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The Intersection of Irregular Migration and Trafficking in West Africa and the Sahel

Understanding the Patterns of Vulnerability

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DISCLAIMER

This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

‘Monitoring the Political Economy of Human Smuggling in Libya and the Greater Sahara’ is a project funded under the North Africa window of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. Its goals are to create an expansive research facility that provides up-to-date monitoring and analysis of migration patterns and human smuggling dynamics in Libya and the Sahel (Niger, Chad and Mali) to the EU and its partners. This takes the form of monthly briefs and regular in-depth, longform research studies, such as this one. The project is implemented by a consortium that consists of the GI-TOC and the Clingendael Institute.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANLTP	Agence Nationale de Lutte Contre la Traite des Personnes, Niger
AVR	assisted voluntary return
CNCLTP	Commission Nationale de Coordination de Lutte Contre la Traite des Personnes, Niger
CNLTP	Cellule Nationale de Lutte contre la Traite des Personnes, Senegal
CSO	civil-society organization
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
EUTF	EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa
GDP	gross domestic product
GI-TOC	Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime
IOM	International Organization for Migration
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NACTAL	Network of Civil Society Organizations Against Child Trafficking, Abuse and Labour
NAPTIP	National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons
NGO	non-governmental organization
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
VOT	victim of trafficking

DEFINITIONS

- Human trafficking** The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force, or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.¹
- Forced labour** Refers to situations in which persons are coerced to work through the use of violence or intimidation, or by more subtle means, such as accumulated debt, retention of identity papers or threats of denunciation to immigration authorities.²
- Slavery** Someone is considered a slave if they are forced to work, trapped and controlled by an 'employer', treated as a commodity and restricted in their freedom of movement.³
- Kidnapping** Refers to taking someone away illegally against their will, usually for ransom.⁴
- Sexual exploitation** Human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation is where a victim is forced, in one of a variety of ways, into a situation of dependency on their trafficker and then used by said trafficker to give sexual services to customers. It can include situations of sexual slavery.⁵
- Organ trafficking** The practice of using exploitation, coercion or fraud to steal, or illegally purchase or sell, organs.⁶

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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A number of policy and security changes in the Mediterranean, North Africa and the Sahel over the last five years have led to a shift in mobility options towards Europe. This study seeks to understand how the changing patterns of irregular migration towards Europe have affected the dynamics of trafficking and the patterns of vulnerability to trafficking.

The methodology for this study consisted of a quantitative survey of 1 689 randomly selected migrants in two countries (Niger and Mali); 39 key informant interviews; and 149 qualitative interviews with migrants. The survey was conducted in the Sahel in order to create a regional perspective, and the sample of respondents spans 31 nationalities of migrants, 12% of whom are women.

The study was launched in September 2019 and the report was drafted in February 2020. Due to the unexpected pressures of the COVID pandemic, the review of the report by the EU and its subsequent publication were not completed until September 2020.

Sample statistics

The survey sample is composed of four types of migrants:

1. **Migrating** respondents who are on their way to a new country that is not their origin country.
2. **Recently returned** respondents who originate from one of the survey countries (Niger or Mali), who have returned home within the last three months and who are not intending to migrate right now.
3. **Recently settled** respondents who are not from a survey country and who do not intend to migrate to another country in the next month.
4. **Returning home** respondents who are not native to a survey country and who are on their way back to their home country.

The average age of the sample is 28; the majority of respondents are single (62%); and Islam is the most represented religion (65%), although women are more likely to be Christian (54% compared to 38% of men). Of the sample, 22% have received no formal education whatsoever and only 10% are educated as far as high school. The majority were labourers in their home country. For recently returned migrants (Nigeriens and Malians), the proportion of women drops to 3%; 97% are Muslim; 54% are married and they are less educated than the rest of the sample. In terms of occupation prior to departure, they are overrepresented in the agriculture industry and many of them are seasonal migrants to Libya, where they work in agricultural areas.

Of the returnees, 45% will wait a year before migrating again; 22% will wait six months to a year before migrating again; and two-thirds will wait at least six months before migrating again.

Routes and destinations

The majority of the sample are targeting Africa as their region of destination (61%), while only 34% are targeting Europe. Women are more likely to be moving towards Europe, and men towards Africa. Muslims are also more likely than Christians to target Africa, and migrants headed to Europe are more likely to be single and without children. The data suggests that migrants who are aiming to reach Europe are more likely to move via Mali, while migrants who are targeting Africa are more likely to move through Niger.

Trafficking along the routes

The survey dealt with seven forms of trafficking: kidnapping, extortion, forced labour, slavery, sexual exploitation, organ trafficking and detention. Detention is included because of the high rate of unlawful detention in the region and the intimate connection between trafficking and detention along the routes studied.

A total of 60% of the sample reported that they had been trafficked along the routes, and detention is by far the most commonly experienced form of abuse (54%), with 40% reporting that they had been detained by non-officials, and 14% by officials. Detention is followed by kidnapping (32%), forced labour (11%), slavery (7%), sexual abuse (4%) and organ trafficking (3%). A further 4% reported that they had been approached with offers of money for their blood and organs. Also, 20% of migrants who have worked along the route were not paid for their work, even when the conditions did not entail forced labour.

Most migrants experienced multiple forms of trafficking along the way and the spectrum of experiences can be categorized in the following way:

Migrants who have not been trafficked at all: 40% of the sample
Migrants who have been detained only: 26% of the sample
Migrants who have been detained and kidnapped/extorted: 22% of the sample
Migrants who have been detained and kidnapped/extorted and were victims of at least one other form of trafficking: 12% of the sample

When respondents were asked to identify the countries in which they had been trafficked, the top five that emerged were Libya, Algeria, Niger, Nigeria and Mali.

- Forced labour is most commonly reported in Libya but is also highly reported in Algeria and Niger.
- Detention, both official and unofficial, is more commonly reported in Algeria than Libya.
- Slavery is extremely high in Libya, followed by Algeria.
- Kidnapping is most commonly reported in Algeria, then Libya and Mali, followed by Niger.
- Sexual exploitation is most commonly reported in Libya, then Mali, then Algeria.
- Organ trafficking is most commonly reported in Libya, followed by Algeria.

Factors influencing vulnerability to trafficking

- Women are categorically vulnerable to trafficking along the routes, as a result of their gender. There are no other socio-demographic markers that show a difference in trafficking rates.
- Migrants who are aiming for Europe are more often trafficked because they are perceived to have greater financial means. In fact, the more money migrants have with them, the more likely they are to be trafficked and the more severely so.
- The news has circulated that prices have increased along the routes in the face of increased controls, and migrants are taking bigger budgets with them as a result. However, these higher budgets are also increasing their vulnerability to trafficking. Some categories of migrants plan bigger budgets as a way of addressing their vulnerability (e.g. women, Christians), but are unwittingly magnifying their risk of trafficking.
- The longer migrants spend on the road, the more likely they are to be trafficked. Journeys of longer duration also equate to multiple trafficking experiences. This is a result of a combination of becoming more desperate for a way forward, after multiple setbacks, and running out of money as a result of the same setbacks.
- One way in which migrants try to mitigate their vulnerability to trafficking and abuse along the routes is to not take all of their money with them, but instead to have it sent to them when it is required. However, the majority are still taking all of their money with them.
- Of those who do leave their money with someone, they most commonly leave it with friends and family at home, but a good proportion leave their money with their smugglers. A good proportion also have their money delivered to them by a smuggler when they need it. Both categories of migrants experience higher rates of trafficking and are more severely trafficked. The highest incidence of trafficking is reported by those who left their money with an employer.
- Migrants who are perceived as having financial means are vulnerable to detention and kidnapping as forms of trafficking. Those who work along the way are more vulnerable to forced labour. Sexual exploitation and organ trafficking are not common along the routes (but more so in source countries).
- In the face of increased counter-smuggling work in Niger and the increased risk of detention and abuse in North Africa, payment and engagement modalities with smugglers have become increasingly important. Migrants try to move from the Sahel to their destination within the protection of one network, with at least some part of the payment being made on arrival at destination, as this payment modality creates an incentive for the smuggling network to deliver the migrant to destination safely.

- Migrants who use smugglers to reach Agadez face a higher risk of trafficking than those who take public transport without the help of a smuggler. Migrants who had moved with several different smugglers reported a higher incidence of trafficking, compared to those who moved within the same network; the former were also more severely trafficked.
- A good proportion of the sample are still paying smugglers on departure, despite their knowledge of the dangers this presents, perhaps pointing to limited negotiating power.
- The smugglers and traffickers have increased their cooperation in Niger, and most migrants reported that they had been taken to a trafficker by their smuggler. This could be seen as a consequence of the anti-smuggling law that was passed in Niger in 2015 that forced smugglers deeper into illegality.
- Although paying at least some of the fee on arrival creates an incentive for the smuggler to deliver the migrant to their destination safely, paying in tranches throughout the journey can also create risks for migrants, particularly if it means they need to find work along the way.
- The data suggests that information on the risks of the journey does not decrease one's vulnerability to trafficking. The vast majority of victims of trafficking (VOTs) in the sample were well prepared and well informed about the risks. Overall, migrating to Libya or Europe is perceived as difficult, expensive and risky by everyone, and the situation is not getting better on any front. The majority also believe that it has become more difficult, dangerous and expensive in recent years.
- The increased difficulty of entering Libya and crossing from Libya to Italy has pushed traffickers in source countries into other business models. This includes connecting with new destinations, but it has also led to the mixing of various forms of trafficking. For example, women who are recruited for sexual exploitation in Nigeria are being forced into organ removal. There are also cases of organ harvesting in Libya for markets in Malaysia and Singapore.
- Victims are trafficked in Libya both by Libyans and by traffickers from their own country of origin, suggesting greater transnational networking.
- The data suggests that exploitation and abuse is rife across Niger, Mali, Algeria and Libya, with levels of abuse in those countries being sometimes on par with Libya.
- Collusion between smugglers and state officials, and between traffickers and state officials is commonly reported and often facilitates abuse. In some instances, migrants work with smugglers in geographies where they don't need them (for example in countries belonging to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), where they have the right to free movement), simply to protect themselves against bribery by border officials, but this then increases their vulnerability to trafficking through their smuggler.

- Migrants who leave their homes voluntarily and end up being trafficked en route might constitute the highest number of trafficking victims. The profiles also vary. While women and children are more vulnerable to trafficking in source countries, men face greater risk of being trafficked along the way because they constitute the majority of migrant flows in the region.

Trafficking in source countries

Nigeria is a source, transit and destination country for human trafficking. Internal trafficking is the most prevalent form, accounting for 75% of cases in the country. Regional VOTs in Nigeria are generally from Togo, Benin or Burkina Faso. In terms of international trafficking from Nigeria, while the forms have not shifted greatly in recent years, the routes and destinations have. New routes have emerged towards Morocco, Mali and the Gulf. Muslims from northern Nigeria (Kano is becoming a hub) are inclined to go or to be trafficked to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran or Afghanistan, while the people from the south (predominantly Christian) want to reach Europe. This divergence began in 2017.

Although in the past, organ trafficking in the Nigerian context was destined for Europe and North Africa, new destinations have emerged in recent years, particularly Malaysia and Singapore. There are also cases of organs being harvested in Libya for sale in Malaysia or Singapore. There is also an emerging trend where women who are recruited for trafficking for sexual exploitation end up being trafficked for the purposes of organ removal, often in scenarios where they lose their lives.

In 2018, flows to Russia increased as traffickers took advantage of the relaxed visa requirements that were implemented for the 2018 FIFA World Cup and fraudulently recruited Nigerian women for jobs in Russia. Once they arrived, the women were forced into prostitution.

Senegal: Forced begging is the most prevalent form of trafficking in Senegal, affecting children from Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Gambia and, sometimes, Mali.

Since it has become more difficult to recruit for Libya, networks in Senegal have also reoriented towards the Gulf for forced labour. The main development in the last three years, however, has been greater movements towards South America, where Senegalese migrants work irregularly in the poultry industry in Brazil. They travel to Brazil via Casablanca. Casablanca airport has become a regional hub for West African migrants and smugglers since 2017, prompted by visa exemptions for certain West African nationals and Royal Air Maroc's (the national carrier) expansion into the region, as part of Morocco's political reorientation towards West Africa.

Forced prostitution has been on the rise in Senegal since 2017, in the south-east of the country, in the gold mining region of Kedougou, where a gold rush has fuelled demand for sex workers from miners.

Recommendations

Given the dire situation of abuse and exploitation along the routes to Europe, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Use information as protection rather than deterrence, utilizing reliable information sources and reinforcing information through multiple avenues.
2. Create community-led victim identification and reintegration programmes.
3. Provide psycho-social support along the route and in transit countries.
4. Help national governments to take the lead in counter-trafficking through commissions based on the Nigerian model.
5. Combat corruption through greater migrant-led initiatives and accountability mechanisms.
6. Carry out ongoing research to track changing patterns of vulnerability.

B. BACKGROUND AND METHODS

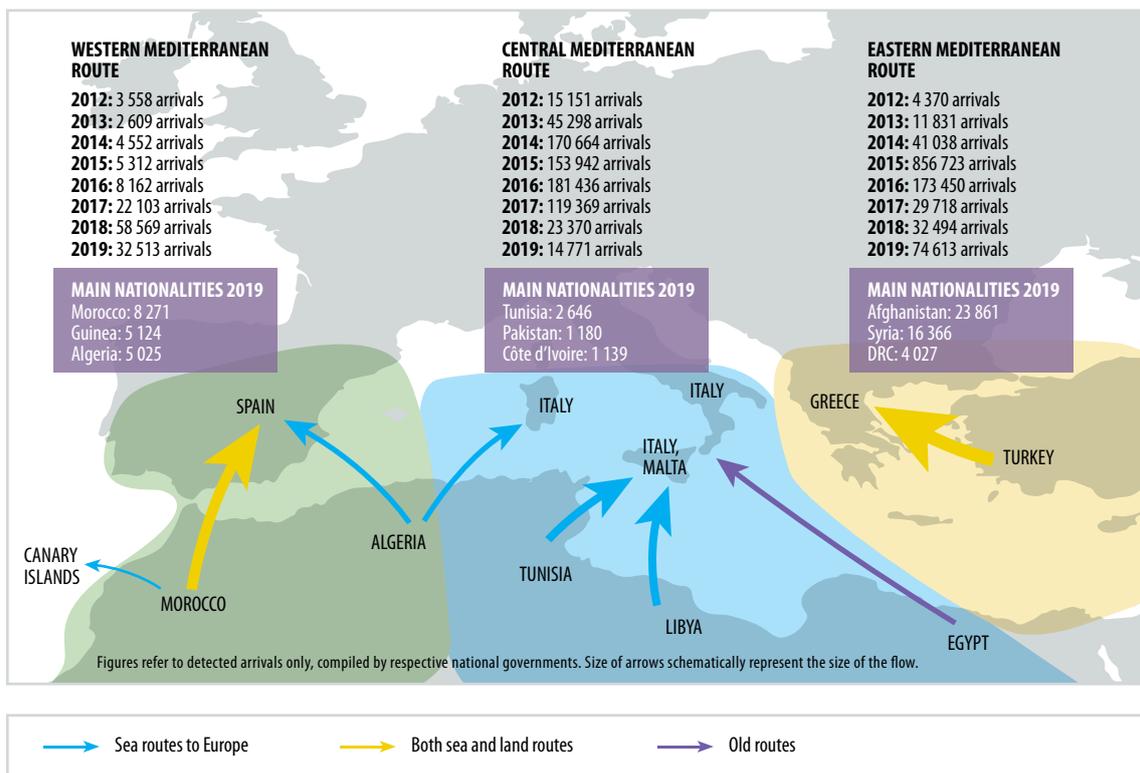
1. INTRODUCTION

A number of policy and security changes in the Mediterranean, North Africa and the Sahel over the last five years have led to a shift in mobility options towards Europe. Post-2014, as the political crisis in Libya deepened and the fragmentation of the country worsened, the migrant-smuggling business became more entrenched, and more and more militia groups opened migrant detention centres, which became cesspools of exploitation, abuse and trafficking.

Concerned about increases in irregular arrivals, Italy signed a memorandum of understanding with Libya in 2017 that led to a number of controversial initiatives that decreased significantly the number of migrants moving through the central Mediterranean. Not only did this involve co-opting militia in Libya to turn their backs to the lucrative migrant-smuggling business, but also reinforced the capacity of the Libyan Coast Guard to intercept migrant boats in the Mediterranean and return migrants to Libya.

