfunctionalities are a result of economic migrants abusing the system in the absence of alternative legal pathways to gain access to the country and the economy. Researchers have criticised the White Paper in this regard by arguing that instead of being driven by the necessity to alleviate strain on an overwhelmed bureaucratic system, the reduction of refugee rights and the imposition of extra restrictions on refugees seeking safety in South Africa can be more accurately understood as an effort to discourage asylum seekers and refugees from considering the country as a favourable destination [11].

Researchers further posit that the core message of the White Paper's contradictory approaches indicates a move towards securitising all migrants, including asylum seekers and refugees [10]. To further highlight the trend towards securitisation, indeed, some posit that South Africa uses national security to shut down its borders, prevent asylum seekers from accessing the system and arrest and deport them when they gain entry [8]. The securitisation approach implies that asylum seekers and refugees are a blanket threat to the country's national security, which in turn further demonstrates how this population group is scapegoated instead of the country fixing its inability to have an intelligence system that identifies threats and risk rather than viewing asylum seekers as collectively undesirable.

As outlined by the DHA, the 2017 policy paper on managing international migration in South Africa reflects a stance that places blame on asylum seekers and refugees through specific policy arguments. The narrative suggests that the asylum seeker system is prone to abuse by economic migrants, leading to a high rate of rejected claims. Asylum Seeker Processing Centres is proposed as a solution that intends to streamline claims processing humanely and securely. However, the denial of automatic rights for asylum seekers to work, study, or conduct business during the determination process raises concerns about the impact on their basic needs.

4.2 Refugees Amendment Act of 2017

While the Refugee Act of 1998 was viewed as progressive and internationally lauded for its humane approach by the democratic government, it has since been amended, and the amendments came into force in 2020, sparking an outcry in human rights and refugee circles. In the Constitutional Court Review, the amendments are

described as having extensively altered the refugee protection system, imposing stringent restrictions on asylum entry, revoking previously granted rights for asylum seekers, and withdrawing status and protection from specific refugees recognised under international law, potentially violating the country's international obligations and constitutional principles [18].

Further, researchers argue that the 2017 Refugee Amendment Act (RAA) represents an apparent regression as it excludes individuals meeting the criteria of the 1951 and OAU Conventions from obtaining refugee status in South Africa in the following ways [18]:

- Abandons asylum claims that would have been assessed under the existing protection system,
- facilitates the establishment of de facto detention centres called APCs, removes statutory timeframes for assessing asylum claims,
- denies asylum seekers certain rights related to employment and education,
- imposes new restrictions on political activities for both asylum seekers and refugees,
- Moreover, it introduces additional cessation clauses, making refugee status more precarious and integration less likely, collectively indicating a substantial weakening of South Africa's commitment to refugee protection.

Literature asserts that the main focus of the 2017 amendments is to prevent destitute asylum seekers from becoming part of local communities, essentially aligning with the principles of exclusion and self-sufficiency in immigration. Again, the reason for these legislative amendments points towards an approach that views asylum seeker applications as bogus, thus overwhelming the system and resulting in prolonged backlogs [8].

However, as some point out, there are many administrative obstacles that asylum seekers are already facing in gaining admission into the system, namely: inadmissible facilities near the South African borders, issuance of appointment slips and pre-screening procedure, refusal by officials to renew a permit issued initially at another Refugee Reception Office, staffing shortages at the Refugee Reception Offices, closure of Refugee Reception Offices in Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, refusal to issue a permit to a delayed applicant, refusal by officials to renew permits for asylum appellants, and refusal to reissue permits to detainees [18]. In addressing all these administrative issues, the South African judiciary has had to intervene through court orders to force the state to implement redress.

The evolution of South Africa's approach to refugee protection, from the progressive Refugee Act of 1998 to the contentious amendments introduced in 2020, raises significant human rights concerns. Available critique underscores that these amendments, particularly under the 2017 Refugee Amendment Act (RAA), have substantially altered the refugee protection system [18]. The exclusion of individuals meeting the criteria of international conventions, the establishment of de facto detention centres, the removal of statutory timeframes, the denial of certain rights, and the introduction of additional cessation clauses collectively signal a marked regression in the country's commitment to refugee protection.

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Some researchers argue that the focus on preventing destitute asylum seekers from integrating into local communities aligns with exclusionary immigration principles, driven by the perception of widespread abuse overwhelming the system [8]. However, some highlight numerous administrative obstacles asylum seekers face, prompting judicial intervention to compel redress [18]. This complex interplay between legislative changes, administrative challenges, and judicial interventions underscores the need for a more nuanced and rights-focused approach to refugee protection in South Africa.

4.3 White Paper on Citizenship, immigration and refugee protection: towards a complete overhaul of the immigration system in South Africa

The new White Paper, which is currently out for public consultation and comments processes, aims to overhaul every legislation put in place since democratisation in the country, including the international governance systems and protocols South Africa has previously ratified. The new policy calls for a more securitised approach to immigration generally. Moreover, the following passages in the draft White Paper are relevant to this chapter's argument of the state's tendencies to scapegoat refugees and asylum seekers [11]:

- The White Paper argues that it is necessary to consolidate the Citizenship Act, Immigration Act, and the Refugees Act into one policy and legislative framework because having them in a fragmented approach makes their implementation difficult, resulting in economic migrants overwhelming the asylum seeker system.

- The appeal process in the asylum seeker and refugee system and immigration services creates a bureaucratic ladder, which leads to further delays and backlogs.

To resolve the problems that come with delays and backlogs in issuing asylum seeker outcomes, the DHA proposes that the country make reservations in line with other global countries that made reservations in the 1951 Convention and 1967 Convention [11]. The DHA proposes that reservations to be made as envisioned in the 1951 Convention are the following: Article 17 as a whole, Article 17 paragraph 2, and Articles 7, 8, 9, 13, 15, and 24; and reservations to be made in the 1967 Protocol are Articles 24 and 29 [14]. Regarding the 1941 Convention, the DHA lists countries such as Zimbabwe, Zambia, Uganda, Angola, Australia, Ethiopia, Mozambique, the UK, and Northern Ireland [13]. And about countries that made exceptional reservations in the 1967 Protocol, the DHA mentions eSwatini, Netherlands, the UK, Northern Ireland, and the US [13].

As a result, the White Paper DHA argues that failure to make any reservations in the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol was a serious misstep by the democratic government and therefore, the paper recommends that the Republic of South Africa must embark on the following policy pathways [13]:

- Review and/or withdraw from the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol to accede to them with reservations like other countries—the procedure involves depositing the reservations with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

- The new refugee and immigration legislation must have reservations and exceptions as contained in the 1951 Convention and the 1969 OAU Convention,

especially because South Africa has limited resources to operationalise the socio-economic rights provided for in the 1951 Convention.

- The Refugee Reception Offices must be located at the ports of entry to facilitate immediate assessment of asylum claims.
- The new legislation must have provisions to repatriate refugees to their countries of origin 'in order to lessen the burden that comes with recognition of refugees'.
- The process of acquiring citizenship needs to be securitised in line with countries such as the US, Canada, Switzerland, and Britain.

The main message in the proposed White Paper is that the entire immigration legislative and policy framework needs to be overhauled in order to make it difficult for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers to gain access to the country's systems and overwhelm the asylum seeker system. This means that instead of spending time fixing the bureaucratic structures, systems, procedures, inefficiencies, delays, backlogs, and institutionalised corruption, the DHA has decided to scapegoat refugees and asylum seekers. The current draft paper has been criticised by researchers who have argued that South Africa has a trend of introducing policies that are not situated in research and evidence, but rather focused on scapegoating immigrants for the government's failures [15].

The proposed changes emphasise a securitised approach to immigration and seek to consolidate various acts to address perceived challenges, including the alleged overwhelming of the asylum seeker system by economic migrants. The draft White Paper contends that the current absence of reservations in the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol, a departure from the approach taken by some other nations, was a strategic misstep by the democratic government.

The proposed policy pathways involve reviewing and potentially withdrawing from these international agreements to accede to them with reservations. Additionally, the document advocates for immediate assessment of asylum claims at ports of entry, repatriation provisions, and a securitised approach to citizenship acquisition. However, this proposed shift has been criticised by researchers, who argue that the trend in South Africa of introducing policies that scapegoat immigrants for government failures needs a foundation in research and evidence. This underscores the importance of a balanced and evidence-based approach to immigration policies that considers national security concerns and the protection of human rights [19].

5. Bureaucratic mismanagement: scapegoating of refugees and asylum seekers

The preceding sections of this chapter have illustrated shifts in legislation and policy initiated by the South African government concerning asylum seekers and refugees. These sections have outlined a discernible pattern wherein the government has been tightening regulations on this demographic, notably curtailing their rights, including the right to work. This represents a departure from the initially observed human rights-based approach evident in earlier instruments following democratisation. The subsequent section delves into a discussion of specific bureaucratic

inefficiencies inherent in the asylum system in South Africa. Furthermore, it underscores how refugees and asylum seekers have been strategically employed as scapegoats to rationalise the implementation of recent, more stringent policy adjustments.

5.1 Bureaucratic mismanagement in the refugee process

There are two main bureaucratic hurdles that asylum seekers and refugees experience in the South African system: long waiting times for application outcomes due to longstanding backlogs and the closure of certain Refugee Reception Offices [8].

Firstly, status determination outcome backlogs occur as a result of appeals made by asylum seekers to the Refugee Appeals Authority of South Africa and the Standing Committee on Refugee Affairs, statutory bodies in the DHA that are responsible for reconsidering applications where asylum seekers believe that their applications were incorrectly rejected by the Refugee Status Determination Officer [20]. In March 2023, the Refugee Appeals Authority of South Africa informed parliament that it had 133,582 appeal cases. Although the DHA partnered with the UNHCR to build capacity for clearing this backlog, the appeals body has not managed to clear backlog cases. Meanwhile, the Standing Committee on Refugee Affairs also informed parliament in 2021 that it has a backlog of 28,549 decisions to be reviewed, which it viewed as abusive, unfounded, or fraudulent.

The backlogs are also due to the high rejection rates by the Refugee Status Determination Officers, who have been accused of misinterpreting problems, including applicants' country of origin information [20]. In fact, the DHA argues that it rejects 90% of asylum seeker applications because most of the applicants are economic migrants and not genuine asylum seekers [3]. It is essential to highlight that asylum seeker application backlogs are not only unique to South Africa but also prominent in countries such as the USA, which had nearly 1.6 million in 2022 [21]. The UK also recorded 132,182 asylum applications backlog in 2022 [22].

Secondly, the closure of some of the country's Refugee Reception Offices has proven to be a bureaucratic nightmare for asylum seekers and refugees. Some refer to this closure as 'procedural, administrative and logistical hurdles that complicate an already tenuous status and sustainability' [11]. Indeed, by closing three offices, the DHA only allowed asylum seekers to renew their permits at their initial application offices [23]. To this end, previous research has found that the closure of some of these application offices puts enormous administrative and financial burdens on asylum seekers and refugees whose permit renewal periods depend on how many bribes they can afford to pay [11]. The rampant corruption has resulted from the heavy backlogs and overwhelming demand in the asylum seeker system [24].