During the same period, an anti-smuggling law in Niger in 2015 led to a strong emphasis on counter-smuggling in what was historically the gateway to Libya for sub-Saharan migrants. As a result of the law, migrants who had previously moved through Niger to North Africa quite easily, sometimes regularly and seasonally, were now blocked in northern Niger and started to move through the region in search of alternative routes. Routes through Algeria increased in prominence – some tried to enter Libya from the

Map 1: Movements through the three Mediterranean routes, 2012–2019



western border; some stayed in Algeria to work, but under precarious conditions, including raids on urban areas and construction sites by police and deportations of migrants back to Niger and Mali; and some moved to Morocco from Algeria, to try their luck on the western Mediterranean route.

Further east, a smaller movement developed towards Chad, where West Africans attempted to enter Libya from the Chadian border. They joined East African migrants who had re-routed from Darfur to Chad because of the increased border security between Sudan and Libya.

The combined effect of the above has been a drastic decrease in arrivals through the Mediterranean, with the total number of irregular migrants arriving across the three routes in 2019 reaching just above 120 000 (see Map 1). However, accompanying this decrease in arrivals has been a number of unintended consequences. First and foremost, the journeys that sub-Saharan migrants continue to undertake northbound have become more clandestine and more dangerous, exposing them to greater levels of risk. Moreover, as the mobility options towards Europe shifted, smuggling and trafficking networks have also regrouped and repositioned themselves.

While smuggling and trafficking are two different phenomena, the line between the two has become more and more elusive in this context. The difference between the two is mainly framed around concepts of coercion, exploitation and profits, with trafficking involving an exploitative element, which is non-consensual for the most part, and the generation of profits out of the exploitation of victims (See Focus box 1). This study seeks to understand how the changing patterns of irregular migration towards Europe have affected the dynamics of trafficking and, consequently, the patterns of vulnerability in source countries in West Africa and transit countries in the Sahel.

Focus box 1: Definition of human trafficking

Human trafficking is a transnational crime that is defined in Article 3 of the Additional Protocol to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Human Trafficking, in particular Trafficking Involving Women and Children. It is defined as:

‘the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.’

2. OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH

The overall purpose of this study is to scope how the shift in migration dynamics on routes to Europe has affected patterns of trafficking. More specifically:

- What is the state of trafficking in the source countries of Nigeria and Senegal, and what new forms of trafficking have emerged?
- What are the ways in which migrants who do not leave their homes in a context of trafficking could end up trafficked along the routes?
- How has the modus operandi of trafficking networks shifted?
- How have patterns of vulnerability shifted for migrants?
- How much information do migrants have about these dynamics and in what ways do they seek to address their vulnerability to trafficking?

Trafficking is a very difficult subject to research within the context of longform research, which is based on scientific methodologies. This is because victims rarely talk about their experiences and, if they do, it is usually only after they have been in therapy for some time and to their therapists alone. Almost all research on trafficking to date is based on key informant interviews with people who are involved in the business or who are related to the victims in some way (e.g. social workers and aid agencies). There is a dearth of information that is migrant-focused and that, instead of relying on the testimonies of victims alone, aims to explore the propensity, vulnerability and perceptions of migrants in relation to the trafficking phenomenon. In order to be able to do so, the methodology of this study relied on a number of layers of investigation in order to gain a comprehensive picture of the objectives the study aims to address.

These layers include:

- Literature review and secondary data review.
- Qualitative interviews with VOT assistance organizations on the ground in order to understand the characteristics of VOTs, their experiences and how these have changed in recent years (i.e. second-party information on the victims and their perspectives).
- Qualitative interviews with key informants to gauge the latest trends in terms of forms of trafficking.
- A quantitative survey with migrants and potential migrants to understand vulnerability and exposure to trafficking by using proxies and indicators (financing strategies, work options along the route, levels of information and strategies for addressing vulnerability).

3. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted through four modules of research and culminated in a quantitative survey of 1 689 migrants across two countries, and 39 key informant interviews across four countries. The four modules are as follows:

1. Literature and secondary data review
2. Pre-survey scoping phase
3. Survey
4. Key informant interviews

The analysis in this report also built upon 149 qualitative interviews with migrants that were conducted between December 2018 and September 2019 in Niger, Morocco, Italy, Spain, Tunisia, Egypt and Mauritania. The study was launched in September 2019 and the report was drafted in February 2020. Due to the unexpected pressures of the COVID pandemic, the review of the report by the EU and its subsequent publication were not completed until September 2020.

3.1 Literature and secondary data review

This module drew upon all of the existing work that has been done in this area, including literature and secondary data. This includes in particular, International Organization for Migration (IOM) Italy's years of central Mediterranean-related counter-trafficking work in collaboration with the Italian anti-mafia police; IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) data in source and transit countries; and IOM's Global Data Hub on Human Trafficking, which contains data from almost 100 000 individual trafficking cases. The purpose of the literature and secondary data review was twofold: to ensure that the research is complementary to the existing body of research and to incorporate existing evidence into the analysis.

3.2 Pre-survey scoping phase

Quantitative surveys were conducted with migrants (outgoing and incoming) and potential migrants (locals to the country) in Mali and Niger. The purpose of the surveys was to add to the evidence base and to introduce a migrant-focused approach.

The survey phase was preceded by a screening phase that was rolled out on the ground in Mali and Niger in September 2019 by members of the Global Initiative (GI-TOC) research team. The purpose of the screening phase was to gather information that would aid the development of the survey questionnaire and methodology. It sought to identify the key locations in the country that have the highest rates of out/in-migration, so that they could be used as survey sites, as well as the typical profiles of migrants leaving the country, and the typical modalities of trafficking and smuggling.

3.3 Survey

A perception survey was conducted in Niger and Mali with migrants in transit (incoming or outgoing) and potential migrants (locals to the country) over October and November 2019. The purpose of the perception survey in transit countries was to explore the circulation of information along the routes, as well as migrants' financing, and work options and strategies. These were used as proxies to help assess the pattern of vulnerability to trafficking. More specifically:

Circulation of information:

- Do migrants perceive a change in the ability to travel to Europe?
- How does this affect their migration strategies?
- Do they know about the heightened risk in Libya?
- How do they plan to address their vulnerability?
- What strategies will they employ to still be able to get to their destination within the context of decreased mobility options?
- What new options have emerged?

Financing and work options:

- In what ways have migrants accessed money along the route (jobs, money sent from home, other forms of income-generating activity)?
- What kinds of jobs do migrants have access to along the route (both in terms of their perception and actual knowledge of available jobs)?
- In what ways and in what modalities do migrants end up working with smugglers?
- Instances of misrepresentation.

Financing strategies for potential migrants:

- How much money do potential migrants think they will need for their migratory journey north and how do they gauge this information?
- What kind of contingency plans do potential migrants have for accessing money along the route if needed?
- Will potential migrants wait until they have enough money for the journey before commencing or will they start with what they have and source more along the way (intentions)?

Sampling: The survey in transit countries targeted a sample size of 800 migrants per country (3.5% confidence interval at a 95% confidence level). This sample size ensures that the data is statistically relevant when disaggregated by profile, gender and vulnerability pattern. In order for the sample to reflect the nationalities and profiles (age, gender) of migrants present in the country, and since the proportion of the overall migrant population that is represented by each nationality is not known, migrant respondents were selected at random across predetermined survey sites.

Survey sites were determined during the pre-survey scoping phase and quotas were established for incoming and outgoing migrants in each location based on proportions identified by IOM DTM data (as this is the only data set currently available). The total number of interviews conducted in each survey site is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of interviews per survey site

Country	Survey site	# of interviews
Mali	Bamako	727
	Timbuktu	114
Niger	Niamey	227
	Agadez	222
	Zinder	205
	Tahoua	194

Quality assurance of data: Data was collected electronically, using tablets or mobile phones. Data was automatically entered into a MySQL database and analyzed leveraging pandas, permitting multivariate analysis. Throughout the research, around 5% of questionnaires were double-checked to ensure quality, either by conducting a short telephone interview, or random revisiting of the locations (where possible) to ensure that the interviewee was asked the questions in the right manner.

3.4 Key informant interviews

Key informant interviews were conducted in Nigeria, Niger, Senegal and Libya. These interviews targeted VOT assistance organizations to understand the characteristics of VOTs, their experiences and how these have changed in recent years (second-party information on the victims themselves and their perspectives). Other profiles of key informants included representatives of implementing organizations and agencies that have counter-trafficking programmes, and authorities involved in counter-trafficking. These interviews were conducted in order to discuss recent trends in human smuggling and trafficking. The full list of key informants interviewed appears in Table 2.

Table 2: Key informant interviews completed

#	Name	Organization	Role
Nigeria			
1	Eleni Zerzelidou	EU	Project officer, migration and drugs
2	Rafael Rios Molina	FIIAPP	Team leader
3	Saskia Kok	IOM	Head of migrant protection and assistance unit
4	Adaramola Sunday Emmanuel	World Children Foundation	Executive director
5	Femi Adesida	NACTAL	General secretary
6	Aderonmu Ismaila	NAPTIP	Chief intelligence officer
7	Mildred Nwabuebo	NAPTIP	Principal intelligence officer
8	Abdulganiyu A. Abubakar	Save the Children Initiative	Chief executive officer
9	Roger Hollo	UNHCR	Deputy representative (protection)
10	Silvia Cravesana	UNHCR	Associate liaison officer
11	Markus Topp	UNHCR	Senior protection officer
12	Imaobong Ladipo Sanusi	Wotclef	Executive director
13	Michael Adeniji	Wotclef	Monitoring and evaluation officer
14	Shade Famojuro	Wotclef	Assistant
Niger			
15	Robert Lankenau	Mercy Corps	Country director
16	Rahamatou Daouda Halidou	IOM	Senior protection assistant
17	Nikolaas Swyngedouw	IOM	Protection officer
18	Hamidou Manou Nabara	JMED	President

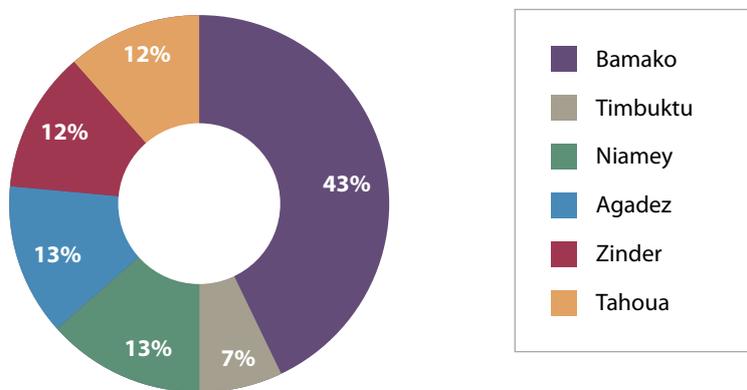
#	Name	Organization	Role
Senegal			
19	Police chief Bakary Malouine Faye	Division de lutte contre le trafic de migrants et pratiques assimilées.	Head of division
20	Badara Ndiaye	Diaspora Développement Education Migration	
21	Ilenia Piccinini	Diaspora Développement Education Migration	
22	Clarisse Liautaud	EU	EUTF Programme manager
23	Patrice Desbonnes	EU	Liaison officer – migration
24	Ilaria Musetti	EU	Cooperation attaché – security
25	Omar Diallo	Association Donner pour Sauver	President
26	Tatiana Perhoupá	France Terre d'Asile	Project manager RECOLTEHA
27	Cheikh Mbacké Seme	IOM	Information management assistant
28	Damien Jusselme	IOM	Regional information management
29	Mboup Cheikh Khadim	Swiss Embassy	Programme officer
Spain			
30	Teresa de Gasperis	ACCEM	Programme manager for anti-trafficking issues
31	Lucia Prieto Rios	ACF	Production deputy director (missions' support)
32	Marta Martinez	Cruz Blanca	Focal point on human trafficking
33	Isabelle Fernandez Malaval	Karibu, Amigo del Pueblo Africano	Volunteer anthropologist
34	Angel de la Aleja	Mbolo	Co-founder, cultural facilitator
Libya/MENA			
35	Aymeric Salamone	UNODC Regional Office for MENA	Border management specialist
36	Faisal Hegazy	UNODC Regional Office for MENA	National project officer on human trafficking and smuggling (former)
37	Aspasia Plakantonaki	UNODC Regional Office for MENA	Programme coordinator (anti-human trafficking and migrant smuggling)
38	Othman Belbeisi	IOM Libya	Chief of mission (former)
39	Urwah Alhabahbeh	UNSMIL	Corrections and human rights officer

C. SAMPLE STATISTICS

1. SURVEY SITES

The total sample for the survey is 1 689 migrants. Of that total number, 841 interviews were carried out in Mali, in two locations, and 848 interviews were carried out in Niger, in four locations. The survey sites in Niger were Niamey, Agadez, Zinder and Tahoua; the survey sites in Mali were Bamako and Timbuktu. The sample in Niger was split almost evenly across the four sites. In Mali, 86% of all interviews carried out were conducted in Bamako (43% of the total sample) and the rest in Timbuktu. Figure 1 sets out the survey locations according to the proportion of the sample they represent.

Figure 1: Survey locations according to proportion of the sample



Survey sites were selected on the basis of key hubs along the migration trail through each country. In Niger, Niamey was chosen because it has historically been the main entry point into the country for transit migrants who typically arrive on public buses, thanks to the freedom of movement in the ECOWAS region for West African nationals. Agadez has traditionally been the main smuggling hub from where journeys to Libya or Algeria begin, as it is the last main town before the Libyan border. Since the passing of the anti-smuggling law in Niger in 2015, new routes have emerged, beginning in Zinder and Tahoua, sites where respondents were also interviewed.

The number of sites in Mali was limited by the insecurity in the country. In fact, the movements through Mali have decreased in recent years given the conflict. The main starting point for migrants is Bamako, and like Niamey, migrants tend to arrive there by bus. From Bamako, there are two main movements north: one via Gao, and one via Timbuktu. Given the insecurity in Gao, our teams were not able to conduct field research there. However, a smaller sample of interviews was conducted in Timbuktu. For more information on routes, please refer to section C.4 of this report.

2. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS

2.1 Nationality and gender

The sample of migrants spans 31 nationalities and is presented in Figure 2. Migrants from Niger and Mali make up the greatest proportion of the sample, which is not surprising, given that the survey was carried out in these countries and given the random sampling. It should be noted that 9% of the Malians interviewed for this study (80 individuals) were interviewed in Niger, and 3% of the Nigeriens (23 individuals) were interviewed in Mali.

Of the 1 689 migrants interviewed, 200 were women, or 12% of the sample. The nationalities with the highest ratio of women are Nigeria (20%, 40 individuals) and Ghana (11%, 22 individuals) and the share of these nationalities among women is higher than among men. Nationality according to survey country is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 2: Sample according to country of origin and gender⁷

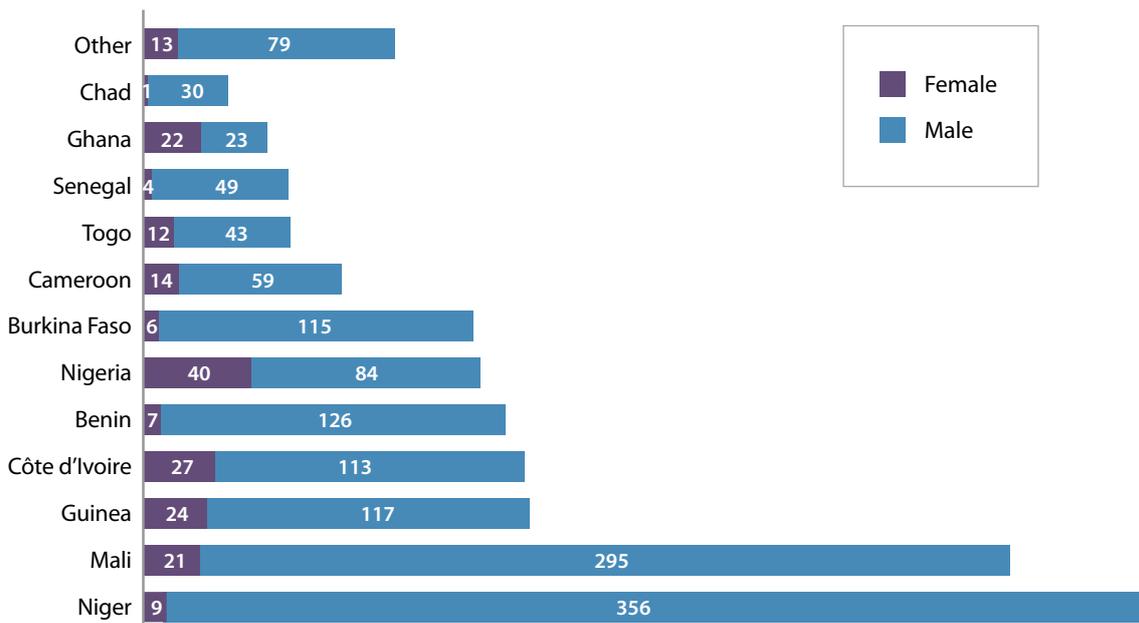
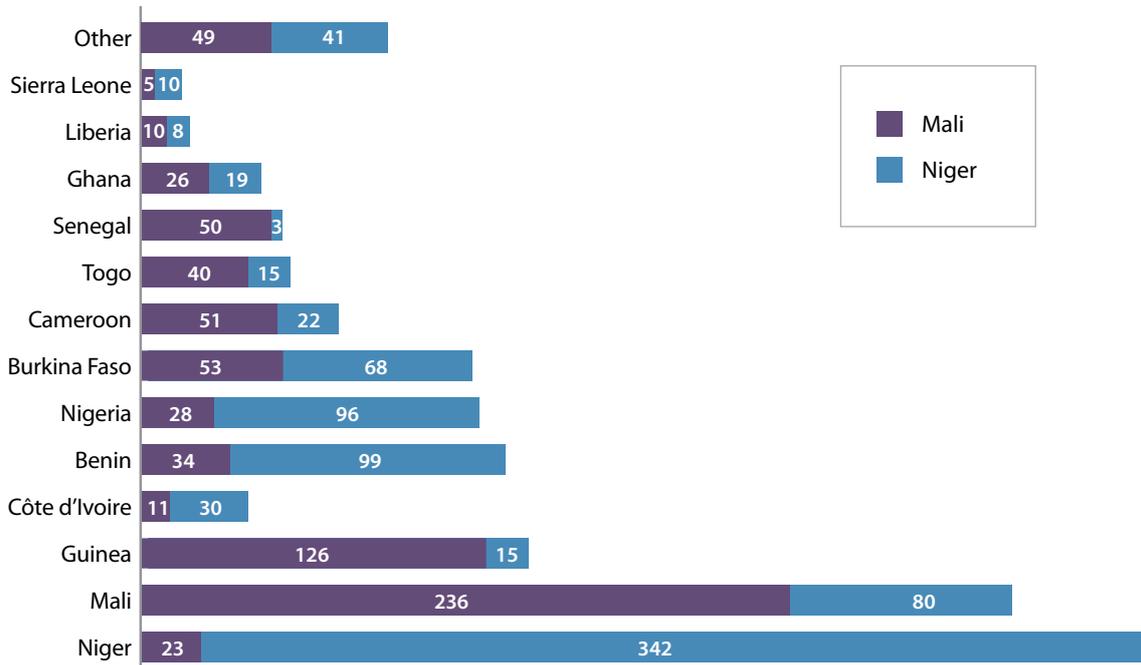


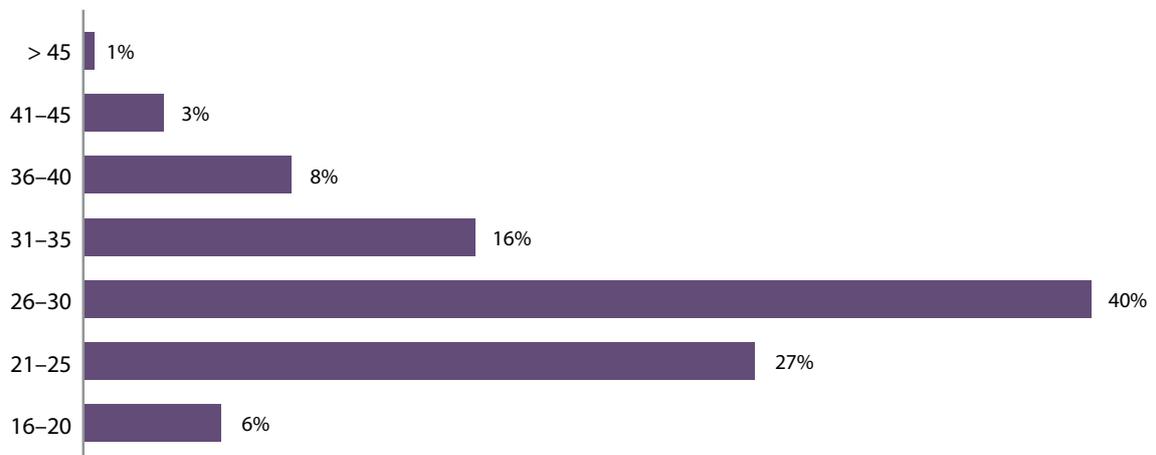
Figure 3: Nationality according to survey country⁸



2.2 Age distribution

The sample is distributed across a range of ages, with a concentration in the 26–30-year-old bracket, as shown in Figure 4, and an average of 28. The numbers are particularly low below 21 and above 36 years. When age is analyzed according to gender, there is not much variation, only that women tend to be slightly younger, with more falling in the 21–25-year-old bracket (32%) when compared to men (26%).

Figure 4: Sample according to age distribution



2.3 Marital status and family life

The majority of the sample are single (62%) and 30% reported that they are married, as can be seen in Figure 5. When analyzed according to gender, there are more women who are engaged/in a relationship, divorced or widowed than men but fewer women who are single or married. When respondents were asked how many children they had, the average answer was one child; 12% of the sample reported having more than three children; and 59% of men reported having no children, compared to 43% of women.

Figure 5: Sample according to marital status and gender

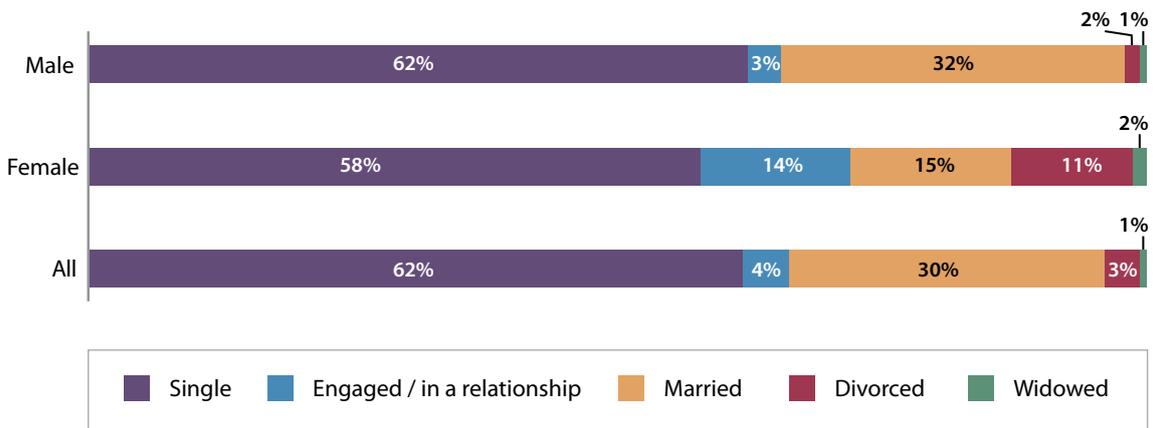
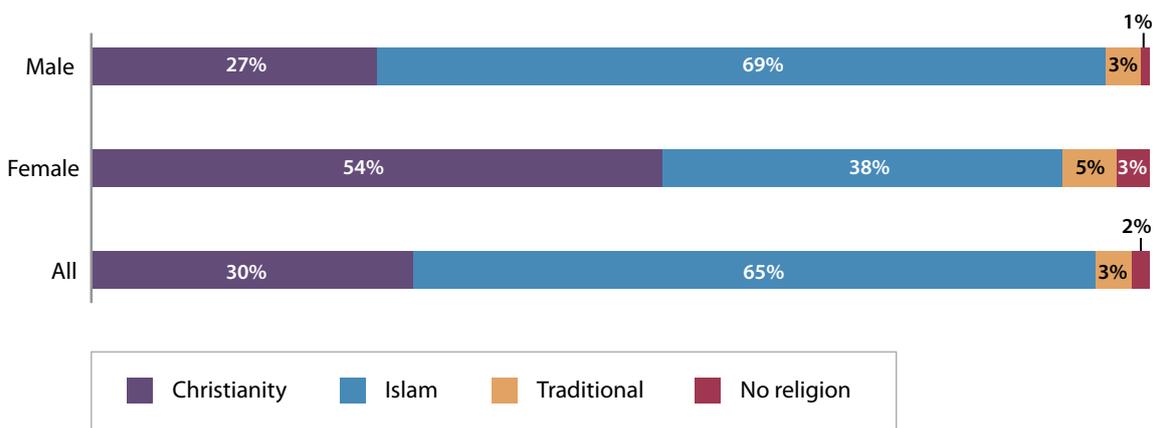


Figure 6: Sample according to religion and gender



2.4 Religion

Islam is the most represented religion among the sample (65%), as shown in Figure 6. Islam is followed by Christianity at 30%, while 3% of the sample reported following traditional religions and 1% reported having no religion. When religious representation is analyzed according to gender, women demonstrate different trends from the overall sample. There is a higher proportion of Christians (108 individuals, 54%) than Muslims (75 individuals, 38%) among women, whereas only 27% of the men in the sample reported following Christianity. This is not surprising, given the high percentage of Nigerians and Ghanaian among the female portion of the sample. It is also probable the Muslim cultural norms would prevent women from travelling alone on these routes.

2.5 Education levels and occupation

The level of education across the sample is relatively low. A total of 372 individuals, or 22% of the sample, reported having received no formal education whatsoever. Only 10% had been educated as far as high school (see Figure 7). There is little variation between the genders when it comes to education levels.

The respondents were also asked what their occupation had been before they migrated, and the most common response, among both men and women, was manual labour. The second most common response among women was service industry, whereas for men it was agriculture (see Figure 8). The occupations of the respondents prior to their departure from their home country also reflect their low education levels.

Figure 7: Sample according to highest level of education completed and gender

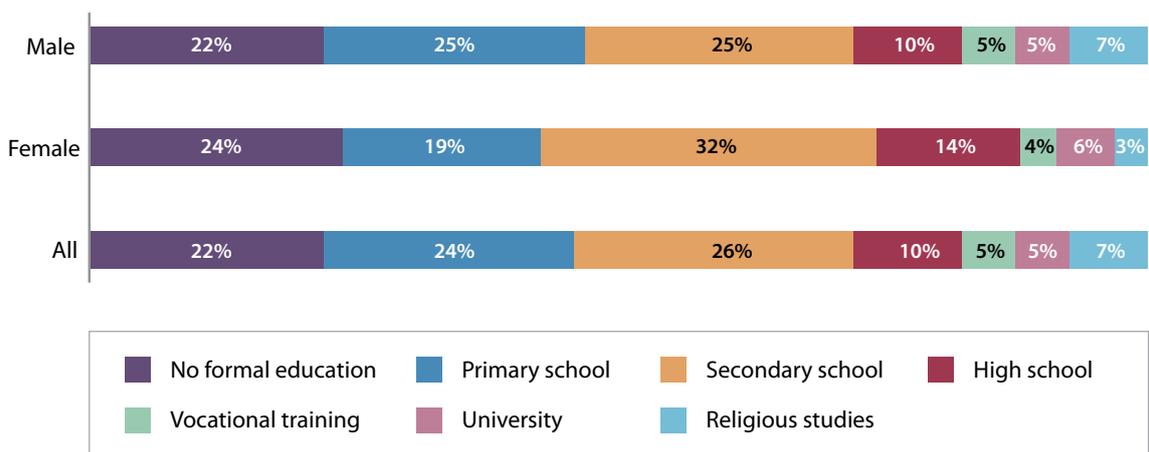
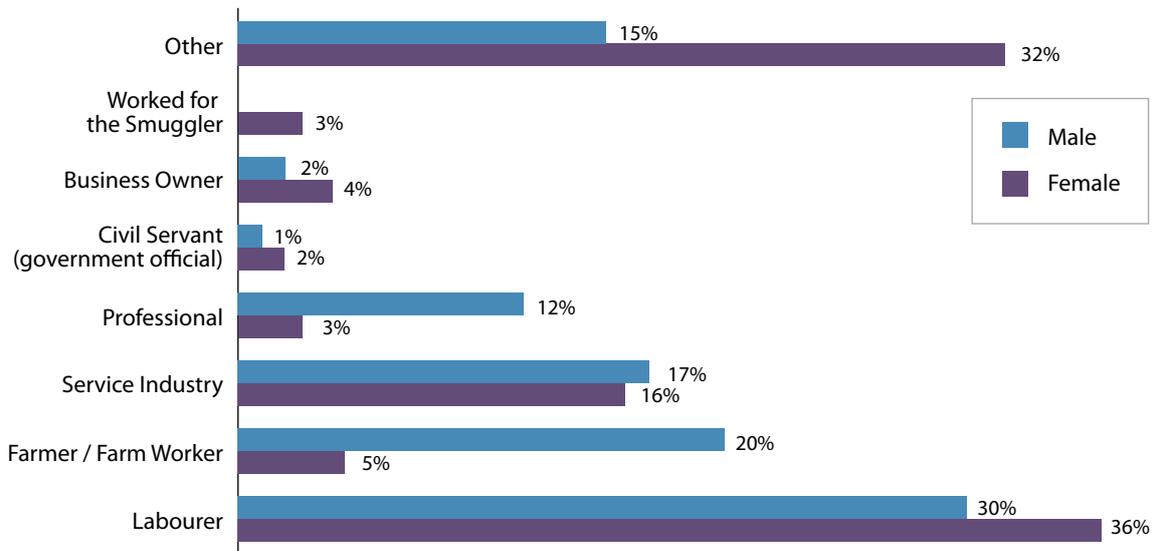


Figure 8: Sample according to occupation before leaving home, by gender

3. MIGRANT PROFILES

The survey sample is composed of four types of migrants:

1. **'Migrating'** refers to respondents (either local to the survey country or migrants) who are on their way to a new country that is not their origin country.
2. **'Recently returned'** refers to respondents who originate from one of the survey countries (Niger or Mali), who have returned home within the last three months and who are not intending to migrate right now.
3. **'Recently settled'** refers to respondents who are not from the survey country (migrants) and who do not intend to migrate to another country in the next month.
4. **'Returning home'** refers to respondents who are not native to the survey country (migrants) and who are on their way back to their home country.

Filter questions were included in the beginning of the survey to ensure that all respondents belonged to one of the above four categories. These categories were created in order to ensure that a good cross-section of experiences would be captured and that a regional perspective could be obtained. That is, the 'recently returned' and 'returning home' categories allow us an insight into trafficking dynamics further north from the Sahel among both Sahelians and West Africans, while the 'recently settled' category was included to provide a window into the experience of trafficking in the surveyed country.

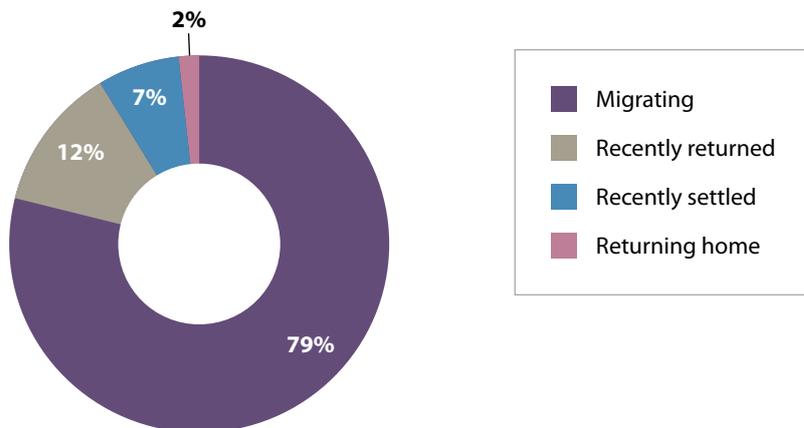
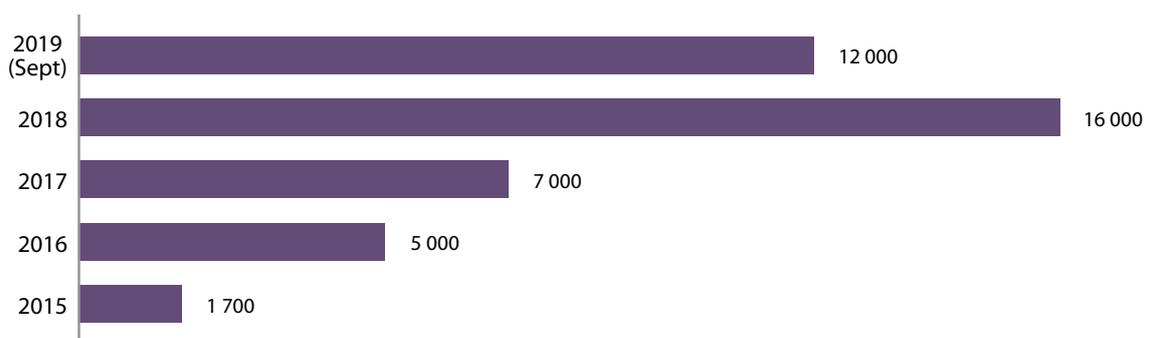
Figure 9: Sample according to migrant type**Figure 10:** Assisted voluntary returnees from Niger, 2015–September 2019

Figure 9 charts the sample according to migrant type. As can be seen, 79% of the sample were migrating, while only 2% were returning home from the surveyed country. As respondents were selected randomly, this could indicate that the majority of migrants in the Sahel are still moving north, rather than returning home. However, it is possible that the data is skewed by the fact that some migrants return home with assistance packages from local or international organizations, particularly IOM's assisted voluntary return (AVR) programmes, and are thereby not captured in these statistics. IOM's AVR programmes have been very active in Niger since 2015, totalling more than 40 000 beneficiaries in that period, as shown in Figure 10.