Asylum seekers and refugees in the South African system face significant bureaucratic challenges, primarily characterised by prolonged waiting times for application outcomes and the closure of certain Refugee Reception Offices. The closure of Refugee Reception Offices compounds these challenges, creating procedural, administrative, and logistical hurdles. These bureaucratic hurdles exacerbate the vulnerabilities of asylum seekers and refugees in South Africa, creating a complex and challenging environment for those seeking protection and refuge.

5.2 Scapegoating in the context of refugee issues

While scapegoating immigrants in South Africa generally takes place in the media or via political discourse by accusations such as migrants steal our jobs, migrants

cause crime, migrants are overwhelming service delivery, or there are many undocumented migrants in the country, the accusation directed explicitly at asylum seekers and refugees are especially formalised as demonstrated in this chapter through policy and legislative amendments. Previous research has found that while South African migration policies have become less restrictive between the period 1948 and 2020—benefitting undocumented migrants through amnesty and regularisation programmes in the process—border control policies have become more restrictive, with asylum seekers and refugees bearing more brunt in comparison to other categories of migrants [25]. This demonstrates that asylum seekers and refugees are a group of migrants that are considered unwanted migrants, similar to undocumented migrants.

The closure of certain Refugee Reception Offices, the introduction of asylum processing centres, and the reduction of rights to education, work, and trade for asylum seekers and refugees because they are apparently abusing and overwhelming the asylum system demonstrates policy shifts towards scapegoating rather than bureaucratic efficiency.

During the COVID-19, asylum seekers and refugees in the EU were also demonised in language by politicians, with the Hungarian Prime Minister blaming migrants for spreading the virus in Hungary; other right-wing politicians portraying migrants as a threat that brings the virus to countries, such as Italy, Greece, Croatia, France, Germany, and Spain [26]. The same occurred in South Africa when the government needed justification to close all borders. At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, South African borders were closed, and the Minister of Public Works announced the plan to erect a 40 km fence to prevent undocumented or infected migrants from coming to South Africa at the Beitbridge Border Post, which costs the public funds R37 million and was destroyed by migrants within a few weeks [27].

In 2016, the president-elect of the United States, Donald Trump, garnered support by using rhetoric that seemed to blame Mexicans and Muslims for various social and economic issues [28]. Similarly, the pre-Brexit campaign in the UK also targeted immigrants and foreign bureaucrats, holding them responsible for a range of social problems, including violent crime and funding challenges for the NHS [28]. Beyond official policy positions, the scapegoating of asylum seekers and refugees in South Africa also occurs through utterances by politicians and citizens when they are given platforms in the media. In fact, policy and legislative amendments mostly follow utterances and announcements in the media by politicians (especially during election seasons) who aim to influence citizens to buy into the new stringent controls against immigrants.

5.3 Media representation

The media contributes to the scapegoating of refugees in the language it uses to describe asylum seekers and refugees and their movement. In Australia, there are asylum seekers described as waves that are arriving on illegal boat arrivals, which frames them in a harmful and dehumanising light [29]. This is not different in South Africa. Researchers posit that in South Africa's media landscape, in discussions surrounding the removal of migrants generally, terms like deport, expel, and hinder are commonly used, reflecting the ideas of deportation, forceful displacement, or the implementation of stringent visa requirements [30]. The narrative also emphasises actions such as arrest, suspect, and detain, reinforcing the perception of foreigners as law violators [30].

During coverage of issues that involved refugees and migrants, mainstream media has been accused of not offering enough counter-arguments to callers and politicians that scapegoat migrants [10]. These narratives have an impact on how society views migrants, especially in a country which is known for xenophobic attacks like South Africa.

5.4 Political discourse

In cities like Johannesburg, immigrants are frequently linked to criminal activities and accused of taking away employment opportunities—politicians capitalise on community discontent with inequality and socio-economic conditions, using migrants as scapegoats for their own failures to address these issues [10]. There has been a rise in political figures attributing problems such as crime, unemployment, and various social issues in South Africa to foreigners [10]. Some researchers contend that politicians have a vested interest in depicting refugees and asylum seekers as constituting a crisis, as presented in the media, because this portrayal serves to rationalise the implementation of strict border controls and measures against this population group, enabling politicians to avoid scrutiny for the lack of political will to host refugees and collaborate with other destination countries in sharing responsibilities [1]. Unfortunately, these utterances trickle down to society via the media, where they have the potential to change the attitudes of citizens towards asylum seekers and refugees.

5.5 Societal attitudes

Examining the impact of politicians scapegoating asylum seekers in the media is essential for understanding its repercussions on societal attitudes, particularly in a nation like South Africa, where xenophobic attacks often target economically disadvantaged African migrants in impoverished areas. The intersection between political discourse, the portrayal of messages to local communities, and the resultant attitudes towards refugees and asylum seekers is a crucial aspect that merits careful consideration. This is further linked to the high levels of inequality and the belief that migrants deprive South Africans of job opportunities, a recurrent notion, particularly during episodes of xenophobic violence [10]. This perception aligns with a global pattern where immigrants are often viewed as individuals who steal jobs from South Africans [10]. For instance, in the UK the right to work was curtailed by the Labour government in mid-2002 through a policy change that allows asylum seekers the right to apply for work permission after 12 months, a move away from when asylum seekers could apply for permission to work if they had been waiting in the country for their claim outcome for 6 months [31]. According to Ziegler, a 2018 survey study revealed widespread opposition to refugee reception in South Africa, with 50% of the respondents expressing opposition to welcoming asylum seekers who are fleeing war and violence from their countries of origin [18].

5.6 Impact on refugees and asylum seekers

This is an essential chapter because bureaucratic inefficiencies have severe implications for asylum seekers and refugees beyond policy implications. Migration Observatory posits that making asylum seekers wait for prolonged periods for their

outcomes in the UK due to backlogs has mental health costs, integration costs, and financial costs for asylum seekers [22]. Previous research in South Africa has also found that long waiting periods and procedures lead to undue psychological distress, trauma, hopelessness, and worthlessness [32]. Indeed, if the contention is that asylum seekers and refugees strain the asylum system, it would be prudent to prioritise the maintenance of their mental health (by avoiding making them wait in limbo) to prevent potential strain on the public health system.

The scapegoating by curtailing the refugee system benefits in policy further impacts the socio-economic circumstances of asylum seekers [33]. In 2023, refugees in Limpopo faced challenges in obtaining social grants for their children due to their inability to renew expired documents at the DHA, stemming from prolonged bureaucratic delays in the issuance of outcomes [34].

Therefore, this chapter underscores the significant consequences of bureaucratic inefficiencies on asylum seekers and refugees, emphasising the mental health, integration, and financial costs associated with prolonged waiting periods, as observed in the UK and South Africa, while also highlighting the socio-economic impact resulting from policy measures curtailing refugee system benefits and the challenges faced by refugees in Limpopo in 2023 due to bureaucratic delays.

6. Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates that South Africa's asylum and refugee protection system, rooted in international human rights instruments, is acknowledged globally for its progressiveness. However, the implementation of these policies has been marred by bureaucratic challenges, leading to criticisms of delays, mismanagement, and intentional restrictions on access to asylum processes. Overall, South Africa's journey in refugee governance reflects both commendable progress and persistent challenges, urging continued scrutiny and potential reforms to ensure a more effective and just system.

Asylum seekers and refugees navigating the South African system encounter notable bureaucratic obstacles, marked by extended periods of uncertainty in application processing and the shutdown of specific Refugee Reception Offices. The closure of these offices amplifies the difficulties, introducing procedural, administrative, and logistical impediments that further intensify the vulnerabilities faced by those seeking protection and refuge in South Africa, thereby creating a complex and challenging environment for those seeking protection and refuge. This raises the need to fix the bureaucratic dysfunctionality and avoids scapegoating asylum seekers and refugees for their own institutional failures.

South Africa holds a prominent status as a key destination for migrants within the continent. Consequently, it is imperative for the country to acknowledge and embrace this role by formulating policies geared towards effectively managing and understanding the migrant population rather than attempting to discourage migration. It is crucial to recognise that deterring international migration is inherently challenging, given its intrinsic nature in human behaviour. Additionally, asylum seekers and refugees are compelled to seek refuge due to conditions in their countries of origin, factors that lie beyond the refugees' and South Africa's direct control. Should the nation persist in adopting restrictive measures akin to Western approaches against asylum seekers and refugees, there exists a potential risk of witnessing a surge in undocumented migrant numbers. Such restrictive measures may inadvertently drive migrants towards perilous pathways and underground channels, as opposed to deterring them.

Attributing blame to refugees and asylum seekers is not a solution for addressing bureaucratic mismanagement within the DHA. Instead, the emphasis should be on strengthening the asylum seeker system and establishing robust governance frameworks to eradicate corruption and alleviate protracted bureaucratic delays. Additionally, the nation ought to prioritise regional solutions that take into account the historical context of migration in the region, addressing the underlying causes of economic migration. It is essential to ensure that legitimate asylum seekers are not deprived of the rights safeguarded by the constitution and international institutions due to the actions of economic migrants exploiting the asylum system. Unless the intention is not to manage migration but to compel migrants to leave, a more comprehensive and equitable approach is necessary.

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Chapter 10

The Ripple Effects of Climate Change on Migration Patterns

José María Ramos García and Jimmy Emmanuel Ramos Valencia

Abstract

This chapter rigorously examines the influence of climate change on migration dynamics from the Northern Triangle countries—Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala—towards the southern Mexican and United States borders, analyzed through a national security lens. Utilizing comprehensive analyses of principal diagnostics from the World Bank, the International Organization for Migration, and the United States' strategic climate change response, it anticipates the continuation of climate-induced migration due to socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing climate change. This investigation uniquely evaluates climate migration, integrating a multidisciplinary approach that includes aspects of migration, security, climate change, and development, highlighting the significant impact of climate change on regional mobility trends expected to persist. Despite these challenges, the prioritization of climate change effects in migrant-origin countries remains minimal, overshadowed by the economic benefits of emigration, particularly through international remittances. The chapter also critiques the current lack of comprehensive international or regional policies to mitigate this migration, despite the strategic efforts by the United States to address the issue from a national security perspective. It underscores the complexity of developing a cohesive policy framework that addresses climate change, migration, rights, and employment, emphasizing the necessity of promoting labor mobility in the face of economic and environmental pressures.

Keywords: climate migration, national security, northern triangle countries, socioeconomic impacts, policy strategies

1. Introduction

This chapter sets the stage for an in-depth exploration into the complex interplay between climate change and migration patterns, specifically focusing on the Northern Triangle countries—Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala—and their migratory flows towards the southern border of Mexico and the United States. This analysis is framed within the context of national security, highlighting the multifaceted impacts that climate-induced migration has on regional stability and security paradigms [1].

Given the interdisciplinary nature of this study, the introduction aims to lay a foundation that is accessible to both experts in the field and readers new to the subject. It begins by outlining the critical role of climate change as a driver of migration, underscoring the urgent need to examine these dynamics through the lens of national

security. This approach is necessitated by the increasing recognition of climate change not just as an environmental issue, but as a multifactorial challenge that intersects with socio-economic, political, and security dimensions [2].

The methodology section elucidates the analytical framework employed, drawing on pivotal diagnostics from authoritative sources such as the World Bank, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and strategic planning documents from the United States. These sources provide a comprehensive backdrop against which the ongoing and anticipated climate-driven migration trends can be assessed.