3.1 Socio-demographics according to migrant type

The socio-demographic characteristics of the different migrant types generally follow the same pattern, except in the case of 'recently returned' respondents, who show different trends from the overall sample. This is not surprising, given that the 'recently returned' group consists only of Malians and Nigeriens and is therefore far more specific than the rest.

For example, the gender distribution of the entire sample is 12% women, and women make up 13% of migrating respondents, 13% of recently settled respondents and 10% of respondents returning home. For recently returned migrants, however, the proportion of women drops to 3%, indicating that there are few Malian and Nigerien women on the move. In terms of religion, the overall sample has a distribution of 65% Muslim and 30% Christian, and all the migrant types follow an almost identical distribution, except for the recently returned migrants, who are 97% Muslim. Recently returned migrants are also less likely to be single, with 54% reporting that they are married, compared to 30% across the rest of the sample. They also have 1.9 children on average, compared to an average of one child across the rest of the sample.

Figure 11 charts the distribution of the sample according to education levels and migrant type. While all four migrant categories are more prominently distributed among the lower education levels (i.e. from no formal education to high school), recently returned migrants exceed the overall sample in the no formal education and primary school categories, and then drop below the overall sample for secondary school and high school. In other words, recently returned migrants are less educated than the rest of the sample. The recently settled migrants also show low education levels, and the returning home category of migrants show higher education levels than the overall sample. However, it should be noted that the category of migrants who are returning home represent only 2% of the total sample (n=33), and so it is difficult to draw any conclusions about this subset.

Figure 11: Education levels according to migrant type

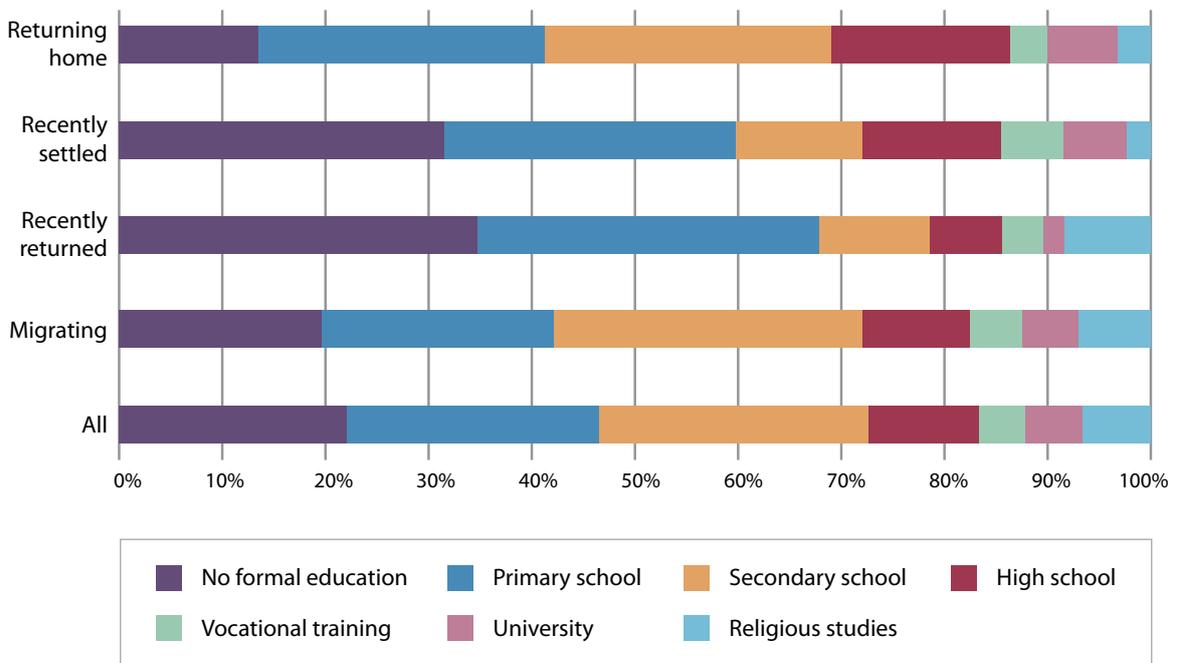
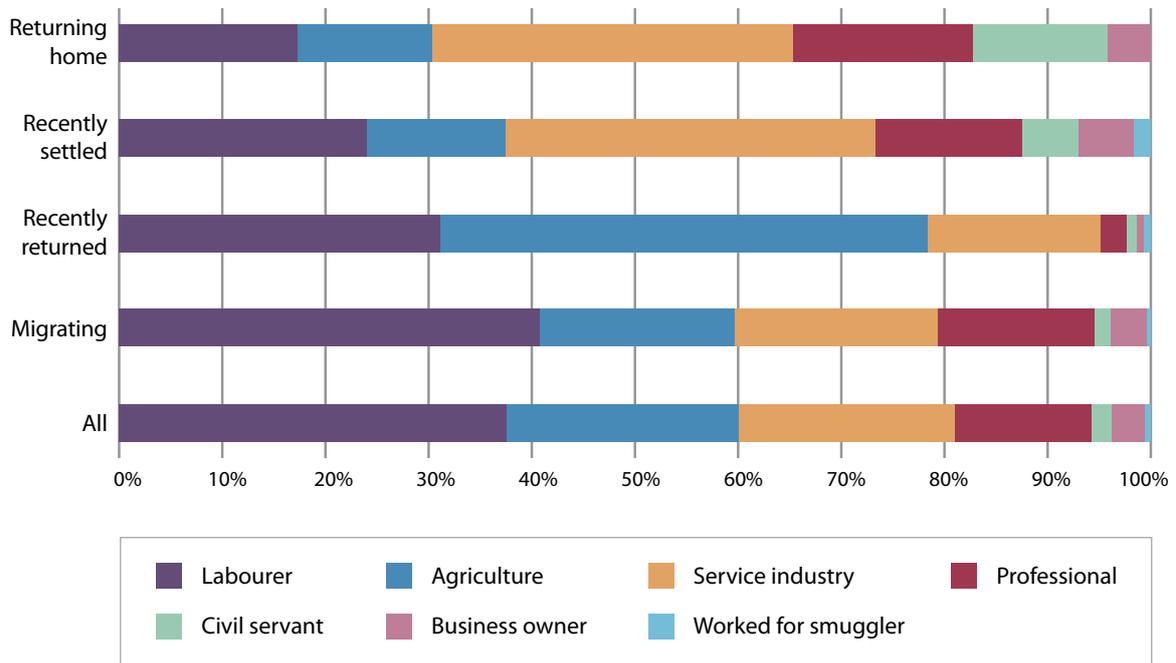


Figure 12: Occupation before departure, according to migrant type

Respondents were also asked what their occupation had been prior to their departure. The majority of the sample is distributed among three professions: manual labour, agriculture and the service industry. The recently returned migrants are overrepresented in the agriculture industry, as seen in Figure 12. Malians and Nigeriens have historically engaged in circular migration patterns to Libya. It is common for them to migrate to Libya every year just after the harvest, during the very warm and dry months, and then to return home for the rainy season after several months of work.⁹

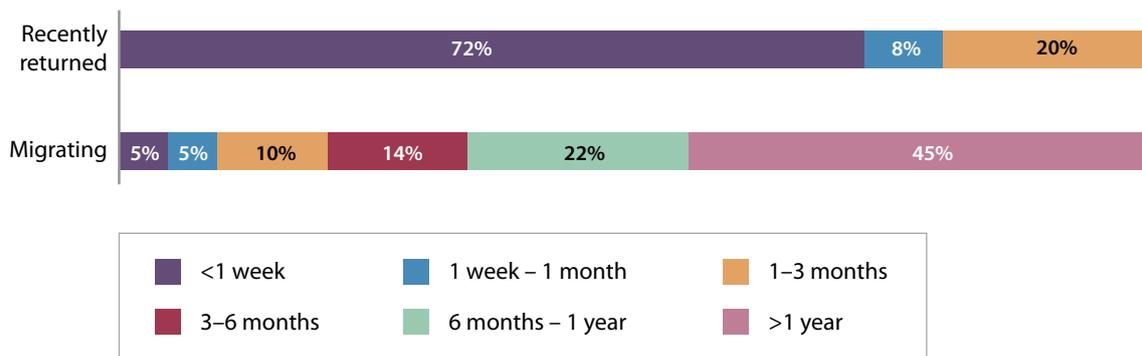
Moreover, while recent anti-smuggling efforts in Niger have made it difficult for migrants to travel between Niger and Libya, Nigerien nationals are still able to make the journey relatively easily. After the implementation of the anti-smuggling law in 2015 many smugglers were arrested or their cars were confiscated and migrant convoys were prevented from crossing the border into Libya, unless they were Nigeriens. This is mainly because the authorities have no basis on which they can stop Nigeriens who are travelling through their own country, as well as the fact that Nigeriens travel to Libya for seasonal work and do not make the onward journey to Europe, and are therefore not the target of the law. Although Nigeriens trying to enter Libya have been targeted, it has been relatively easier for them to cross the border and there has been a significant increase in the transportation of Nigeriens to Libya since 2016 as a result.¹⁰

3.2 Returnee dynamics

When we look at the total sample of Malians and Nigeriens across the various migrant categories (referred to as 'local respondents'), 87% reported that they had migrated to another country previously and returned home. This includes both local respondents who are currently migrating, as well as returnees (not currently on the move). Out of the local respondents who were migrating at the time of the survey, 79% reported that they had migrated previously and returned home. That is, 79% of local respondents who are currently migrating are repeat migrants.

Figure 13 charts how local respondents answered the question, 'When did you return home from your last migration?' and disaggregates the information according to local respondents who are recent returnees and local respondents who are currently migrating. Of those who are currently migrating, 45% returned home more than one year ago. Put another way, 45% will wait a year before migrating again; 22% will wait six months to a year before migrating again; and two-thirds of this subgroup will wait at least six months before trying another migration. Repeat migration is very common in the region and this can be the result of various factors. For example, circular migration patterns are very common, where individuals will migrate for a period of time to another country to make money and then return home to spend their earnings with their family, only to repeat their migration again when they require another cash injection. Other migrants will leave their host country when their migration has not been successful and choose to return at a future time to try again.

Figure 13: When did you return home from your last migration (local respondents)?



with drivers transporting people only at night. There has been a decrease in arrivals at the traditional hubs, such as Agadez and Seguedine, in favour of more conspicuous routes and itineraries.

The new routes to Libya begin in Zinder and Tahoua and although there are routes to Agadez from both starting points, there are also routes that head north to Libya avoiding Agadez altogether. The route from Zinder keeps close to the Chadian border as it heads north, while the route from Tahoua skirts the Algerian border. There is also a route from Agadez to Termit, which allows migrants in Agadez to join migrants travelling north from Zinder. As described earlier, there are no clear exit points over the Nigerien border into Libya; instead smugglers try various points along the border to avoid being intercepted. Whether migrants move directly north from Zinder or still travel via Agadez, they tend to pass through Dirkou and then Dao Timi before heading to the border.

Focus box 2: Legal and policy framework for human smuggling and trafficking in Niger

In 2010, Niger passed a decree on Combating Trafficking in Persons, which criminalizes sex and labour trafficking, including slavery, practices similar to slavery and exploitative begging. The law prescribes punishments of five to 10 years' imprisonment for perpetrators of trafficking offences in cases where the victim is an adult and 10 to 30 years where the victim is a child.

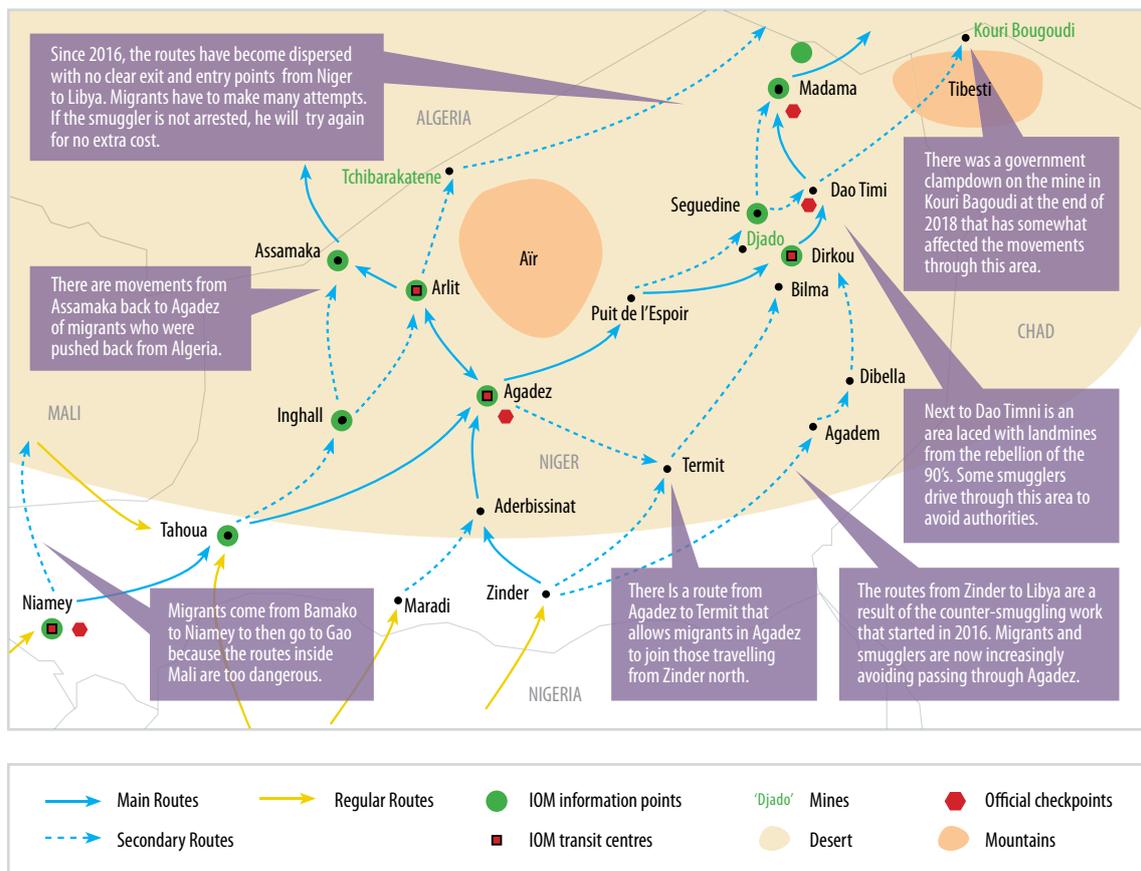
In 2012, the Commission Nationale de Coordination de Lutte Contre la Traite des Personnes (CNCLTP) and the Agence Nationale de Lutte contre la Traite des Personnes (ANLTP) were created. The CNCLTP is mandated with the creation of programmes and policies to combat human trafficking, while the ANLTP creates strategies to implement these programmes and policies in the field. The CNCLTP is established under the authority of the Ministry of Justice and is composed of representatives from the ministries of Justice, Social Affairs, Finance, Foreign Affairs, Mines, Transport, Trade, Education, Labour, Communication and National Defence, as well as civil-society organizations (CSOs). The ANLTP is an independent authority administrated by the CNCLTP. Its director is chosen by the Conseil des Ministres, and it is composed of technical and administrative personnel.