This study employs a diachronic approach to explore the evolution and prospective increase in migration rates, particularly focusing on how the foreign policy propositions of Mexico and the United States have influenced the mass migration movements from Central America. By analyzing a series of longitudinal data and strategic documents, this methodology enables a deep dive into the shifts and trends over time, providing a forward-looking perspective on migration dynamics. This approach is complemented by a rigorous review of official documents that are regularly updated regarding the migration phenomenon, ensuring that our analysis remains anchored in the most current and relevant data available.

In tracking the phenomenon of migration, special attention is given to the role of climate change as a critical variable in understanding the complex nature of migration in a holistic manner. This aspect of the study draws on foundational works such as "Climate Change in Central America: A Navigation Guide" by Bárcena et al. [3], which offers a comprehensive overview of climate impacts in the region, and "Root Causes of Migration from Guatemala: Analysis of Subnational Trends Policy Brief" by Bermeo et al. [4], providing insight into the underlying factors driving migration from specific localities. These sources, among others cited, form the bedrock of our analytical framework, enabling an examination of how environmental changes exacerbate migration pressures and intersect with socioeconomic factors.

Moreover, the research methodology incorporates a prospective analysis, considering policy responses and strategic planning documents from the United States and Mexico, such as the U.S. Department of State's bilateral cooperation frameworks and initiatives outlined by The White House to address broader security and migration challenges. This prospective angle allows for an assessment of how current and future policies might shape migration trends, particularly in light of the increasing recognition of climate change as a determinant factor. By synthesizing data from a variety of authoritative sources, including the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's migration statistics and strategic security outlines provided by the U.S. government, this study not only maps out the historical trajectory of migration but also projects potential future scenarios, underscoring the multifaceted impacts of climate change on migration patterns.

Anticipated findings suggest that the socio-economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with the persistent challenges posed by climate change, are likely to fuel continued migration from the Northern Triangle to Mexico and the United States [5]. This chapter not only explores the direct impacts of these phenomena but also delves into the broader implications for national security, including the adequacy of current policies and the need for a multidisciplinary approach to address the complexities of climate-induced migration.

In conclusion, this introduction underscores the significance of climate change as a determinant of migration and sets the premise for a detailed examination of its implications on national security. Through a blend of theoretical analysis and empirical

evidence, this chapter seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse on climate migration, offering insights into the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in managing these dynamics effectively.

2. Climate migration: impacts on global security and cooperation

The climate crisis is radically reshaping society and its environment on an international scale, as the climate is being altered due to fluctuations in temperature and the frequency of meteorological phenomena [6]. When climate change is combined with physical, social, economic, and/or environmental vulnerabilities, it affects food, water, and economic security, underscoring the importance of conceptualizing climate change from the perspective of global security.

This priority is relevant considering the implications of climate change in terms of instability and conflicts affecting human security, global security, and the environment in transboundary regions internationally [7]. There is a strong correlation between regions most vulnerable to climate change and those that are fragile and/or facing conflicts or violence. This is the case for the Northern Triangle countries experiencing both phenomena, pressuring vulnerable communities, and increasing human displacement towards Mexico and the United States [8].

Between 1998 and 2020, it is estimated that climatic and geophysical phenomena caused 312,000 deaths and affected more than 277 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean, according to the World Meteorological Organization's report on the state of the climate [6]. In the updated version of the World Bank's Groundswell report, it is emphasized that climate change could force 216 million people from six regions around the world to move within their countries by 2050 [9].

Climate change is impacting human mobility in the region. The local and regional cross-border dimension of policies is relevant, considering that most human displacements associated with climate change occur at the borders of countries, for example, the Northern Triangle, highlighting the importance of promoting effective regional co-responsibility with countries in the region [10]. However, at the borders of these countries, neither climate change nor labor mobility are priorities, as the central problem for them is food security, because of the pandemic's effects [11].

In 2021, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre identified more than 1.6 million displacements by disasters in the Americas; in 2020, mobility was estimated at 4.5 million [12]. By 2050, the World Bank estimates the potential number of climate migrants in Latin America to be 17 million if scenarios and the effects of climate change on environmental and social aspects are met [9]. These scenarios are associated with temperature increases, decreased precipitation, and the limited implementation of reactive or strategic policies to reduce the effects of climate change from an international or regional cooperation perspective.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has highlighted that, between 2008 and 2016, an average of 21.5 million people were displaced by effects of climate change. According to the World Bank's projections, if the impacts of climate change are not as severe, there could be between 1.4 and 2.1 million "climate migrants" in Mexico and Central America by 2050. In a more pessimistic scenario, they could reach 3.9 million, representing 1.9% of the region's population [9].

Analyzing the number of migrant detentions by the U.S. government over the past 3 years shows that the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic influenced historic migration in the flows from Central America to the United States [13]. In the last fiscal year

(October 2021 to August 2022), 1,997,769 migrants were detained by U.S. immigration authorities. In the fiscal year (October to November 2022), USCBP has detained 411,125 irregular migrants, highlighting that for 4 months, non-regional migrants (Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela among others) have surpassed migrants from Mexico and the Northern Triangle [14].

These data are historic in the border relations between the Northern Triangle countries and Mexico [15]. These flows are explained by the socioeconomic effects of the pandemic and the growth of the U.S. economy. It is necessary to note that this context is outside the effects of climate change. According to these data, it can be considered that the effects of the economic crisis derived from the post-pandemic have had more influence than climate change on the recent migratory mobility of the Northern Triangle countries and other countries in the region towards Mexico and the United States [16]. Likewise, the deficits in implementing economic growth policies of the Northern Triangle countries have influenced.

The short-term scenario is that rainfall will decrease in Mexico and Central America, and there will be increasingly more extreme climatic events related to El Niño. Climate change and variability will affect the production of corn and beans in Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and to a lesser extent, Guatemala. As a result, climate change will translate into economic losses and impacts of greater poverty and social inequalities for small farmers and an increase in labor migration. Farmers who depend on rain are vulnerable to droughts, and their families may opt to migrate.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the impacts of climate change are exacerbated by factors such as inequality, poverty, demographic growth, occupation of high-risk spaces, and, in general, ineffective sustainable planning for the exploitation of natural resources within a local-regional development approach [17]. These problems are structural in the case of the Northern Triangle countries, especially in the last 15 years, and reflect their management deficits and policies to address such a scenario, and particularly the effects of climate change, which are not part of government priorities [18].

The agricultural context in Central America also influences the formulation of policies towards climate change and to regulate international migration. For example, coffee production, which is crucial for thousands of farmers in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, is especially vulnerable to climate variations. Additionally, its price at the global level has decreased, which has caused less interest in its cultivation, despite its strategic relevance for the economy and governance. The challenge for the countries in the region is to manage this agricultural scenario and its effects on migratory flows and promote policies that address this agricultural context, as well as those that encourage the mitigation of climate change and better management of migratory flows between the Northern Triangle countries and destination towards the United States [19].

Another relevant context for Central American migration is represented by the Dry Corridor, where more than 22 million people live. The Dry Corridor extends from southern Chiapas, Mexico, to Guanacaste, Costa Rica. It has a length of approximately 1600 kilometers, is located on the Pacific coast, and covers 30% of the area of Central America. This area is characterized by having a dual climate, marked by the El Niño – Southern Oscillation phenomenon and climate change. This means that every year, families in the Dry Corridor face a period of intense drought combined with another of torrential rains and floods. Extreme drought and excessive precipitation and floods in the same year impact the subsistence agriculture of basic grains [20], 80% of the basic grain-producing families in the northern triangle of the Dry Corridor live in conditions of poverty, and 30% are in a condition of extreme poverty [21].

An analysis by the Pew Research Center reports that, from 2007 to 2017, immigration to the United States from the northern triangle of the Dry Corridor grew by 25%, being this the region that reflects the highest growth among all regions of origin in the world.

3. Central American migration: a multidimensional perspective

Migration from Central American countries is associated with three primary factors: the lack of economic opportunities and low living standards, extreme weather events related to climate change, and violence [22]. Unemployment triggered by the pandemic has been a decisive factor, affecting underemployment and job precarity, especially among youth [8].

Central American migration to the United States has been a historical constant over the last decades, characterized by a series of factors extending beyond the pursuit of better economic opportunities [23]. This predominantly irregular migration has been shaped by elements including insecurity, violence, lack of opportunities, poverty, and increasingly, the impacts of climate change. According to research by Martínez et al. [24], and Castillo and Toussaint [13], the migratory route to the United States through Mexico has become a transit corridor reflecting the complexity of circumstances faced by migrants from their countries of origin and during their journey. These factors, as well as their implications for family dynamics in the context of irregular migration, have been thoroughly explored by Aguilar et al. [25]. This essay delves into a historical exploration of these factors to better understand how they have evolved and continue to influence migration patterns from Central America to the United States.

The recent migratory profile is reflected in the number of irregular migrants detained by the United States Customs and Border Protection. In 2021, approximately 44% of individuals from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras were adults seeking opportunities, 40% were families seeking a more dignified life, and about 16% were unaccompanied minors (i.e., 122,000 children and adolescents) [26]. This profile has remained consistent in the fiscal year 2022, but there has been a notable increase in migration from individuals outside the study region, particularly migrants from Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua, Haiti, and African countries [14].

Economic precarity is a significant driver of migration from Central American countries. The lack of satisfactory job opportunities, low wages, and poverty have compelled many Central Americans to seek a better future in the United States [24]. The pandemic has exacerbated this situation, increasing unemployment and underemployment rates, particularly affecting youth, a population significantly susceptible to the allure of the north.

Violence is another critical factor driving migration from these countries. El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala suffer from high rates of crime and violence, often related to gangs and drug trafficking [13]. Threats to personal and family security have forced many to leave their homes in search of refuge.

Moreover, extreme weather events, exacerbated by climate change, have begun to play an increasingly significant role in Central American migration. Prolonged droughts, devastating hurricanes, and other natural disasters have undermined food security and destroyed homes and livelihoods, pushing more people to migrate [25].

The composition of migration flows is also noteworthy. During the fiscal year 2021, approximately 44% of detentions at the United States border involved adults

seeking opportunities, 40% involved families in search of a more dignified life, and about 16% involved unaccompanied minors. While these patterns have remained relatively stable in 2022, there has been an increase in migration from individuals outside the Central American region, with a significant number of migrants coming from Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua, Haiti, and African countries [14].

The increase in the number of irregular migrants detected at the border between the United States and Mexico is an indicator of the challenge these countries face. Encounters by the United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) with migrants from Central American countries, mainly El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, increased markedly from 109,100 in fiscal year 2020 to approximately 705,500 in fiscal year 2022 [14].

In response to this situation, the Biden administration has implemented a mix of strict and humanitarian policies. On one hand, it has introduced a rule that bars many non-Mexican migrants from applying for asylum in the United States unless they have previously applied in at least one of the countries they passed through and were denied [27]. However, it has also implemented investment and assistance strategies in countries of origin, extended protection programs for minors and refugees, and created processes for family reunification [28].

These new migrants join an already established population of Central American immigrants in the United States, which has experienced significant growth over the last decades. Immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras have been the main contributors to this increase [29].