In 2015, Niger introduced a new anti-smuggling law with the support of European partners. The legislation seeks to punish human-rights violations suffered by smuggled migrants, and its intent is to reduce the scale of this crime in the country. While the law is ostensibly aimed at smugglers, it resulted in a de facto travel ban on all those travelling north of Agadez in violation of ECOWAS freedom of movement protocols, which had the effect of creating more risks for migrants.

The routes to Algeria from Niger pass through Arlit. Migrants make the journey from Agadez to Arlit, and then from Arlit to Assamaka. From Assamaka, they cross the border into Algeria. If migrants travel with a smuggler, some of them will negotiate a journey from Arlit to Tamanrasset, in Algeria. Others negotiate journeys from Arlit to the other side of the border. There are also migrants who make the journey without a smuggler and use public buses. Once migrants cross into Algeria, they often end up needing to use smugglers to get to Tamanrasset because Algerian transport companies refuse to sell bus tickets to migrants without documents. Some migrants end up having to work in small towns close to the border in order to make enough money to pay a smuggler to transport them to Tamanrasset and onwards, not having been aware of the need to make such provisions before leaving Niger.

Algeria has a regime of forced returns to Niger. In 2014, a bilateral agreement was made between the two countries that enables undocumented Nigerien migrants in Algeria to return to their home country as part of a voluntary programme. As a result of this agreement, the Algerian government returns Nigeriens to Assamaka. Third-country nationals, however, are typically abandoned in the desert between the two borders or at the Malian border with Algeria.

Map 3: Routes through Niger

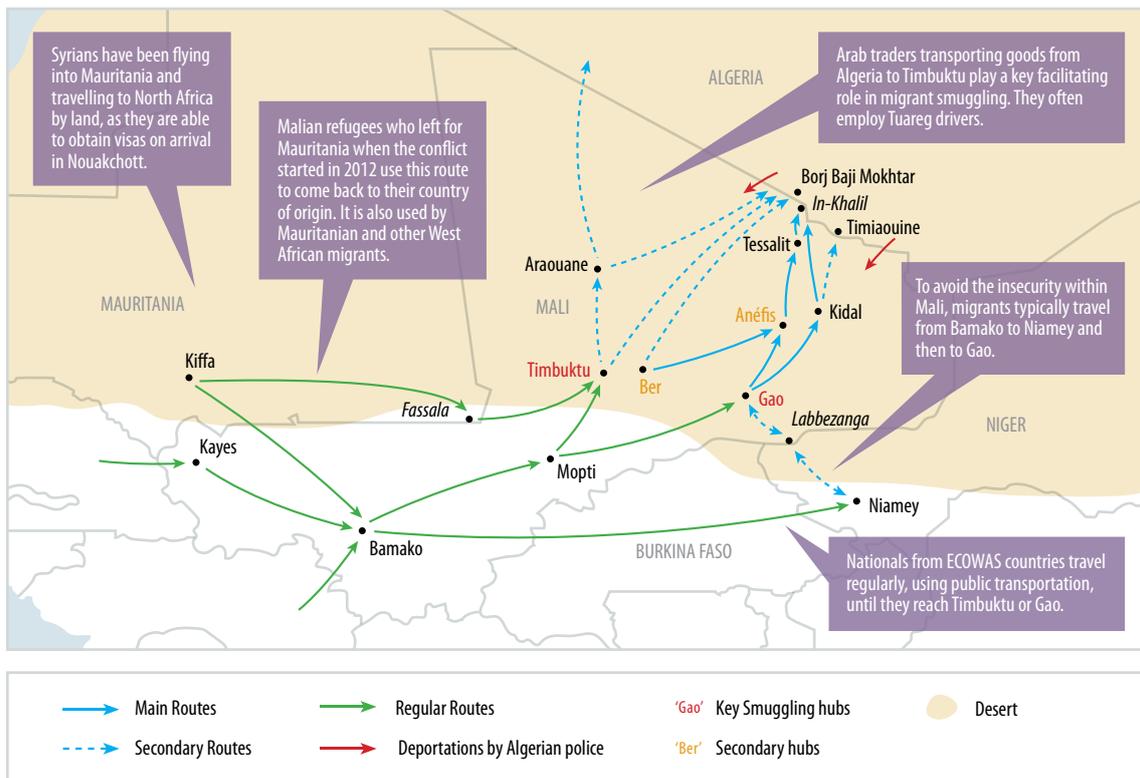


4.2 Routes through Mali

The routes through Mali are set out in Map 4. Movements of migrants through Mali are minimal given the insecurity in the central and northern parts of the country, and the risks that this creates for migrants. These routes are mainly used by Malians or by migrants who wish to move to Morocco from Mauritania. As the border between Morocco and Mauritania is now closed, migrants move through Mali and Algeria and cross into Morocco from Oujda. The main route through Mali involves travelling from Gao to Borg Badji Mokhtar in Algeria through the official border crossing points of In-Khalil or Timiouine. The routes from Timbuktu head directly to Borg Badji Mokhtar, bypassing In-Khalil, or to Arouane and then directly north to the Algerian border. Migrants who enter Algeria on this route go to Reggane on the Algerian side of the border – a journey of 160 kilometres to the border and then 380 kilometres to Reggane.

There is also a route from Niamey to Gao that became more prominent after the anti-smuggling law in Niger complicated movements within that country. However, it never became a major route, given the instability in Mali. The Ménaka region, which the Niamey–Gao route passes through, is highly volatile and characterized by intercommunal violence, jihadist activity and conflict between armed groups for control of the region. Migrants are more likely to travel from Bamako to Niamey via Burkina Faso. There has been a very small number of migrants moving from Niamey to Gao through the Ménaka region with the intention of accessing Algeria via Mali. However, the numbers have been almost negligible and are decreasing. There

Map 4: Routes through Mali



have also been cases of migrants moving from Bamako to Burkina Faso and then back into Mali, as a way to avoid the instability in central Mali.

Forced expulsions from Algeria to northern Mali began in March 2018. Migrants are typically arrested in the north of Algeria, in cities such as Algiers or Oran. These cities are not on the migration trail but they are locations where migrants go to find work. The Algerian police conduct raids on construction sites and mines in search of undocumented workers. The migrants are then gathered in transit centres until enough have amassed to be moved back to the border. They are then escorted by police on buses to Borg Badji Mokhtar and made to walk the 25 kilometre desert trail to In-Khalil. Unlike the 2014 agreements between Niger and Algeria, Mali and Algeria have not created a bilateral agreement for expulsions.

Table 3: Routes used by migrants in the sample

Libya/Italy (27%)	Migrants who are targeting Libya or Italy (or were targeting them but are now returning home)
Morocco/Spain (9%)	Migrants who are targeting Morocco or Spain (or were targeting them but are now returning home)
Algeria (17%)	Migrants who are targeting Algeria as a destination (or were targeting it but are now returning home)
Other Europe (19%)	Migrants who are targeting any other European country (or were targeting it but are now returning home)
Other Africa (27%)	Migrants who are targeting any other African country (or were targeting it but are now returning home)

4.3 Routes used by respondents in the sample

Out of the survey results, there emerged five routes that our sample can be structured around (see Table 3).

Respondents interviewed in Niger were far more likely to be following the Libya/Italy (36%) or Algeria (25%) routes, with only 3% targeting the Morocco/Spain route (see Figure 14). Respondents in Mali, however, were more likely to be following the Morocco/Spain route, with 16% of the sample in that country identifying it as their target. Libya/Italy and Algeria decreased in prominence for migrants in Mali but the 'other Europe' route was identified by 33%, as compared to 6% in Niger. Once again, the data suggests that Mali is a more prominent transit country for migrants targeting Europe, and in particular destinations other than Italy and Spain, and Niger is more prominent for migrants targeting African destinations, in particular Libya and, increasingly, Algeria.

Figure 14: Intended route according to survey country

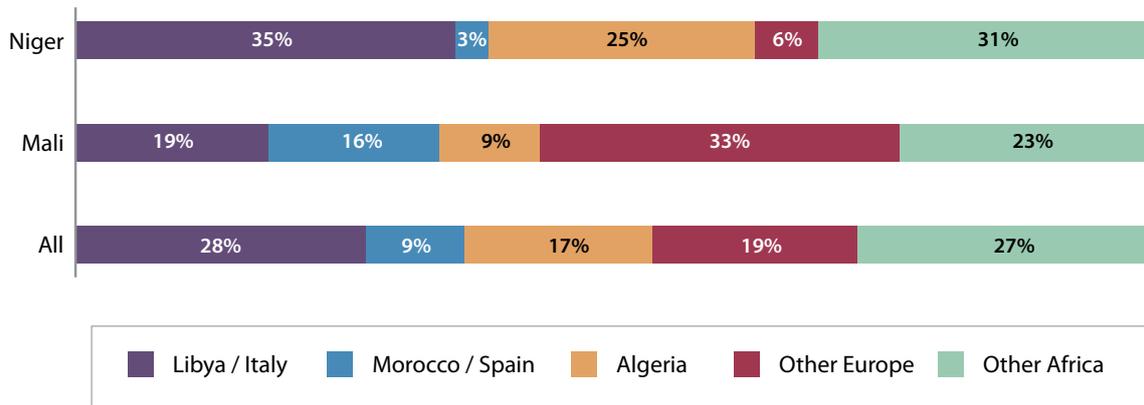
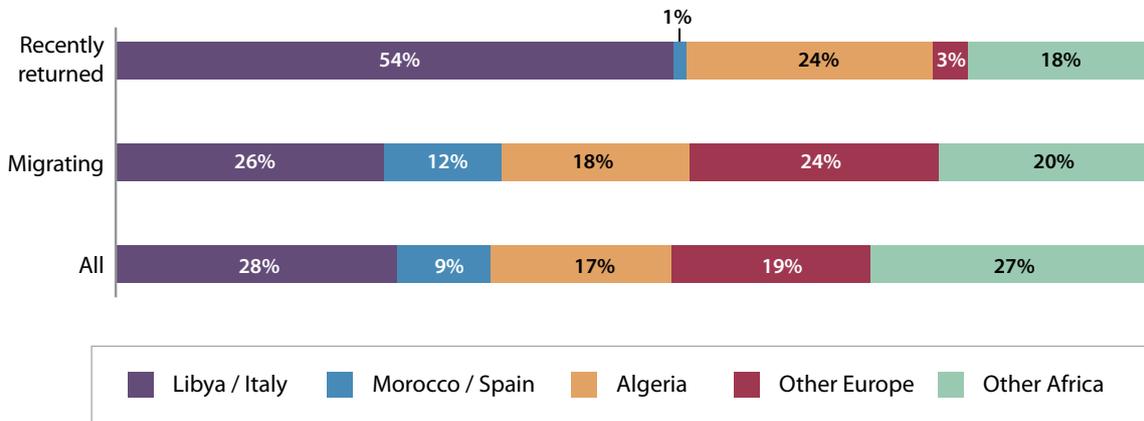


Figure 15: Route according to migrant type



Recently returned migrants, who are all Malian and Nigerien, are over-represented on the Libya/Italy route, with 54% falling into this category (see Figure 15). It is safe to assume that the majority were targeting Libya as a final destination, given their historic circular migration to the country (as previously discussed). An additional 25% fall into the Algeria route category. Only 1% are placed in the Morocco/Spain route and only 3% in the ‘Other Europe’ route. The ‘migrating’ category of respondents move closely with the overall sample.

When the route categories are analyzed according to socio-demographics, there are no major variations with religion, education levels, occupation before departure or family structure.

4.4 Intended destinations

The majority of migrants in our sample were, or had been, targeting Africa as their region of destination (61%), and only 34% had been targeting Europe. When analyzed according to survey country, however, the proportions shift. In Mali, 59% of migrants were targeting Europe as their destination, compared to 10% of migrants interviewed in Niger (see Figure 16).

Figure 16: Destination according to survey country

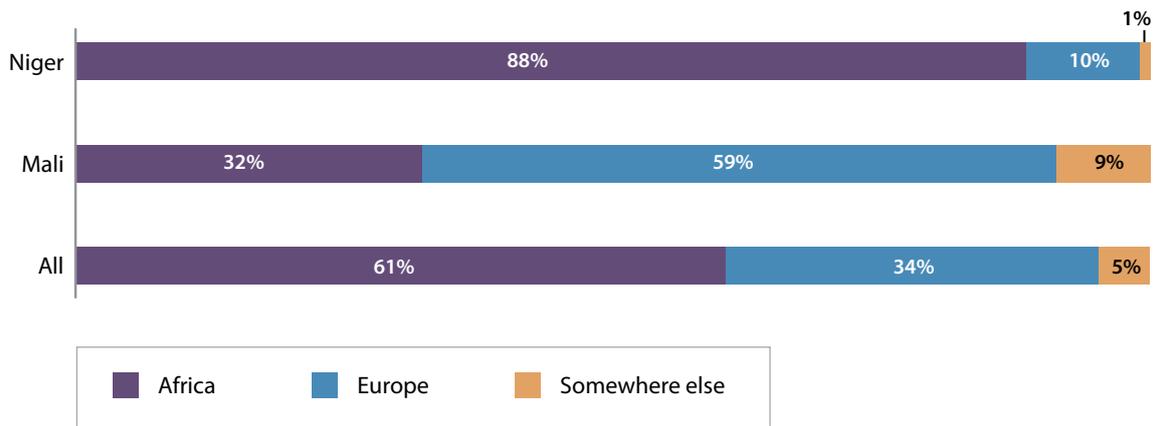


Figure 17: Reported country of destination according to survey country

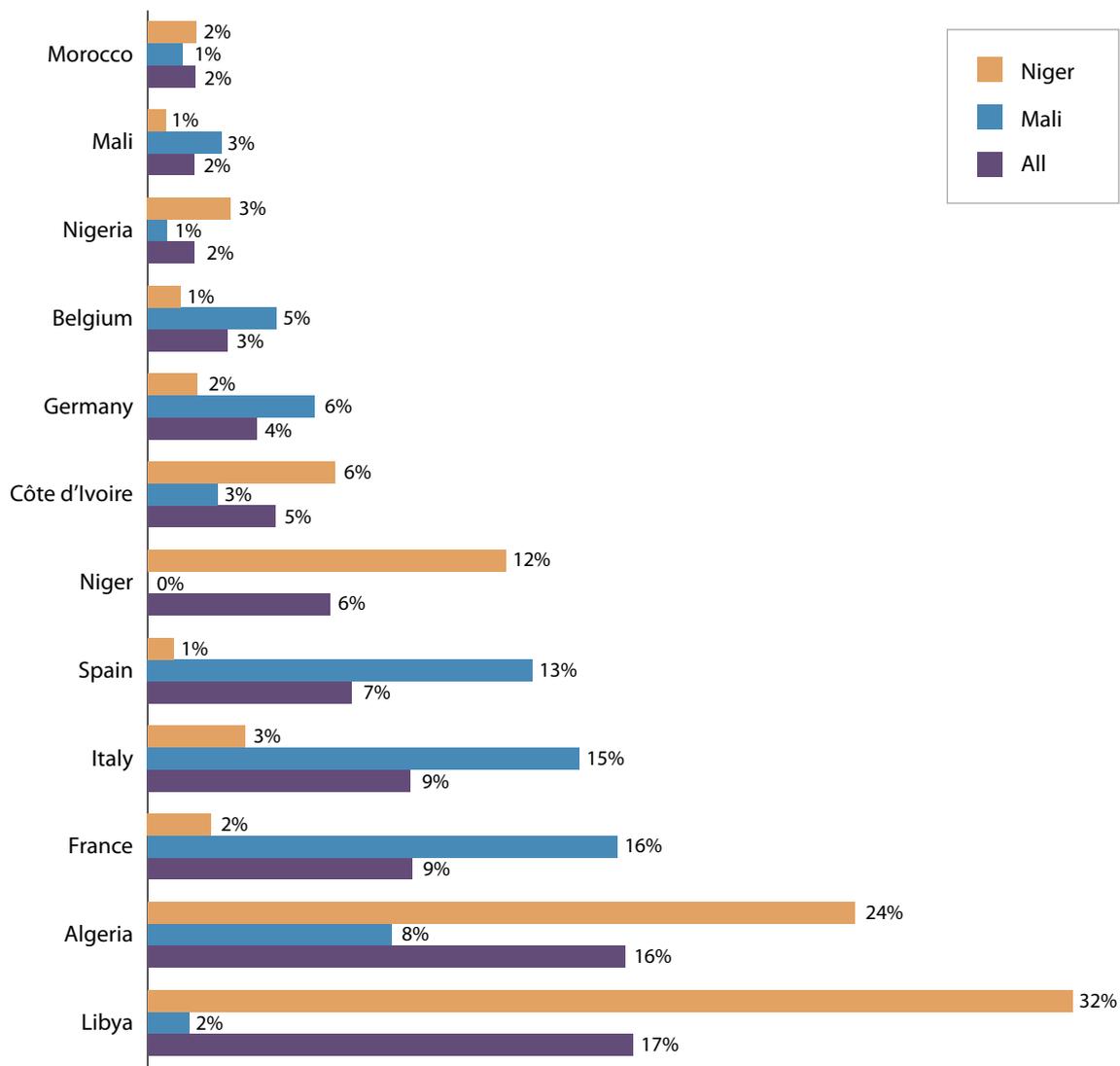


Figure 17 further details the difference by charting the reported countries of destination according to survey country and shows that those surveyed in Niger are far more likely to nominate African countries as their intended destination and in particular Libya and Algeria: 32% identified Libya and 24% identified Algeria, compared to 2% and 8% respectively for respondents interviewed in Mali. Conversely, 16% of respondents interviewed in Mali identified France as their destination and 15% identified Italy, as compared to 2% and 3% respectively for migrants interviewed in Niger.

The nationalities of respondents interviewed across the two survey countries are presented in Figure 18 and Figure 19. The nationalities that are more prominent within the Mali sample include Malians (28% compared to 9% in Niger), Guineans (15% compared to 2% in Niger), Ivoirians (13% compared to 4% in Niger) and Senegalese (6% compared to zero in Niger). Malians, Guineans, Ivoirians and Senegalese all showed up in the top ten of nationalities that arrived in Spain in 2019 and have shown up in most years since 2014 (see Figure 48 in annex). Ivoirians and Guineans also showed up in the top ten of nationalities that arrived in Italy in 2019 and Malians, Guineans, Ivoirians and Senegalese showed up in Italy for most years since 2014 also (see Figure 49 in annex).

Figure 18: Country of origin of respondents interviewed in Mali

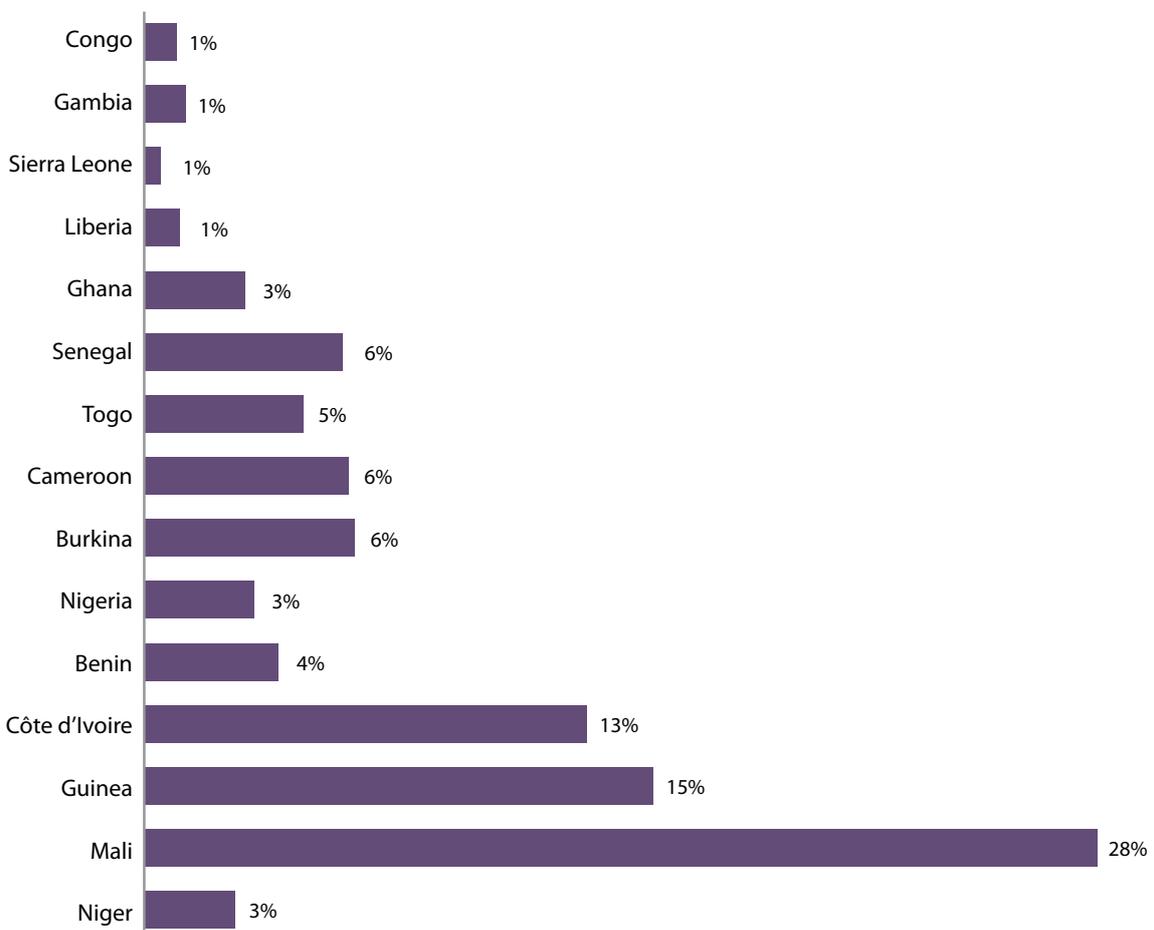
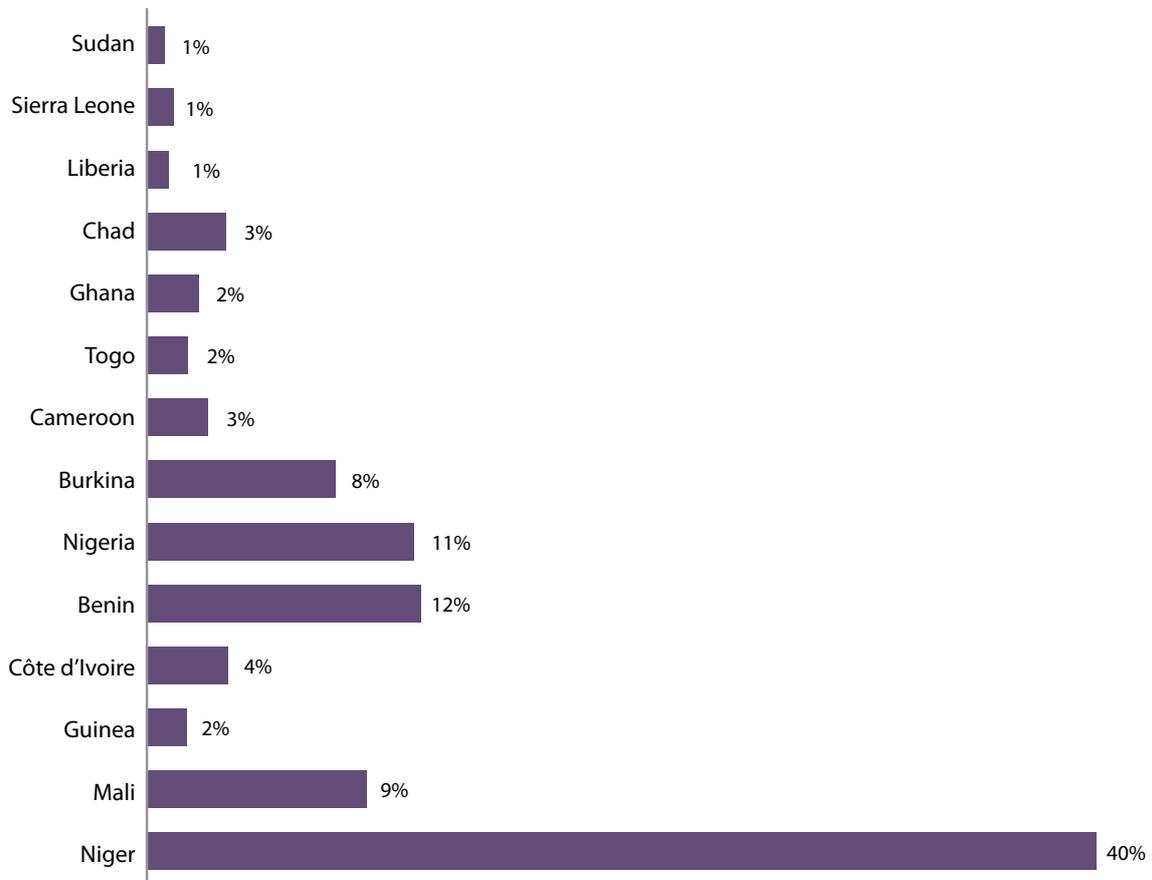
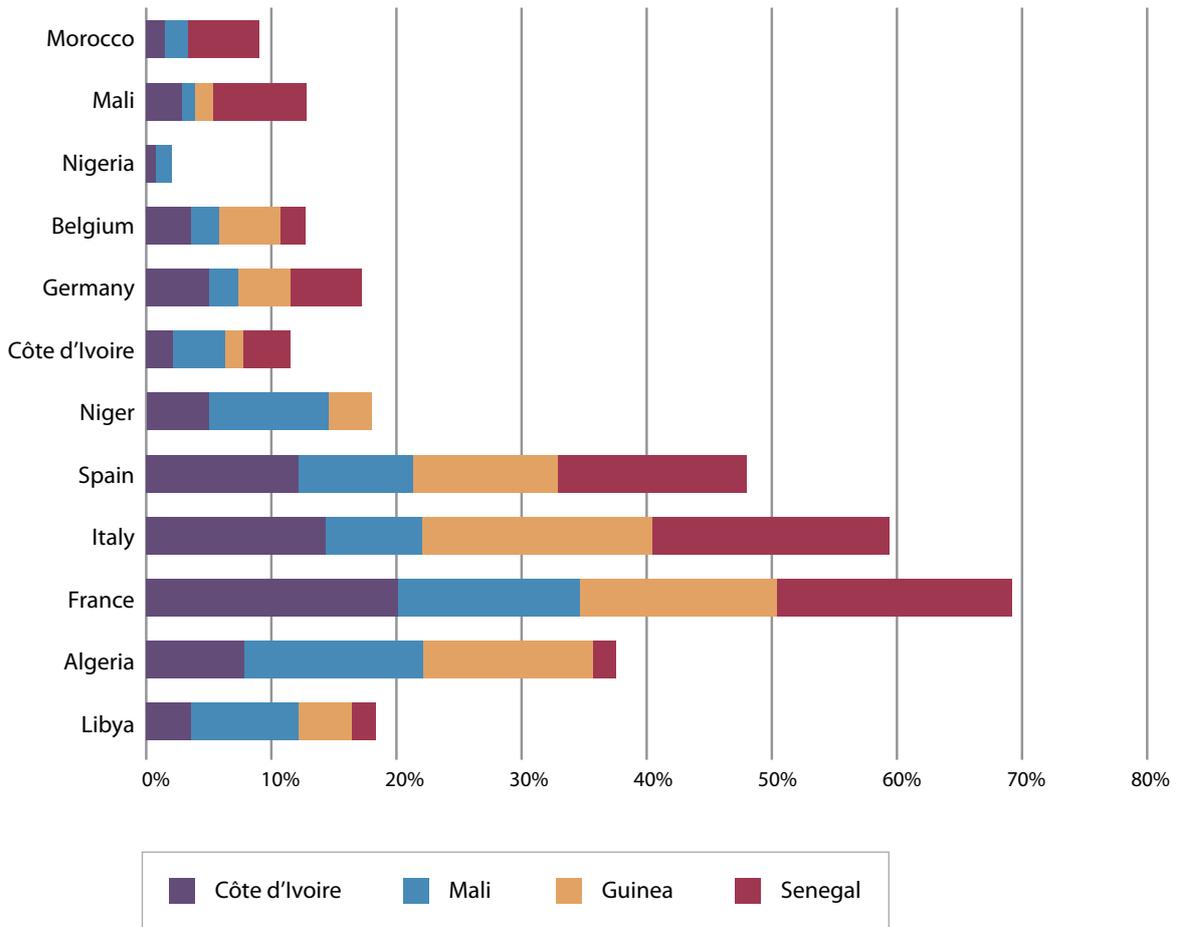


Figure 19: Country of origin of respondents interviewed in Niger

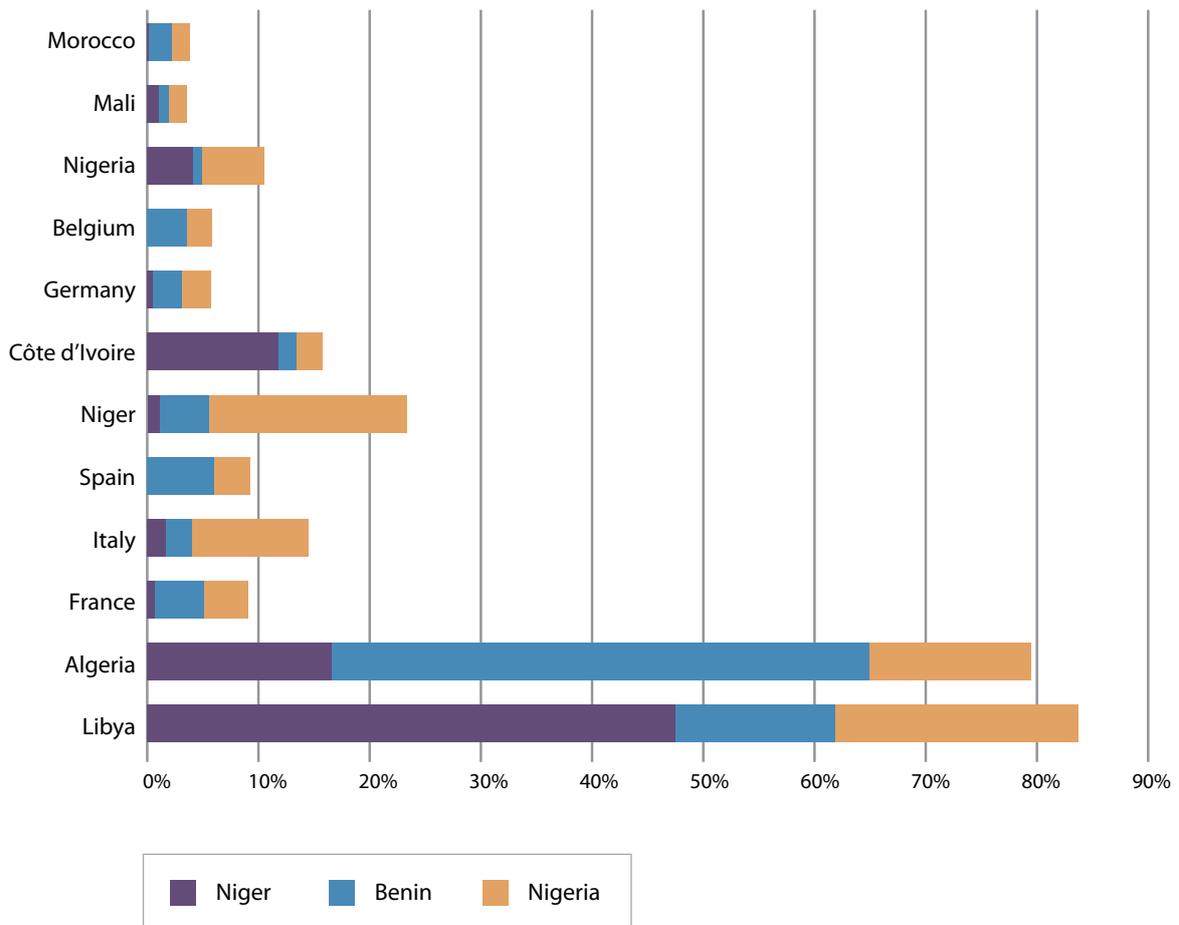
In our own sample, when we analyze intended destination by country of origin, the data once again demonstrates that Malians, Guineans, Ivoirians and Senegalese are more likely to nominate European destinations, particularly France, Spain and Italy (see Figure 20).