It's important to note that this description represents only an overview of the Central American migration phenomenon, and individual experiences can vary considerably. Migration decisions are complex and multifaceted, influenced by a combination of factors at the individual, family, community, national, and international levels. Therefore, it's crucial to continue researching and understanding the challenges and opportunities facing migrants to inform future policies and practices.

Migration from Central America to the United States is a multifactorial phenomenon, but increasingly, climate change is playing a prominent role in its drive. This region, particularly the Dry Corridor of Central America, is among the most vulnerable to climate change globally, experiencing prolonged droughts, more frequent and intense hurricanes, and other natural disasters that threaten agriculture, the primary livelihood for many Central Americans [30].

The relationship between climate change and migration is complex and nonlinear, but recent academic literature and field reports suggest a growing connection. Recurrent droughts and climate variability, coupled with low agricultural yields and food insecurity, are affecting Central Americans' decisions to leave their homes in search of new opportunities.

As climate change continues to intensify, its impacts on food security, housing, water, and other essential aspects of daily life are expected to worsen. This means more people may be forced to migrate because of climate factors. Therefore, climate change could become an increasingly important driver of migration from Central America in the coming decades.

To effectively address Central American migration, it will be essential not only to address the immediate causes of migration but also the underlying causes, including climate change. This requires long-term, adaptive solutions that address the socioeconomic and environmental challenges in the countries of origin, help communities adapt to climate change, and provide legal pathways for migration.

4. Climate migration and security concerns in Central America

Climate change has been contextualized as part of the national security framework by several countries, notably by the United States government [31], due to its wide-ranging social, economic, and employment implications that generally influence migration to the country [14]. From this perspective, the nexus between security and climate change underscores the importance of articulating a governmental agenda that aims to mitigate the negative impacts and thus propose alternatives to alleviate the immediate and long-term effects of climate change. However, most countries in the Central American region, particularly those of the Northern Triangle, have not accorded such a priority within global security since it is not a significant concern on their governmental agenda and because maintaining migration for the purposes of international remittances [9] is considered beneficial, in some cases being viewed as the primary resource for providing these countries with external financial resources. Moreover, in the border regions of the Northern Triangle countries, climate change or labor mobility are not prioritized, as their main urgency is to prevent famine in the populations [32].

In this context, the contribution proposed by the United States Government to manage the interaction between security, climate, climate change, migratory flows, and their socio-economic and environmental impacts is highly relevant [33]. This policy is justified based on the priority granted by the United States government; the national security perspective presented, the public agenda in terms of federal policy, and the actions planned with respect to the countries in the region.

The World Bank report [9] presents other policy recommendations that can help slow down the drivers of climate migration and prepare for anticipated migratory flows. Among these proposals are:

- Reducing global emissions and progressing towards the Paris Agreement, which implies greater political will, effective international cooperation, and increased regional co-responsibility of migrant-sending countries. The challenge lies in the feasibility of promoting such political will.

- Integrating internal migration for climate reasons into planning based on a green, resilient, and inclusive agenda. The challenge is to integrate the initiative into the public agenda of the countries in the Central American region.

- Increasing migratory flows, whereby internal migration for climate reasons can be conceived as an adaptation strategy. This aspect is equally relevant but must be part of the agenda. This concept has not been a priority for migration in the Northern Triangle countries.

- Promoting greater understanding of the determinants of migration for climate reasons; the challenge is to formulate a cross-cutting policy that generates employment options and resources for migrant-sending communities.

The following questions are raised: What incentives do countries in the region need to engage in a climate change agenda when they have other priorities on the public agenda? Are processes of power centralization maintained or reinforced in the context of the pandemic [34], where irregular labor mobility is the best alternative for obtaining international income?

Among the labor options to reduce regional emigration, it is proposed that regular temporary migration programs could contribute to the economic development of both countries of origin and destination, by fostering skills and generating productive assets for migrants and their households [33]. Additionally, facilitating regular mechanisms of labor migration (temporary) highlights the importance of 2HA and 2HB work visas promoted by the United States government, which can be a situational alternative for inclusion for labor migration from the countries in the region [35].

In South America, some innovation initiatives have been proposed, including promoting action plans and national alignments on climate migration, relocating populations in risk zones, and promoting humanitarian visas for disaster victims [6]. The challenge of these initiatives is to integrate them into a human rights agenda, the Global Compact for Migration, and the 2030 Agenda [9].

Coordination among different actors, the exchange of experiences, and support from the international community are fundamental. The IOM has reiterated that climate negotiations are a space to integrate human mobility, under the premise that it is impossible to undertake climate action without addressing the impacts of global warming on migratory flows [36]. The challenge is: How to integrate such an approach into the policy agenda of the countries in the region, in a framework of scarce governmental priority? It is important to consider that the Northern Triangle countries have other internal policy priorities, such as promoting greater governance, controlling insecurity and violence, and generating economic growth options.

Another difficulty is that the relationship between climate change and its impacts on human mobility has not been part of an international or national agenda. This phenomenon occurs because the problems and impacts of climate change, despite their evident socio-environmental effects, are not part of the public agenda, that is, they are not a priority in government plans, due to predominance of reactive actions and more incentives to promote international emigration under a framework of labor contraction.

Furthermore, international initiatives, while important and have allowed progress in understanding the relationship between climate change and labor displacements, have not generated incentives with the countries in the region based on strategic plans where effective accompaniment by international organizations prevails.

This was the challenge presented at the 27th edition of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27), held in Egypt in November 2022, with the goal of surpassing general agreements and advancing concrete incentives to promote intervention plans that integrate human mobility displaced by the effects of climate change [37]. Although proposals exist, the mechanisms have not been viable, therefore it is necessary to ensure a successful transition towards greener, more resilient, and sustainable economies that protect the most vulnerable populations.

In Central America, particularly in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, climate change particularly affects vulnerable populations and contributes to the emigration process. Consequently, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is promoting investment in nature-based climate solutions aimed at vulnerable populations through biodiversity conservation initiatives [3].

Another promoted activity is the generation and application of climate information, and the promotion of climate-smart agricultural practices [4]. The challenge of these strategies is to articulate them in local and regional development proposals, as part of prioritizing a comprehensive development agenda, where international remittances could be part of a strategy to lessen the effects of climate change and generate some local employment options [38].

The IDB study [39] proposes some recommendations considered to be of limited viability. Among the main ones are promoting the role of civil society, local governments, and the private sector through support for educational programs and access to climate information; and encouraging the planning of adaptation by subnational governments and partnerships with the private sector. These options are associated with the United States government initiative [40].

A year after the formulation of the United States government study, progress is limited. It is considered necessary to promote greater regional co-responsibility and improve implementation mechanisms. In particular, the governments of the Northern Triangle have concentrated their decision-making processes, in a pandemic context, marginalizing local governments. At the local level, in the Northern Triangle countries, their priority is food security, education, and job creation for vulnerable groups [41], so climate change is not a governmental priority.

In this context, the climate change agenda in the Northern Triangle countries faces the following challenges:

- Strengthening the socio-environmental priority in the public agendas of the three levels of government of the Northern Triangle countries.

- Promoting the participation of the United States government with the goal of articulating the labor mobility agenda with the impacts of climate change on regional migratory dynamics.

- Encouraging greater regional co-responsibility based on a multidimensional development agenda, in which climate change would be a governmental priority.

- Articulating the development plan proposals put forward by the governments of Mexico and the United States, along with a common agenda on climate change.

- Promoting a climate change and labor mobility impacts agenda, based on the agreements of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27).

- Articulating a common agenda on climate change and labor mobility, in line with the initiatives of the High-Level Economic Dialog (HLED).

5. HLED's approach to climate and migration in North America

Over the past 3 years, the governments of Mexico and the United States have proposed initiatives on migration and climate change within the framework of the High-Level Economic Dialog (HLED) and the North American Leaders' Summit. However, these presidential meetings have not introduced government initiatives that explicitly establish the relationship between climate change and international migration from the Northern Triangle countries and Mexico to the United States. This reflects an independent conception of both issues, not considered as part of the binational public agenda or national security, as posited by the U.S. federal government itself [35].

At the HLED meeting on September 9, 2021, revitalizing cooperation between the United States and Mexico to ensure safe and orderly migration was proposed, as well as revitalizing North America's economies. Additionally, collaboration on a

new approach to regional migration was discussed, incorporating the principles of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration [42], with an agenda focused on development promotion, border security (control of human traffickers), strengthening the rule of law, and increased governmental responsibility by Central American countries.

The second HLED meeting, held in September 2022, focused on objectives of economic growth and development, job creation, global competitiveness, and reducing poverty and inequality. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, who chaired the meeting, emphasized the importance of promoting semiconductor production to advance a strategic partnership in North America aimed at reducing dependence on China.

Secretary Blinken acknowledged Mexico as a priority in current U.S. policy, given a series of shared issues: production and trafficking of fentanyl, management of irregular migration in line with the commitments of the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection, climate change, and revitalizing value chains [27].

As observed, the relationship between climate change and labor mobility was not explicitly considered in both HLED meetings. Most of the HLED objectives, particularly the 2021 agreements, have yet to be implemented. Labor emigration has increased in the last 2 years because of climate change and, fundamentally, the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic in the Northern Triangle countries.

Climate change is a priority for the new U.S. government. President Joseph Biden hosted the Leaders' Summit on Climate Change on April 22, 2021, which was the first global meeting on the issue. He also held a meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, where both highlighted their commitment to the climate change agenda and a green economy. The Mexican government, represented by President López Obrador, also can join this agenda and leverage the benefits of a trilateral and global agenda that, articulated with the post-pandemic agenda, generates opportunities for environmental, health, and economic resilience, as well as an option to regulate emigration. Climate change is a central and global security issue [43] on President Biden's agenda. Consequently, he convened leaders from 17 countries responsible for 80% of global emissions on April 22 and 23, 2021. President Biden aims to make the climate crisis a central pillar of his administration, appointing John Kerry as Special Envoy for Climate and proposing a $1.7 trillion investment in clean energies, while aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2050 [33].

Climate change has been a priority on President Biden's domestic, bilateral, and international agenda. At the North American Leaders' Summit on November 18, 2021, the presidents of Mexico, the United States, and Canada committed to promoting renewable energies in North America, including technical assistance and the exchange of best practices. Another bilateral challenge is managing asymmetric interdependence based on shared issues and the growth and development priorities of each country. In particular, the proposals made at the North American Leaders' Summit on November 18, 2021, should be considered, where essential industries were agreed upon to minimize future disruptions given the region's need for resilient, sustainable, diverse, and secure supply chains to manage economic security [44]. In this framework, a priority strategy for the U.S. government is to accelerate the transition to sustainable transport, including the manufacture of electric vehicles.

The challenge of the proposed environmental and climate change (CC) initiatives lies in integrating the migration agenda, considering that the HLED and North American Leaders' Summit do not explicitly address the impact of CC on labor migration from the Northern Triangle countries to Mexico and the United States. The fact that this issue is not emphasized in U.S. governmental agendas reflects that there

are other more relevant effects of CC, such as drought, fires, the transition to electric mobility, and temperature increase, impacting migration flows. Another challenge is to strengthen the priority of CC effects and alternatives, especially in Central America and Mexico. The level of Mexican development compared to the United States will also condition the progress of the proposed initiatives.