The nationalities that are more prominent within the Niger sample include Nigeriens (40% compared to 3% in Mali), Beninese (12% compared to 4% in Mali), Nigerians (11% compared to 3% in Mali), and Chad and Sudan who do not show up in Mali at all. However, only 1% of the sample in Niger was Chadian and only 1% was Sudanese so not much can be inferred from these two nationalities. If we focus on the Nigeriens, Beninese and Nigerians, the Nigerians are the only nationality that show up in European arrival statistics (both Italy and Spain).

Figure 20: Intended destination according to four nationalities



The Nigeriens, Beninese and Nigerians in our own sample are also more likely to nominate Libya, Algeria and then Niger as destinations, than France, Italy or Spain (see Figure 21). Nigeriens showed a high propensity towards Libya and then Cote d'Ivoire and the Beninese showed a high propensity towards Algeria and then Libya. Nigerians were indeed most likely out of the three nationalities to nominate France and Italy but showed a high propensity towards Libya and Niger. Thus, one could conclude that the Mali sample was more likely to nominate Europe as destination because of the composition of migrants moving through the country. However, the data also suggests that migrants who are aiming for Europe are today more likely to move via Mali than Niger.

Figure 21: Intended destination according to three nationalities

4.5 Socio-demographics and destinations

When destinations are analyzed according to gender, we see that women are more likely than men to be targeting Europe. As can be seen in Figure 22, 53% of women in our sample identified Europe as their intended region of destination, compared to 32% of men. Conversely, 63% of men targeted Africa as their intended region of destination, compared to 40% of women. Figure 23 further analyses destination according to individual countries. The biggest variation is seen in the case of Libya, which is targeted as intended destination country by 18% of men, compared to only 7% of women. Women more commonly target European countries such as France (17%) and Italy (19%).

Religion also affects intended destination with Muslims being far more likely than Christians to target Africa (48% vs. 36%). Christian migrants have faced greater levels of risk in North Africa, and particularly in Libya. This was especially so when the Islamic State appeared in the region. Christians have also been targeted by militant Islamic groups in other parts of the region, such as in Nigeria, Mali and Burkina Faso. Migrants travelling along routes to Libya and Algeria have also reported that Muslim migrants receive better treatment from Muslim smugglers and have a better chance of securing employment in these Muslim countries.

Figure 22: Intended destination region according to gender

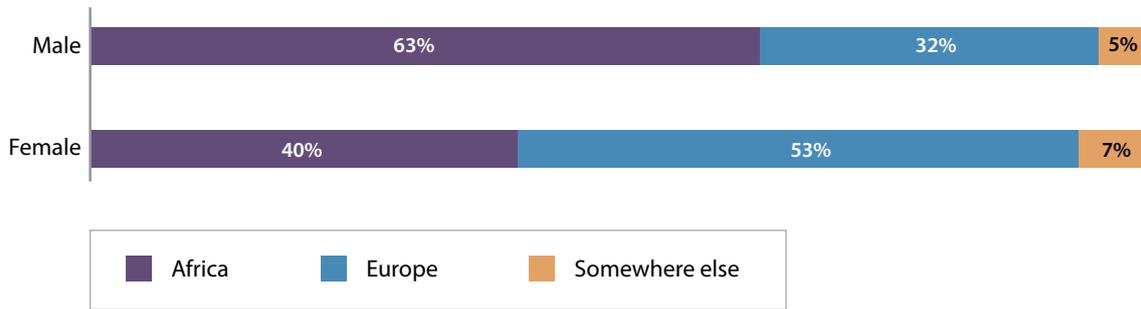
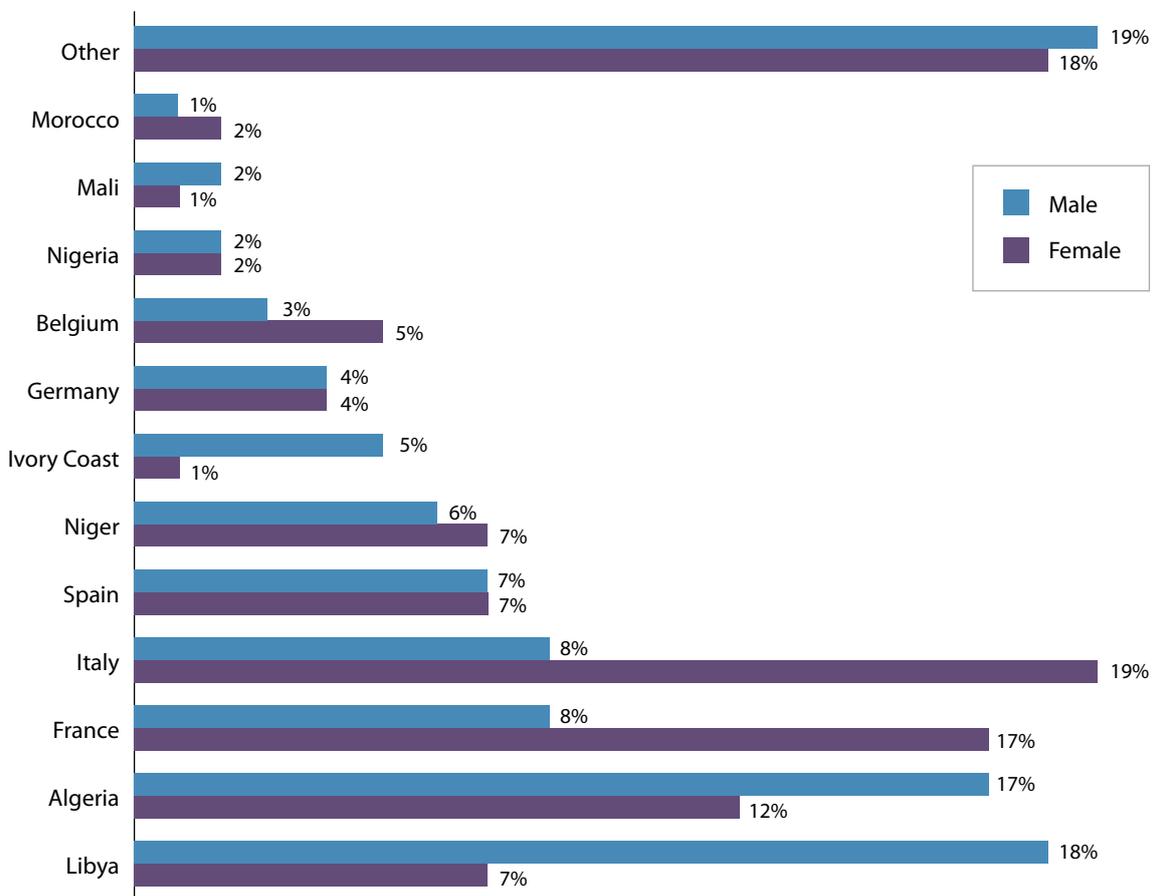


Figure 23: Intended destination country according to gender



The final socio-economic marker that affects destination is marital status and family life. Figure 25 shows that married migrants are less likely to target Europe when compared to single migrants (24% vs. 36%). Figure 26 shows that the more children respondents have, the less inclined they are to target Europe. That is, the migrants headed to Europe are more likely to be single and without children.

Figure 24: Intended destination according to religion

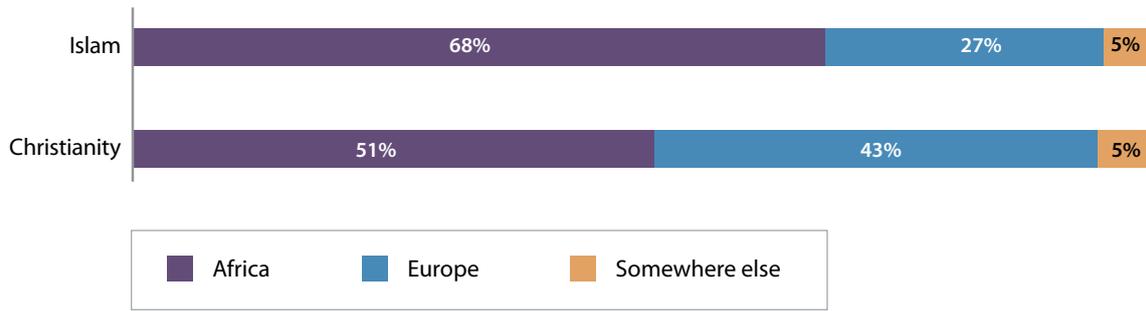


Figure 25: Destination region according to marital status

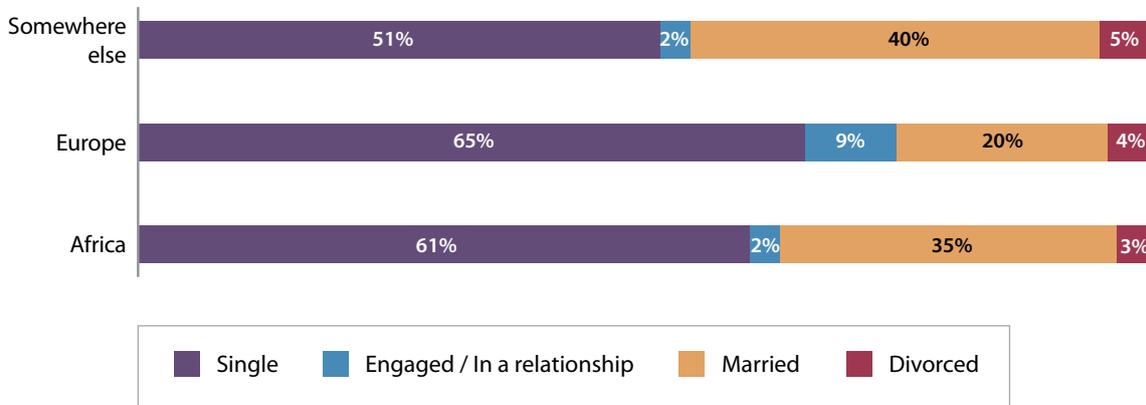
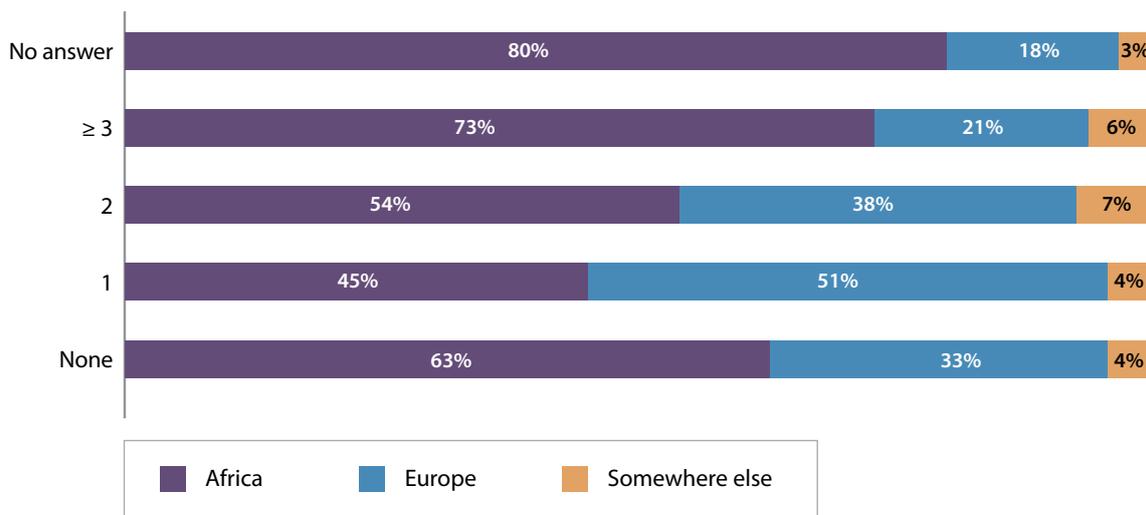


Figure 26: Intended destination according to number of children



D. TRAFFICKING ALONG THE ROUTES

1. EXPERIENCE WITH TRAFFICKING

1.1 Forms of trafficking

The UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons for 2018 found that 31% of detected VOTs in sub-Saharan Africa were victims of sexual exploitation, 63% were victims of forced labour and 5% were trafficked for other purposes.¹¹ In our survey, a total of 60% of the sample reported that they have been trafficked along the routes. The survey dealt with six forms of trafficking: kidnapping and extortion, forced labour, slavery, sexual exploitation and organ trafficking. Detention is also included because of the high rate of unlawful detention and the intimate connection between trafficking and detention along the routes studied. Our sample's experience with trafficking is distributed across the six forms, as outlined in Figure 27.

Detention is by far the most commonly experienced form of abuse, with 54% of the sample indicating that they had been detained. Respondents who reported detention were then asked to specify the nature of their detention, and 40% reported that they had been detained by non-officials and 14% by officials. While it is impossible to determine whether detention by officials was lawful or unlawful (meaning that some of the detention by officials could potentially have been unlawful), we know for certain that 40% of the sample has been detained by non-officials and therefore unlawfully.

Organ trafficking is the least commonly experienced form of trafficking for migrants in our sample, being cited by only 3% of respondents (50 individuals). However, in addition to the 3% who reported being forced to sell their blood or organs, a further 4% reported that they had been approached with offers of money for their blood and organs.

Figure 27: Incidence of trafficking according to type

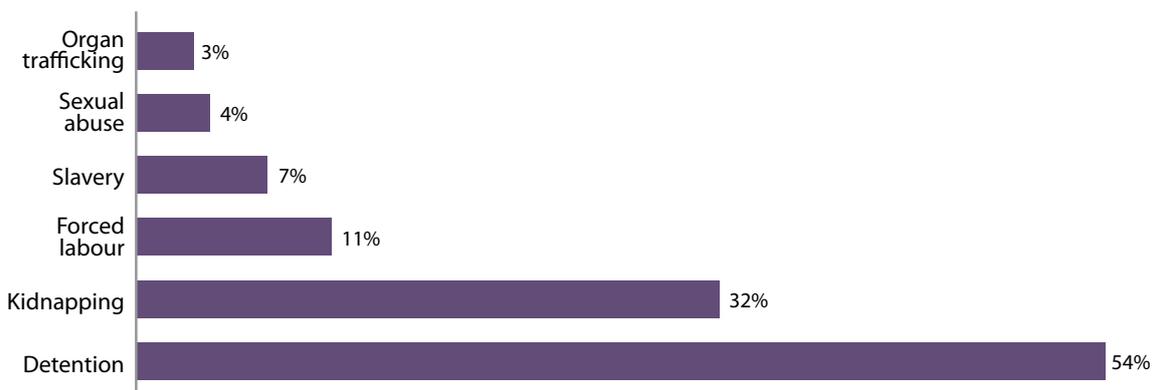
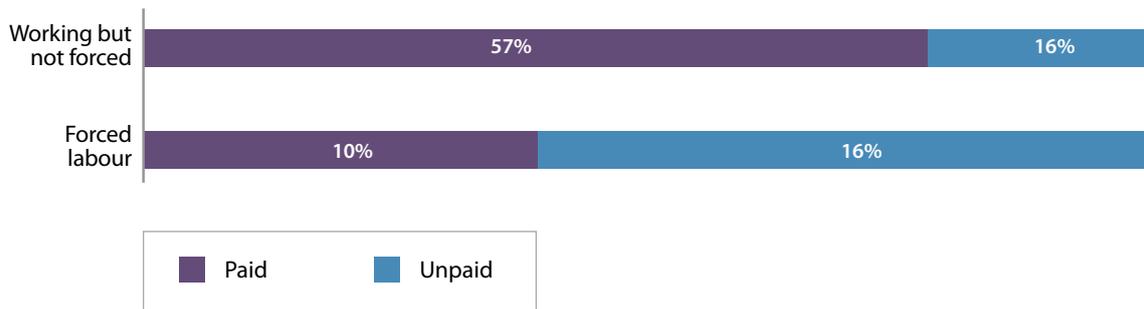


Figure 28: Forced labour against unpaid work¹²

In addition to forced labour, migrants were also asked if they had been paid for labour conducted along the route, even where it was not forced. Figure 28 demonstrates that over 20% of migrants who have worked along the route were not paid for their work, even when it was not forced labour. Moreover, close to 40% of migrants who were pushed into forced labour were still paid for their work. This demonstrates that instances of exploitation along the route are quite nuanced.