Furthermore, another indicator of CC priority in the U.S. government is the approval, on August 7, 2022, of a federal law by the U.S. Senate that will allow investments against global warming. The estimated budget is $369 billion in spending and tax incentives over 10 years, aiming to boost clean energies and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030 [33].

This law could be linked to the environmental and CC initiatives proposed in the HLED, North American Leaders' Summit, and the Summit of the Americas, held in June 2022. Through regional development proposals towards the Northern Triangle countries, a higher priority, agenda articulation, and resources shared by the U.S. government concerning the region and regional cooperation mechanisms would be reflected.

Another opportunity to explore would be the articulation of the CC agenda with migration control in the Program and national security initiative [45] to ensure the U.S. government grants higher priority to the issue and thus advance a joint agenda. From the perspective of the Mexican government, the solution to migration and CC lies in the tree-planting program. President López Obrador proposed to President Biden to expand his tree-planting program, known as "Sembrando Vida," to Central American countries. The proposal involves planting three million hectares in Central America, which would help stop migration to the United States and create 1.3 million jobs in the region [46].

6. Climate-driven migration: focus at the summit of the Americas

The Summit is the sole forum convening leaders from North America, South America, Central America, and the Caribbean [47]. It and its associated forums champion cooperation towards economic growth and inclusive prosperity across the region, grounded in mutual respect for democracy, fundamental freedoms, the dignity of labor, and free enterprise. Central themes at the Summit included: the COVID-19 pandemic and its repercussions on health, economic, educational, and social systems. Additionally, threats to democracy, the climate crisis, and the lack of equitable access to economic, social, and political opportunities were addressed [48].

Analyzing the geopolitical interactions and agreements at the Summit of the Americas allows us to understand the political, economic, and social dynamics shaping the regional landscape. Through the review of various academic sources, experts' perspectives in the fields of international relations and Latin American politics will be explored.

A key topic discussed during the summit was the new geopolitical landscape in Latin America. Scholars such as Malamud and Núñez [49] examine the shifts and challenges the region faces within the evolving global relations context. Moreover, Morgenfeld and Merino [50] emphasize the significance of the United States' participation, under President Biden's leadership, and its role in the global dispute, as well as its influence on the Summit of the Americas in Los Angeles.

Another critical aspect to consider is the bilateral agenda between the United States and Mexico. Dithurbide [51] scrutinizes the recent positions and shared agenda

between both countries beyond the Ninth Summit of the Americas. This exploration provides a detailed view of the agreements and challenges both nations encounter.

Addressing the crisis of U.S. hegemony and disputes within the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) is essential. Merino and Morgenfeld [52] delve into this issue, highlighting conflicts and challenges in the region and their relation to the Summit of the Americas.

The analysis of geopolitical interactions and agreements at the Summit of the Americas unveils the complexity and significance of the issues discussed in this regional forum. The region's outlook and future perspectives are crucial for understanding and addressing the political, economic, and social challenges Latin American countries face. The Summit of the Americas emerges as a key platform to foster cooperation and inclusive prosperity throughout the region.

- Alliance for Economic Prosperity in the Americas. The Alliance for Economic Prosperity in the Americas represents a groundbreaking agreement to boost recovery and economic growth in the Western Hemisphere, one of the world's most economically dynamic regions. Key initiatives of this alliance include a) enhancing the resilience, diversity, security, transparency, and sustainability of supply chains; b) creating jobs in the clean energy sector to advance decarbonization and biodiversity protection; c) promoting inclusive and sustainable trade [53].

- Climate Change and Jobs in the Clean Energy Sector in the Americas. In response to the climate crisis, there is an opportunity to create quality jobs, propel economies based on clean energies, and build resilient communities in the region. Among the proposed initiatives are (a) the partnership between the United States and the Caribbean to address the Climate Crisis 2030; (b) strengthening the clean energy-based economy; (c) the 100,000 Strong in the Americas Climate Initiative [54].

- In response to this collective commitment, four regional development banks will facilitate financing of 50,000 million dollars. These banks include the Inter-American Development Bank, with the United States as a principal shareholder, the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), and the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI).

- Feasibility of a Climate Change Proposal and Its Integration with Migration. The feasibility of the initiatives proposed at the Summit, including the climate change agenda, depends on political will, effective management, and alignment with relevant outcomes and policies, as well as regional co-responsibility and global security.

It is noteworthy that the Summit did not explicitly address the impact of climate change on labor migration from the Northern Triangle countries to Mexico and the United States [55]. This reflects the prioritization of other climate change effects, such as drought, fires, the evolution of electric mobility, and temperature increases. The feasibility of the Summit's main agreements, particularly those related to climate change and migration, relies on an effective results-based management model.

The main management elements proposed to address climate change (CC) and its impact on labor migration are described below:

a. An integrated vision aligned with CC and other dimensions: A comprehensive vision that considers CC alongside social, environmental, employment, and meteorological impacts, as well as its influence on migratory flows at local, regional, cross-border, and international levels.

b. Strategic direction: A direction prioritizing the multidimensional opportunities of CC and related policies, establishing a connection with a migration agenda encompassing employment, rights, mobility, and resilience.

c. Strategic agenda: It is essential to define priorities focused on the relevance of CC objectives and alternatives, considering their effects on migration at local, regional, cross-border, and international levels.

d. Cross-sectional management: A management approach addressing various strategies for CC reduction, considering its impact on different dimensions of reactive, preventive, and strategic policies, and establishing a connection with the migration agenda.

e. Strategic leadership and promotion of institutional incentives: Leadership promoting impact on multidimensional CC policy and its impact on growth and migration management, through the implementation of institutional incentives.

f. Intra-organizational and inter-institutional coordination: Effective governmental coordination involving CC policies and their differentiated impact on migration, fostering collaboration among various institutions and agencies.

g. Coordination with civil society groups: Coordination considering the participation and contributions of civil society groups in CC policies, based on a shared social vision and focused, consensual actions.

h. Cross-sectoral strategies: Strategies promoting the viability of CC policies across dimensions such as social, cultural, environmental, employment, and gender, establishing their connection with migration.

i. Implementation and monitoring of cross-sectoral CC policies: The execution and comprehensive follow-up of reactive, preventive, and strategic policies related to CC, and their linkage with migratory flows.

j. Impact evaluation: An evaluation identifying the outcomes and impacts of CC policies and their relation to migration, aiming for a clear understanding of achievements and challenges.

k. Management indicators: Indicators to determine the concrete achievements of implementing a comprehensive CC policy and its relationship with migration.

Governments in the Central American region, Mexico, and the United States face the challenge of managing the impacts of CC on migration, strengthening migration governance, and promoting links between migration and sustainable development. It is crucial to establish permanent inter-institutional policies coordinating the U.S. government's efforts in mitigating and responding to labor

migration resulting from CC impacts. This process must consider the structure, coordination, strategies, and budgets proposed by the U.S. government, aiming to advance the viability of the policies.

7. Conclusions

This chapter analyzed the impact of climate change (CC) on migration flows from the Northern Triangle countries (Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala) to Mexico and the United States border. The institutional strategic studies discussed in this chapter support the impact of CC on migration flows in Central America in recent years and for the next 20 years, from a global security perspective. Despite such impact, it is identified that the issue of labor mobility in migrant-sending countries is not a governmental priority, due to deficits in their growth policies and because emigration generates greater benefits in terms of international remittances.

Conversely, for the United States government, labor mobility related to CC is a priority on its national and global security agenda, especially under President Biden's administration. The U.S. government has proposed a permanent interagency policy on CC and migration, which includes the coordination of policies, strategies, and budgets. However, its challenge lies in the feasibility of such policy, considering the scarce incentives for its implementation in the Northern Triangle countries and Mexico.

A significant finding is that the environmental and CC initiatives proposed within the framework of the High-Level Economic Dialog, the North American Leaders' Summit, and the Summit of the Americas do not explicitly consider the impact of CC on labor migration from the Northern Triangle countries to Mexico and the United States. The fact that this issue is not emphasized in the governmental agenda reflects that there are other CC effects deemed more relevant for the countries in the region, such as droughts, fires, electric vehicle evolution, and temperature increase, than migration flows. The recent approval of the fiscal, climate, and health law by the U.S. Senate on August 7, 2022, represents an opportunity to strengthen the priority of CC, if its financial resources are linked with integration initiatives in North America.

Greater effectiveness and commitment from migrant-sending countries with impacts on CC will depend on international organizations (World Bank, IDB, IOM, and the U.S. government) establishing better incentives to promote viable CC and migration policies in the affected Central American countries. The U.S. government's strategic study on the impacts of CC on migration and human displacement [45] represents a significant advancement, granting governmental priority from a national and global security perspective. The challenge lies in achieving its short-term feasibility in Central American countries, where such priority does not exist, and regional co-responsibility is limited, despite most CC-associated displacements occurring at the borders of the region.

The irregular migration of Central Americans to the United States has been a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, and this chapter has shed light on the impact of climate change (CC) on this dynamic. Institutional strategic studies support the relationship between CC and migration flows in the Northern Triangle countries, identifying a significant impact in the region in recent years and projecting it into the future. However, a lack of governmental priority is observed in migrant-sending countries, where growth policies and international remittances seem to have greater relevance. This contrast highlights the need to address labor mobility and CC effects comprehensively.

On the other hand, the U.S. government has prioritized labor mobility related to CC on its national and global security agenda, particularly during President Biden's administration. The proposal of a permanent interagency policy on CC and migration demonstrates a commitment to coordinate actions and allocate resources to address this issue. However, the challenge of achieving the policy's feasibility arises, given the scant incentives in the Northern Triangle countries and Mexico for effective implementation.

A relevant conclusion from this analysis is the lack of explicit consideration of the impact of CC on labor migration in the environmental and CC initiatives in the region. Although there are other CC effects that are priorities in the governmental agenda, such as droughts, fires, and temperature changes, migration flows also need to be addressed comprehensively. The recent passage of the fiscal, climate, and health law in the U.S. Senate provides an opportunity to strengthen the priority of CC, if the financial resources are linked with integration initiatives in North America.

The effectiveness and commitment of migrant-sending countries and those impacted by CC largely depend on collaboration with international organizations and the creation of better incentives to promote viable CC and migration policies in the Central American region. The U.S. government's strategic study on the impacts of CC on migration and human displacement represents an important advancement by granting governmental priority from a national and global security perspective. Nonetheless, the challenge resides in achieving its short-term feasibility in Central American countries, where the lack of priority and limited regional co-responsibility present significant obstacles, despite most CC-related displacements occurring at the region's borders.

This comprehensive study underscores the multifaceted nature of climate change's impact on migration patterns, particularly from the Northern Triangle to North America, revealing a critical intersection of environmental, economic, and security dimensions. Through the lens of institutional strategic studies, it becomes evident that while climate change significantly influences migration flows, the response from both sending and receiving countries remains fragmented, with a notable discrepancy in prioritization and policy implementation. The U.S. government's strategic approach, aiming to integrate climate change considerations into its national and global security agenda, represents a pivotal step towards addressing this complex challenge. However, the realization of such policies hinges on fostering greater collaboration, incentivization, and a shared sense of responsibility among all stakeholders involved. This study, therefore, calls for a unified and concerted effort to not only recognize but actively address the climate-migration nexus as a central component of regional stability and prosperity, advocating for policies that are as adaptive and resilient as the communities they aim to support.

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Chapter 11

Natural Disasters and Syrian Refugees: The Case of Kahramanmaraş Earthquakes in Türkiye

Sevda Akar

Abstract

This study focuses on the impact of destructive earthquakes in Türkiye, specifically addressing the situation of Syrian refugees in the context of natural disasters. On February 6, 2023, two earthquakes with magnitudes of 7.8 and 7.5 occurred in the southeastern region of Türkiye, centered in the Kahramanmaraş province, specifically affecting Pazarcik and Elbistan. These earthquakes significantly affected the central region and 11 surrounding provinces, resulting in numerous casualties and property losses. Moreover, the earthquakes had a substantial impact on Syrian refugees residing intensively in this region of Türkiye. The earthquakes triggered a humanitarian crisis for the both host country's citizens and Syrian refugees. This study aims to address the challenges faced by refugees in the face of natural disasters and provide recommendations for the reconstruction phase after the disaster.

Keywords: natural disasters, earthquakes, Syrian refugees, humanitarian crisis, Türkiye

1. Introduction

'Refugee' can be defined as any individual who is compelled to migrate from their own country or habitual residence, whether within or outside their country of origin, due to factors such as race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. This displacement may occur because of internal or international conflicts or natural or man-made disasters. These individuals are unwilling or unable to return to their home country and are not willing to seek protection from that country [1].

Worldwide, more than one in every 74 people is forcibly displaced as a refugee. The number of forcibly displaced individuals due to persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations, events seriously disrupting public order, famine, or natural disasters increased by 21% in 2022, reaching an estimated 108.4 million by the end of the year. Nearly 90% of these individuals are in low- and middle-income countries [2].

The 'Arab Spring' of 2010–2011 engulfed Syria in March 2011 with a populist uprising, subsequently escalating into a devastating civil war that became one of

the largest humanitarian catastrophes of its time. This crisis not only affected Syria but also had repercussions on its neighboring countries. The neighboring nations experienced a significant influx of Syrian refugees, leading to a substantial increase in refugee populations within these countries [3].

After 12 years of ongoing conflict, the Syrian refugee crisis continues to be the largest displacement crisis in the world (**Figure 1** [4]). Approximately 5.2 million registered refugees, including more than 2.5 million children, reside in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Türkiye. As of the last update on November 30, 2023, the total number of Syrian refugees in these countries is 5,184,938 (**Table 1** [4, 5]).

Türkiye hosts approximately 3.6 million refugees, making it home to the largest refugee population worldwide [5]. Among these refugees, around 3.2 million are Syrian refugees. Due to its geographical proximity to Syria, the initial destinations for Syrians arriving in Türkiye after 2011 were the provinces of Kahramanmaraş, Hatay, Gaziantep, Adıyaman, Kilis, Osmaniye, Malatya, Şanlıurfa, Adana, Diyarbakır, and Elazığ. On February 6, 2023, at 04:17 and 13:24 Turkish local time, two earthquakes of magnitudes Mw7.8 and Mw7.5 occurred, with their epicenters located in the Pazarcık

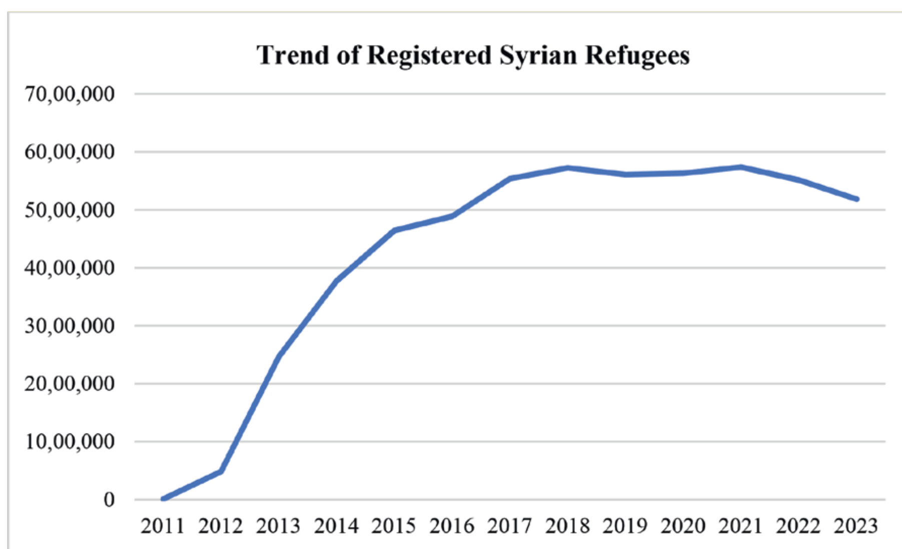

Figure 1.
Trend of registered Syrian refugees in the period of 2011–2023.

Country	Data date	Population
Türkiye	05.10.2023	3,274,059
Lebanon	30.09.2023	789,842
Jordan	30.11.2023	651,329
Iraq	30.11.2023	271,732
Egypt	30.11.2023	152,963
Other (North Africa)	31.12.2022	45,003

Table 1.
Total Syrian refugees by countries.

and Elbistan districts of Kahramanmaraş. These earthquakes caused significant destruction in the 11 provinces where Syrian refugees are densely populated. Due to the extensive coverage of the earthquakes, the delay in search and rescue operations led to a significant humanitarian crisis for both the local population and refugees.

Given the reasons mentioned above, Türkiye is a country worthy of examination in terms of refugee issues. In recent times, refugee policy, seen as part of employment and growth policies, needs a better understanding to help Türkiye achieve its sustainability and humanitarian development goals through improved integration of refugees into society. This study aims to understand the problems faced by refugees in Türkiye following the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes and to evaluate them in terms of social integration. In other words, the study focuses on the issue of secondary displacement, particularly among Syrian refugees. The study generally aims to answer the following questions:

1. How have the destructive earthquakes in Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye, affected refugees?

2. How have these earthquakes in Türkiye affected refugee integration policies?

3. How should refugee policy be implemented in the reconstruction process following the earthquakes in Türkiye?

As far as we know, there is no study in the literature that addresses the problems of refugees specifically in relation to the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes in Türkiye. It is expected that this study will fill this gap in the literature and contribute to the discussions on refugee integration policies.

In this study, previously collected secondary data sources are utilized instead of collecting primary data. The research relies on a literature review conducted regarding the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes and Syrian Refugees, incorporating data from reliable and appropriate sources identified through the literature search, including governmental institutions such as The Republic of Turkey Ministry of Interior Presidency of Migration Management and The Presidency of Strategy and Budget, as well as international organizations like the World Bank and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, along with reports from civil society organizations such as the Turkish Medical Association, World Food Program, and Support to Life. In this context, data from international organizations have been utilized. This data source's accuracy, reliability, and appropriateness have been evaluated and interpreted. The findings answer the main research questions, are compared with relevant literature, and form conclusions. Additionally, the significance, limitations of the findings, and suggestions for future research are provided in the study.

The study is organized as follows: The first section examines the challenges faced by refugees exposed to natural disasters in the literature, and the second section discusses the short-term effects of the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes on Syrian refugees in Türkiye. The study concludes with the results and recommendations section.

2. Natural disaster and refugees challenges: Literature

The United Nations defines a natural disaster as a situation that requires inter-regional or international assistance, involving thousands of deaths, hundreds of

thousands of affected individuals, a significant impact on the national economy, and substantial insurance losses [6]. Natural disasters can be described as unforeseen and sudden events or situations that exceed local capacity, necessitating external assistance at the national or international level, causing extensive damage, destruction, and loss of life [7, 8].

The approach that classifies natural disasters according to natural phenomena is the most used classification type. According to this classification, natural disasters are examined in four groups based on geological events (earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tectonic movements), meteorological events (storms, hurricanes), hydrological events (floods, flash floods), and climatic events (extreme weather conditions, droughts, fires) [9].

There are few studies in the literature addressing the re-displacement of refugees due to natural disasters and the challenges they face. The prevailing consensus in the literature is that refugees displaced due to reasons such as war and natural disasters are relatively impoverished in the countries they flee to [10–12]. The refugees, who are already impoverished, encounter another disaster such as a natural calamity, leading to further deterioration of their conditions. Amidst the natural disaster, they may even confront life-threatening difficulties due to linguistic barriers.

The experiences of linguistic minority immigrants and refugees during natural disasters in Canterbury, New Zealand, and Tohoku, Japan, between 2010 and 2011 are examined. The focus of the study is to determine the resilience of refugees to social security gaps and disasters. Previous research has revealed that linguistic minority immigrants and refugees are socially vulnerable compared to majority groups due to their relatively disadvantaged position. However, findings from in-depth interviews indicate that social vulnerabilities during disasters are variable and complex. Nevertheless, the study suggests that refugees can be both vulnerable and resilient in the face of disasters simultaneously. Their resilience partly stems from the daily inequalities they already face and partly from previous disaster experiences. Wars, conflicts, displacements, and daily challenges empower refugees with a sense of 'earned resilience.' In other words, the experiences of daily inequalities and displacement partially faced by immigrants and refugees demonstrate their resilience to new disasters [12].

Refugees are more vulnerable to disasters due to their lack of economic, cultural, and social capital. Moreover, the challenges they face regarding adaptation in a new country may be more pronounced than the risks of disasters encountered in the new area. Refugees are often confronted with daily hardships dominated by less routine events such as earthquakes, floods, or hurricanes (such as finding employment). Overcoming these challenges can be extremely difficult for refugees who lack strong social capital or community networks. Refugees, including undocumented migrants/refugees, may hesitate to seek assistance during disasters due to the fear of deportation, even if they recognize themselves as being at risk because of the disaster event [13].

Another study focusing on the earthquakes in Canterbury, New Zealand, during 2010–2011 discusses how young refugees (under 24 years old) can provide leadership in their communities during earthquakes and play a role in reducing disaster risks. Interviews and focus group discussions with participants reveal the capacity of young refugee individuals to act as cultural mediators within their communities. These young refugees serve as a bridge connecting people from their ethnic communities to crucial disaster information through their linguistic capital, digital literacy, and social networks to support the post-disaster recovery process. They can significantly

contribute to enhancing societal capacity through supportive roles they can undertake in reducing disaster risks [14].

Despite Japan being a world leader in preparedness for devastating disasters like earthquakes, it did not pay sufficient attention to the needs of refugees and asylum seekers, one of the most marginal social groups, during the 2011 earthquake. During the earthquake, refugees and asylum seekers faced challenges such as movement restrictions, increased poverty, and a lack of basic information. Those experiencing economic difficulties were the most affected by the earthquake and tsunami catastrophe. Most refugees and asylum seekers in Japan reside in conditions of severe poverty, primarily due to insufficient government support, language barriers, and the economic climate. Following the earthquake, the threat of nuclear power plant destruction led to regular power outages, resulting in reduced working hours and days for factories and restaurants, and common workplaces for refugees and asylum seekers. This situation means fewer working hours for refugees and asylum seekers and even job loss. As a result, refugees and asylum seekers experienced immediate income loss after the disaster. Furthermore, they were significantly affected by a lack of information about earthquakes and radiation issues. Many refugees and asylum seekers, coming from countries with less frequent earthquakes or less reliance on nuclear energy, required more information [11].

Due to the recent armed conflict in Syria, over 1.5 million displaced Syrians are currently residing in Lebanon. The refugees, dispersed throughout the country due to Lebanon's ban on official refugee camps, are straining Lebanon's already weak infrastructure and surroundings. An examination of Lebanon's landslide risk profile reveals a 75% increase in landslide risk since the onset of the Syrian crisis. Syrian refugees have been compelled to move to high-risk areas due to substandard housing conditions, exposing them to heightened danger. Compared to the urban population, Syrian refugees are exposed to 9–11 times higher risk of natural disasters. This indicates their vulnerability to secondary disasters [3].

The psychosocial effects of the 1989 Newcastle earthquake on 250 migrants from non-English-speaking backgrounds were compared to a matched sample of 250 Australian-born individuals. Both overall and event-related levels of psychological illness were found to be higher among participants from non-English-speaking backgrounds. The study findings indicate that refugees from non-English-speaking backgrounds, especially female refugees, are at a higher risk of experiencing psychological distress following natural disasters such as earthquakes [15].

A similar study also demonstrates that refugees are more vulnerable to mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, and trauma resulting from disasters compared to the general population. The resilience of Vietnamese refugees to a potential natural disaster was investigated. The study findings indicate that refugees and their families lack sufficient information, financial resources, emergency supplies, or social support for natural disasters. Therefore, it is necessary to enhance the existing strengths of refugees in disaster response, provide them with specific emergency training, strengthen relationships between institutions serving refugees and refugee communities, and improve the socio-economic capacities of refugees [16].

3. Kahramanmaraş earthquakes and Syrian refugees in Türkiye

Türkiye, located on the Mediterranean-Alpine-Himalayan seismic belt, is a country frequently exposed to powerful earthquakes. The country's seismic activity in an

active region poses a significant risk for its population. Due to its proximity to the East Anatolian and North Anatolian Fault Lines, the Eastern Anatolia Region is particularly vulnerable. This study focuses on earthquakes, the most destructive and commonly occurring geophysical natural disasters in Türkiye due to its geographical location.

On February 6, 2023, two powerful earthquakes, with magnitudes of Mw 7.8 and Mw 7.5, struck Pazarcık, Kahramanmaraş, and Elbistan in Kahramanmaraş. These earthquakes, strongly felt in many provinces, affected an area of 108,812 km^2 covering 11 provinces in the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia Regions (Adıyaman, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Kilis, Osmaniye, Gaziantep, Malatya, Şanlıurfa, Diyarbakır, Elazığ, and Adana) (**Figure 2**, [17]). The tragedy that began with the two strong earthquakes resulted in the loss of 50,783 lives. These earthquakes affected approximately 14 million people, constituting 16.4% of the total population. These devastating earthquakes are among the deadliest in Turkish history [18, 19].

Some of the regions affected by the earthquake have some of the highest poverty rates in Türkiye. The earthquake zone also hosts over 1.7 million Syrian refugees, constituting almost 50% of the total Syrian refugee population in Türkiye (**Figure 3** [20, 21]). Approximately 50% of the total Syrian population under temporary protection in Türkiye, totaling around 3.5 million registered individuals, resides in the 11 provinces affected by the earthquake, with 1,738,035 Syrians covered under temporary protection in the region. The proportion of Syrians to the population in the region is 11.48%. Approximately 46% of the Syrian population in the region consists of children aged 0–17, while 3% are elderly individuals aged 65 and above [22]. In the earthquake-affected provinces, one out of every two individuals in Kilis, and one out of every four to five individuals in Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, and Hatay, is a Syrian refugee [17].

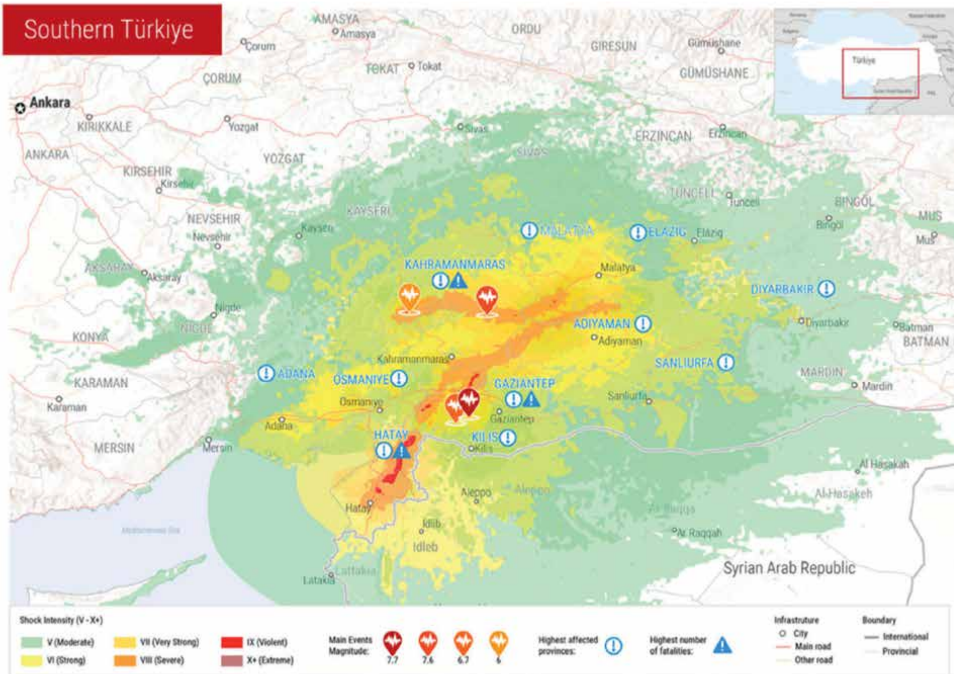

Figure 2.
Areas affected by the earthquakes.

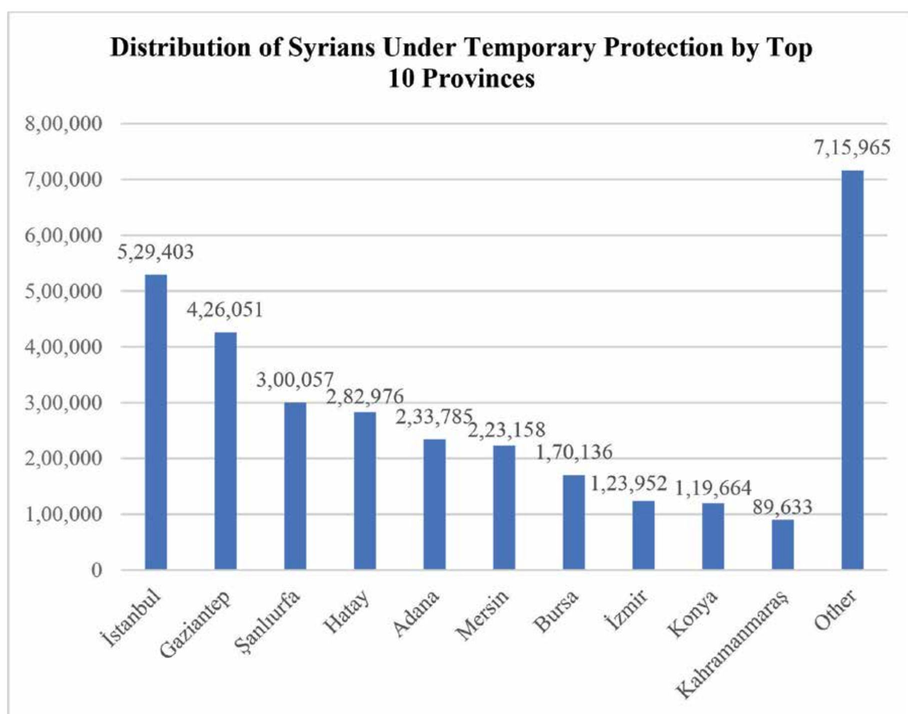

Figure 3.
Distribution of Syrians under temporary protection by 10 provinces.

These two earthquakes are estimated to have caused approximately $34.2 billion in direct physical damage in Türkiye. This accounts for approximately 4% of Türkiye's GDP in 2021. However, it is expected that the costs of search and rescue operations and reconstruction will be much higher, potentially doubling the initial estimate [21, 23]. The Kahramanmaraş Earthquakes in 2023 are expected to result in a total of $84.1 billion in damages, including $66.2 billion in housing damage, $13.2 billion in national income loss, and $4.7 billion in lost workdays [24].

According to initial assessments following the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes, it is reported that out of the 7302 fatalities, 297 were Syrian refugees, with 688 individuals still undergoing identification processes. The number of Syrian refugees under temporary protection in the earthquake-affected region is stated to be 1,738,035 [25]. Additionally, the total number of refugees staying in temporary accommodation centers under temporary protection is 64,241 (**Figure 4** [20]). However, the exact population of Syrian refugees in the earthquake zone is not fully known.

Under normal circumstances, individuals under temporary protection or international protection status in Türkiye are required to obtain permission to leave the provinces where they reside. Those wishing to relocate within the country must obtain a permit document from the migration authorities in their current province and must present it in case of any checks during their journey. Otherwise, they may face the risk of deportation [26].

On February 7, 2023, the day after the initial earthquake, the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Interior Presidency of Migration Management issued a circular announcing the removal of travel restrictions for international protection and temporary protection status holders in the 10 provinces affected by the earthquake, as well as

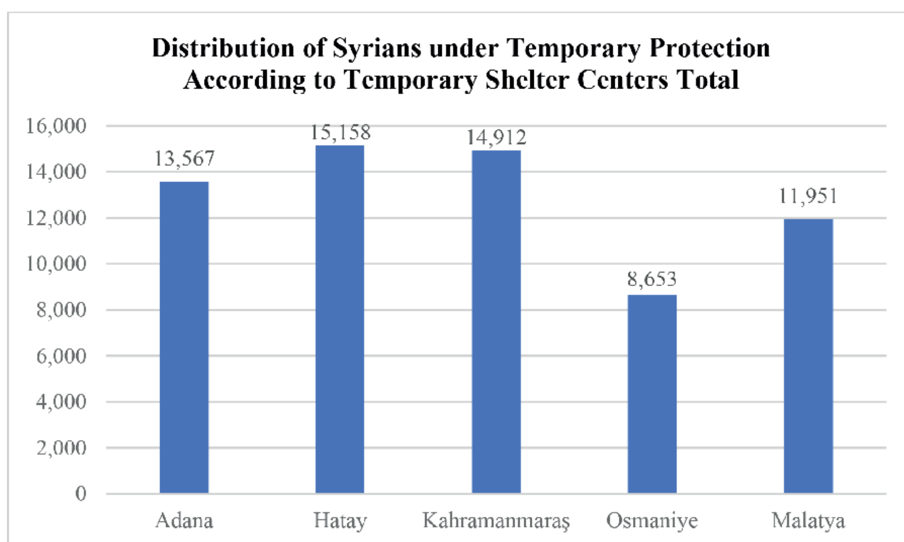

Figure 4.
Distribution of Syrians under temporary protection according to temporary shelter centers total.

the cancelation of the requirement to obtain travel permits, allowing them to stay in their destination provinces for up to 90 days by applying to the provincial migration directorates. However, Istanbul remained a closed city for internal circulation permits. Another letter issued by the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Interior Presidency of Migration Management on February 13, 2023, introduced a new regulation regarding travel permits, reducing the validity period to 60 days. This period was extended for another 60 days in April. Nevertheless, several uncertainties persist regarding the earthquake-affected refugees' ability to return, the timing of their potential return, the conditions awaiting them upon their return, and the permanence of their resettlement. The fact that earthquake victims who leave the region will not be provided with any accommodation by public institutions in the cities they travel to poses a significant obstacle to their departure from the region despite the earthquake. This situation leads refugees to stay in their current cities if they lack the means to meet their food, shelter, and other needs elsewhere [27].

After the earthquakes, it was noted that around 70,000 individuals returned to Syria, with approximately 16,000 of them returning to Türkiye. However, ongoing issues with re-registration persist due to unauthorized departures and arrivals [28, 29]. The registered Syrian refugee population in Türkiye between February 2, 2023, and October 5, 2023, is shown. It is observed that the number has gradually decreased due to the earthquakes (**Figure 5** [4]). After the earthquakes, it is estimated that some of the refugees who went to Syria will not return to Türkiye. In this respect, it can be said that the earthquake has accelerated the return to Syria [27].

After the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes, international organizations continued the implementation of The Minimum Expenditure Basket in areas with a high concentration of refugees under the Earthquake Protection Program. The cost of this implementation increased by 4% compared to the previous month, reaching 2105 TL per person per month ($74) in November 2023. The Minimum Expenditure Basket amount in the region affected by the February 2023 earthquakes is 2262 TL ($79) [30]. However, it can be said that the fiscal aid provided to refugees is insufficient.

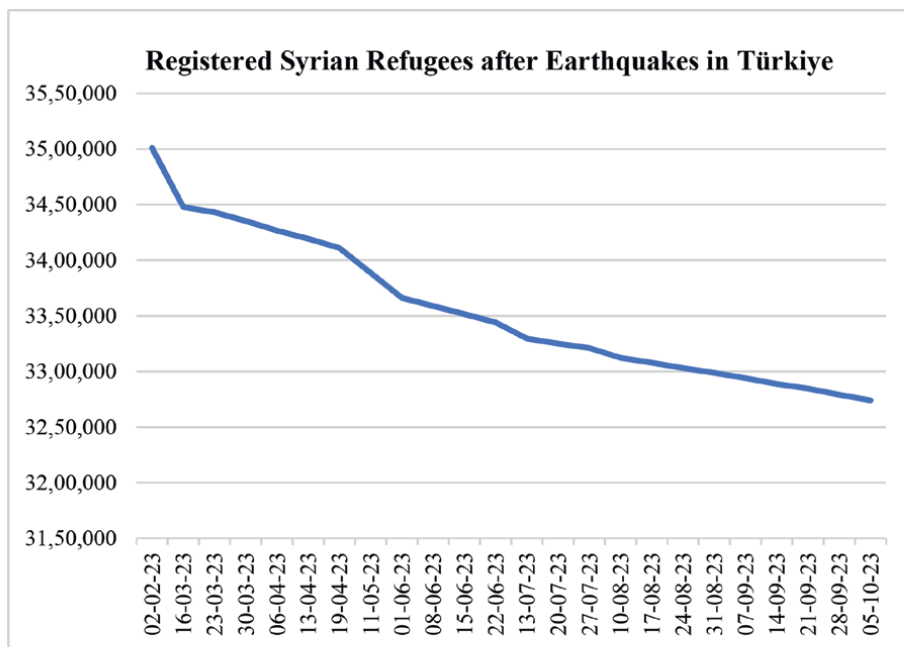

Figure 5.
Registered Syrians refugees after earthquakes in Türkiye.

When considering the inflation issue particularly experienced in Türkiye, it can be argued that the amount of assistance provided to refugees may not suffice to sustain their daily lives.

Before the earthquakes, approximately 47,000 Syrians were sustaining their lives in seven temporary shelters, but after the earthquakes, the number of temporary shelters was increased to 12, accommodating around 88,000 people [22]. However, it has been observed that the facilities and environmental hygiene in the temporary settlements belonging to refugees deteriorated significantly after the earthquakes. In provinces heavily affected by destruction, Syrian refugees face significant geographical, economic, and cultural barriers in accessing hospitals from the temporary settlements they inhabit. This situation exacerbates inequalities in health. Moreover, an increase in tension between refugees and the residents has been observed in the aftermath of the earthquakes [25].

After the earthquakes, the initial assessment report suggests that migrants and refugees faced two main challenges: hate speech and vilification, and housing. Both issues can lead to spatial segregation and exclusion in the earthquake-affected areas and the places they migrated to after the earthquake. It is a fact that migrants and refugees are also victims of the earthquake and experience similar problems as many others. However, due to their legal status and social stigma and exclusion, they are also grappling with different issues such as multiple displacements and discrimination in aid [31]. The prevailing opinion regarding refugees is that efforts toward societal integration have been in vain, with the main issue being economic conditions. It is believed that unless economic problems in the region are resolved and a system ensuring a humane living for everyone is established, anti-immigrant sentiment will continue to escalate [28]. The lack of direct access to information about travel permits and evacuation processes for refugees living in earthquake-affected areas has forced

them to rely more on internal networks. This situation has exacerbated their tendency to become more insular, potentially undermining integration processes that have been implemented thus far [26].

After the earthquake, refugees relocating to or planning to relocate to different cities are anticipated to encounter various challenges, including hate speech, exclusion, segregation, high rents, high cost of living, and livelihood issues. Throughout this process, the government, alongside all its institutions, has strived to reconstruct the earthquake-affected region and relocate the earthquake survivors to other cities. Nevertheless, due to prevailing economic circumstances and infrastructural challenges in urban areas, there has been hesitance in relocating refugees residing in the region to other cities. As a result of such constraints, it becomes increasingly difficult for refugees to establish settled lives in the cities they migrate to after the earthquake [27]. The language barrier, along with the transient and dispersed nature of the population and significant resource disadvantages, alongside negative prejudices against refugees, contributes to these challenges. As an anticipated outcome, it could be argued that the culture of cohabitation with immigrants is undermined [25].

In the earthquake-affected regions, both host communities and refugees suffered losses in terms of families, friends, homes, and livelihoods. Refugees, constituting the lowest income and vulnerable group in society, must be incorporated into the social protection support provided to the local population post-earthquake, encompassing preventive measures, interventions, shelters, non-food items, and cash aid. They may face challenges in accessing information and assistance due to limited social networks and language skills; hence, they require support in accessing accurate information about their rights and procedures and in applying for available social assistance [32]. Hence, there is a crucial need for support from governments, international organizations, and civil society organizations to raise awareness about the plight of refugees in the aftermath of the earthquakes.

4. Conclusion

Natural disasters are characterized as unforeseen and abrupt events that occur within communities, leading to economic disruptions such as unemployment and stagnation, social challenges like migration and social disintegration, as well as physical damages to buildings and infrastructure, necessitating international aid.

This study examines the hardships experienced by displaced refugees in host countries due to natural disasters. Displaced refugees, already in a vulnerable state, become further marginalized by the natural calamities they encounter in their new locales. In essence, natural disasters compound the issue of secondary displacement among refugees. The study evaluates the challenges faced by Syrian refugees, displaced by the internal conflict in Syria, who subsequently confronted devastating earthquakes in the heavily inhabited regions of Türkiye. Moreover, it offers recommendations for addressing the needs of refugees during the post-earthquake reconstruction phase.

The vulnerability to disasters within communities is a complex phenomenon, necessitating multifaceted solutions. Considering social, cultural, demographic, and economic conditions, along with population structure, it is imperative to continuously review disaster risk reduction, preparedness, and response policies. Developing effective disaster policies requires careful consideration of the demographic makeup of communities. Otherwise, disasters will yield destructive social and economic

repercussions for populations (both local and refugee communities) vulnerable to and residing in high-risk areas [13].

Due to their proximity to the Syrian border and the concentration of temporary shelter centers in earthquake-affected areas, Syrian refugees have preferred to reside in these provinces based on work and living opportunities. However, due to the perception of Syrian refugees as temporary guests in Turkish society, they are generally employed in the informal sector. Consequently, it can be argued that the most impoverished and vulnerable segment of society is predominantly composed of refugees. Furthermore, ongoing cultural and language barriers contribute to the challenges faced by refugees in terms of social integration.

While Syrian refugees continue to face social integration challenges, encountering a disaster like an earthquake has deeply affected them as much as Turkish society. Especially, the persistence of language barriers during search and rescue operations, deficiencies in post-earthquake information dissemination to refugees, and uncertainties have exposed refugees to secondary adverse effects following the disaster.

After the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes, the situation observed in initial assessment reports indicates that the already challenging living conditions of refugees have become even more difficult. In particular, the increase in exclusion and hate speech directed toward refugees has further exacerbated this situation. The inability of refugees to benefit adequately from post-earthquake fiscal assistance and the increase in the cost of living due to inflation have accelerated the return of some refugees to their countries. In addition to these issues, the integration of refugees into Turkish society has also been negatively affected following the earthquakes [25–27]. In the post-earthquake reconstruction phase, refugees need opportunities to secure livelihoods, particularly in finding shelter. Additionally, refugees facing discrimination, especially women and girls, require greater access to social services and assistance. There is a need for refugees to be more quickly integrated into public and social services, including health and education [32].

The deficiencies in disaster management were more clearly observed in Türkiye following the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes. Particularly, it has been recognized that Türkiye, which hosts the largest number of refugees globally, should include this group in its disaster management plans. It is believed that facilitating the active participation of Syrian youth proficient in languages in disaster risk reduction and rescue processes could serve as a significant communication network within their communities. Granting an active role to young refugees in disaster risk management can be beneficial both to their communities and to the local population [14]. Such a situation could also accelerate the process by contributing to the social integration of refugees.

In conclusion, natural disasters primarily affect the poorest and most vulnerable individuals in the countries where they occur. Among these groups are refugees. Therefore, disaster risk management is of great importance in combating natural disasters. Through disaster risk management, countries assess their exposure to disasters and implement strategies to cope with them. Countries prone to natural disasters should address disaster risk management in a manner that is compatible with their demographic structure, thus minimizing the likelihood of being affected by disasters and reducing welfare loss.

Future studies could analyze the medium- and long-term effects of the devastating Kahramanmaraş disasters on Syrian refugees in Türkiye. Additionally, considering the social, economic, and psychological impacts of earthquakes, it is also conceivable to conduct separate studies for each impact.

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Conflict of interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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Migration has been one of the contested topics among scholars and politicians throughout the world. Similarly, the experiences of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants have been different as they are influenced by race, gender, class, and geographical location. This book explores the experiences of international migrants, including the challenges they face from nation-states, environmental issues, and sociocultural factors. It consists of chapters that discuss the causes and effects of migration, the role of nation-states, and the environment. Moreover, the book covers gender and family relations and the relationship of refugees and migrants with the host population and the socio-cultural and economic integration of migrants. Overall, the book argues that international migrants, particularly refugees and asylum seekers, are among the most vulnerable groups in the world. However, they use various strategies to overcome their vulnerability and become resilient in the face of adversity. Hence, the book contributes to increasing people's awareness of migration and the experiences of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants. It can also be a significant source for initiating further debate and academic discussion on issues of migration and forced displacement, vulnerability, and resilience.

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