1.2 Prevalence of trafficking

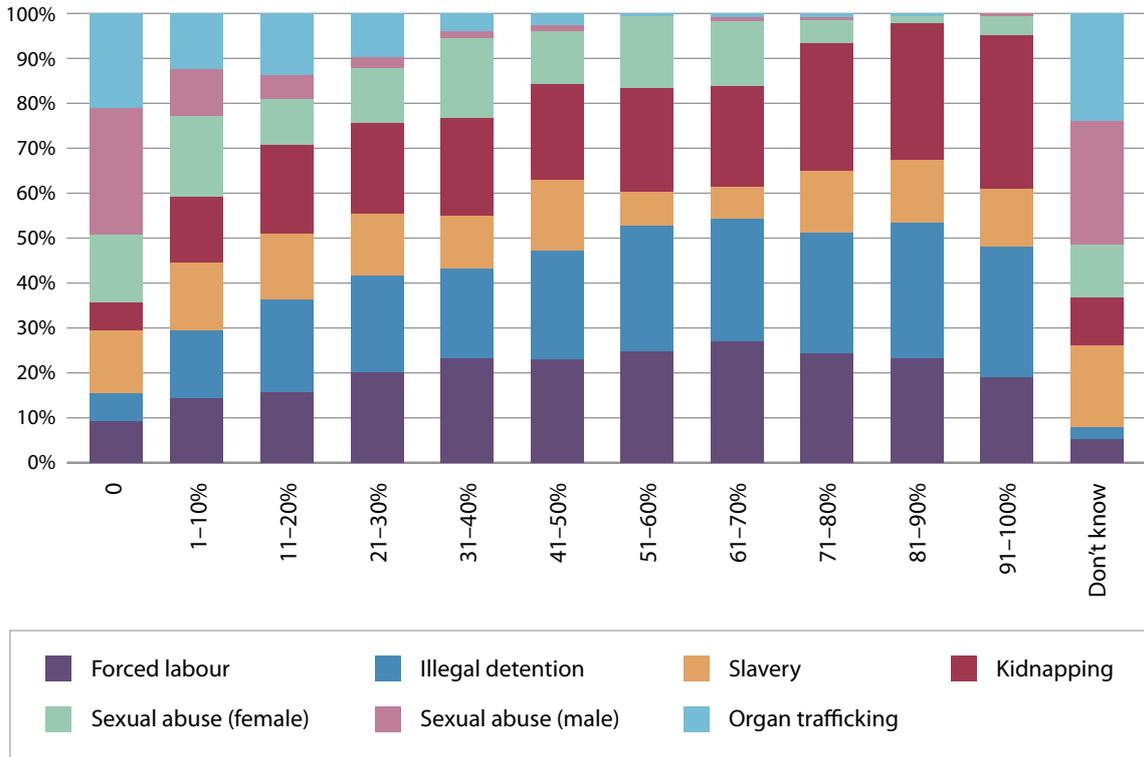
Of the 60% of the sample who reported being a victim of trafficking, more than half said that they had experienced multiple forms of trafficking. Respondents were asked to detail all of their experiences of being trafficked and from the responses provided, a spectrum of trafficking was developed. That is, the population of trafficked migrants can be organised into four categories:

0	Migrants who have not been trafficked at all (40% of the sample);
1	Migrants who have been detained only (26% of the sample);
2	Migrants who have been detained and kidnapped/extorted (22% of the sample);
3	Migrants who have been detained and kidnapped/extorted and were the victim of at least one other form of trafficking (12% of the sample).

This spectrum allows us not only to gauge the prevalence of trafficking along the routes but also the severity whereby migrants have been trafficked. By numbering the four categories from zero to three, we create a trafficking score that will be referred to throughout the report.

In addition to their own experience with trafficking, migrants were asked to comment on the situations of trafficking that they had witnessed along the route. This series of questions was included because previous research has shown that victims are sometimes unwilling to talk about their experiences of trafficking, and that in such cases it helps to either ask respondents to depersonalize the experience or to ask others who

Figure 29: Migrant estimates of the percentage of migrants who are VOTs along the routes



witnessed the event. This is particularly so in cases of trafficking that carry higher levels of shame or stigma, such as trafficking for sexual exploitation. It also provides another layer by which to estimate the prevalence of trafficking along the routes.

Respondents were asked to estimate what percentage of migrants they believed had been victim to the various forms of trafficking along the route. These results are presented in Figure 29. Forced labour, illegal detention and kidnapping were the types of trafficking that respondents felt were most commonly experienced, and organ trafficking and the sexual abuse of men are the least commonly experienced in the perception of the respondents. More specifically:

- Organ trafficking and male sexual abuse start to dissipate at 30% and are almost non-existent past 50%, indicating that respondents believe that only a small portion of migrants on the move are victims of these forms of trafficking.
- Forced labour is increasing until 70%, but then starts to decrease. However, close to 20% of respondents believe that 91–100% of migrants along the routes are victims of forced labour.
- Illegal detention is high across the entire scale, with close to 30% of respondents believing that 91–100% of migrants are victims of this form of abuse. Only 5% of respondents felt that zero migrants are exposed to illegal detention.
- Slavery and the sexual abuse of women remain fairly constant across the scale.

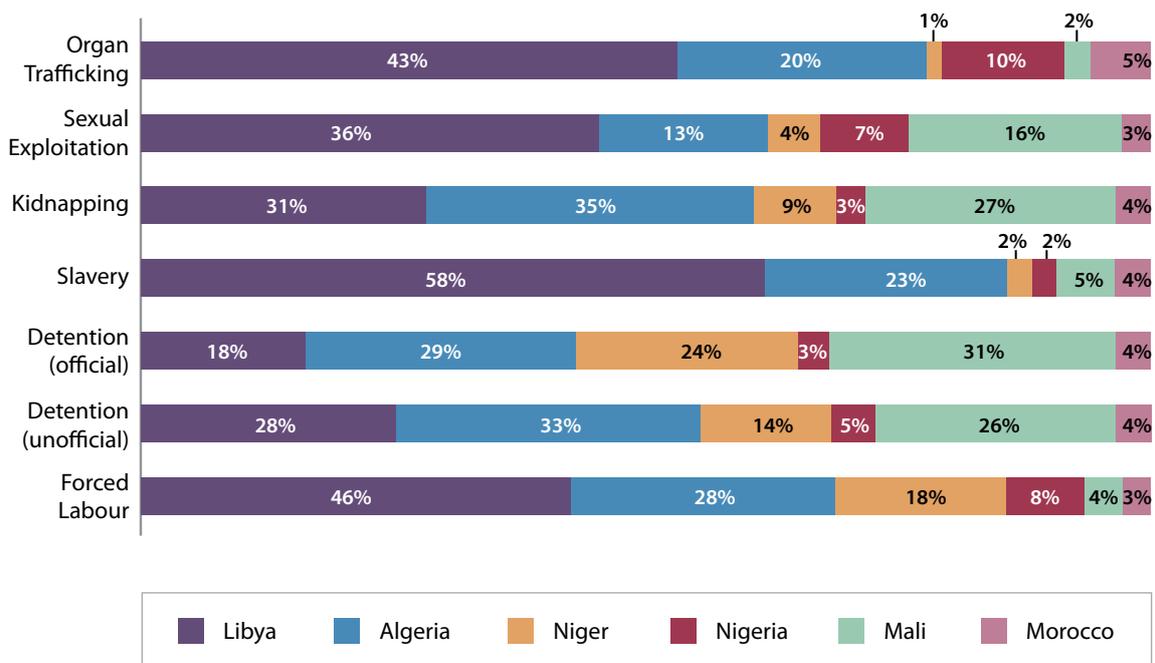
1.3 Locations where trafficking occurs

When respondents were asked to identify the countries where they had been trafficked, the top five countries that emerged were Libya, Algeria, Niger, Nigeria and Mali. Figure 30 charts the share that each of these countries represented for each of the seven forms of abuse/trafficking that the survey covered. It is important to keep in mind when reading this data that 3% of the sample reported being a victim of organ trafficking, 4% of sexual abuse, 7% of slavery, 11% of forced labour, 32% of kidnapping, 39% of unofficial detention, and 42% of official detention. The data tells us:

- Forced labour is most commonly reported in Libya but is also highly reported in Algeria and Niger.
- Detention, both official and unofficial, is more commonly reported in Algeria than Libya, perhaps pointing to an emerging and troubling trend. Both forms of detention are also highly reported in Mali and Niger.
- Slavery is extremely high in Libya and constitutes the most commonly reported form of abuse in Libya. Libya is followed by Algeria.
- Kidnapping is most commonly reported in Algeria, then Libya and Mali, followed by Niger.
- Sexual exploitation is most commonly reported in Libya, then Mali, then Algeria.

Organ trafficking is most commonly reported in Libya and then Algeria. Organ trafficking is the most commonly reported form of trafficking in Nigeria.

Figure 30: Locations of trafficking according to top six reported locations¹³



In January 2019, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) in Nigeria announced that there were 20 000 Nigerian trafficking victims in Mali.¹⁴ They are recruited on a false promise of a job but end up being sexually exploited or trafficked into domestic servitude.¹⁵ According to the Agency, they are vulnerable because they don't speak the language of the country they pass through and because they don't look or dress in the same way as local inhabitants, making them more conspicuous.

Key informants in Senegal and Senegalese migrants also reported that the Senegalese on the routes are now trying to avoid Mali on their journeys to North Africa, given the risks of kidnapping, robbery and trafficking there. They increasingly travel through Niger, Chad, Algeria and Libya in order to reach Italy or Morocco and then Spain. In Niger, they are also trying to avoid Agadez for the risks of trafficking present there.

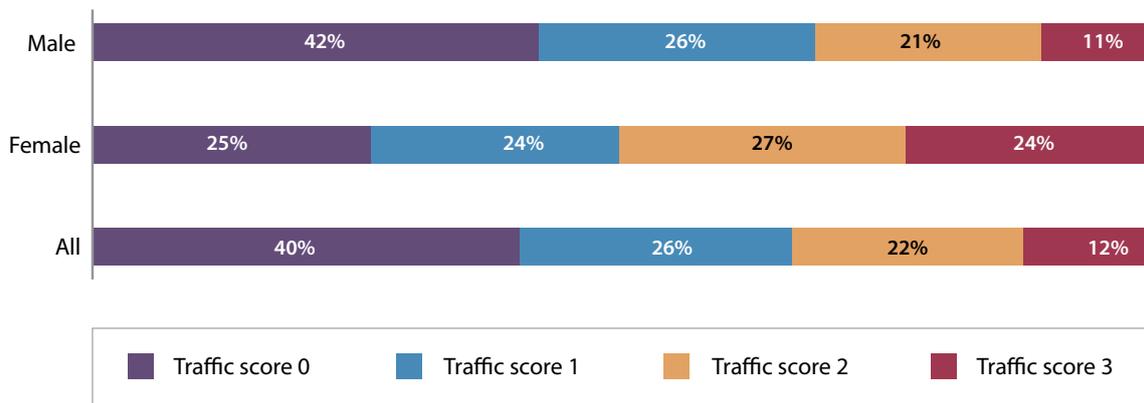
While the incidence of organ trafficking is low across the entire sample, and particularly in Nigeria, it is a growing phenomenon in that country, as confirmed by the sample. In recent years there has been an increase in cases of victims of sexual exploitation in Nigeria being forced into organ trafficking unwittingly, as will be explained in greater detail in the section on Nigeria.

2. FACTORS INFLUENCING VULNERABILITY TO TRAFFICKING

In relation to trafficking, vulnerability is understood as 'a condition resulting from how individuals negatively experience the complex interaction of social, cultural, economic, political and environmental factors that create the context for their communities'. This definition allows for the concept to change according to the context as well as to allow for individual responses.¹⁶ In this section, we explore the factors that could increase a migrant's vulnerability to trafficking along the routes studied, with the intention of understanding how the patterns of vulnerability may have shifted in the current context.

2.1 Gender

74% of female respondents reported falling victim to trafficking, compared to 58% of men. It should come as no surprise that women along the routes are more vulnerable to trafficking than men. A higher proportion of women, when compared to men, also reported falling into the third category of trafficked victims, as shown in Figure 31. That is, migrants who have been detained and kidnapped/extorted and who were the victim of at least one other form of trafficking (24% of women, compared to 11% of men). This means that women are more commonly trafficked than men and more severely.

Figure 31: Ranking the experiences of men and women in relation to the trafficking score¹⁷

In terms of the gender dimension within specific forms of trafficking, the only forms of trafficking where women and men demonstrate the same levels of prevalence are forced labour and slavery. Women are more often victims of:

- Sexual exploitation (27% of women, compared to 1% of men);
- Kidnapping/extortion (45% of women compared to 31% of men);
- Organ trafficking (11% of women compared to 2% of men);
- Unlawful detention (65% of women compared to 52% of men).

In an effort to determine specific factors of vulnerability amongst women, trafficked women were compared with non-trafficked women within the sample. However, it was difficult to draw any conclusions, given the fact that three quarters of women in the sample have been trafficked (only 53 women reported not being victims of trafficking out of a total sample of 200 women). This implies that women on the routes are categorically vulnerable to trafficking simply as a result of their gender.

2.2 Socio-demographics

Socio-demographic details had little bearing on the experiences of trafficking amongst respondents. Both trafficked and non-trafficked migrants had the same distribution in terms of religion, education levels, marital status and number of children.

The only other marker, other than gender, that shows some variation was occupation before leaving home. Amongst those respondents who reported being labourers in their home country, 52% had experienced two or more types of trafficking along the route, compared to 34% of the overall sample. While it is difficult to pinpoint why exactly without further research, it is possible that labourers are more vulnerable to trafficking because offering one's services as a daily labourer in many of the counties along the way necessitates standing and waiting at roundabouts and street corners for potential clients, thereby opening the migrant up to risk.

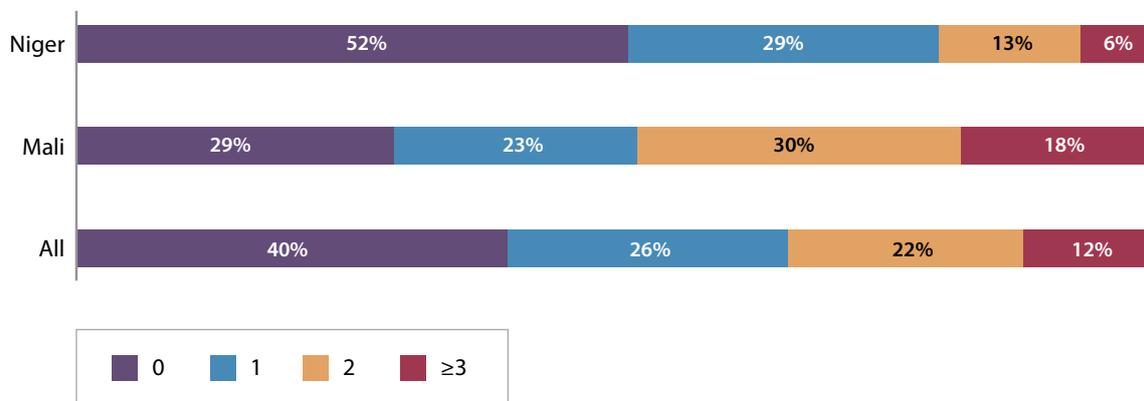
2.3 Destination

Respondents targeting Europe are more trafficked than those who are targeting Africa. They are also more badly trafficked, with 21% of them being victim of at least three forms of trafficking. About half of the respondents targeting Europe have been kidnapped and two-thirds of them have been detained.

In certain locations in Libya, the vulnerability of migrants to detention and extortion does rest on their intended destination. For example, in the Kufra region, where local groups have agreed to work with Italy on counter-smuggling work, migrants who are perceived as less valuable are returned home and those perceived as more valuable are allowed to continue through the Libyan detention and smuggling systems. The Eritreans and Somalis coming through this area are considered valuable and allowed to continue because they are destined for Europe and this carries the perception of greater economic means. The Sudanese and Chadians who come through this area are usually coming to Libya to work and are thus perceived as less valuable. The Sudanese and Chadians are sometimes detained prior to deportation and extorted; however, they are charged lower extortion rates (less than 1 000 euros) and they are charged in local currencies. Eritreans and Somalis can be charged between 4 000 and 9 000 euros, and they are typically charged in USD. Moreover, because they are allowed to continue north, they can be re-detained, re-extorted and exposed to other forms of trafficking inside the various detention centres they move through.

This finding is further corroborated by the fact that 70% of respondents in Mali are VOTs, compared to 49% in Niger and 60% across the entire sample. As established previously, 59% of migrants in Mali are targeting Europe, compared to 10% in Niger, and it is likely that this has influenced the higher rates of trafficking. Migrants in Mali are also more severely trafficked, with 48% being victim to at least two forms of trafficking, compared to 19% in Niger and 34% across the entire sample.

Figure 32: Trafficking score according to survey country¹⁸

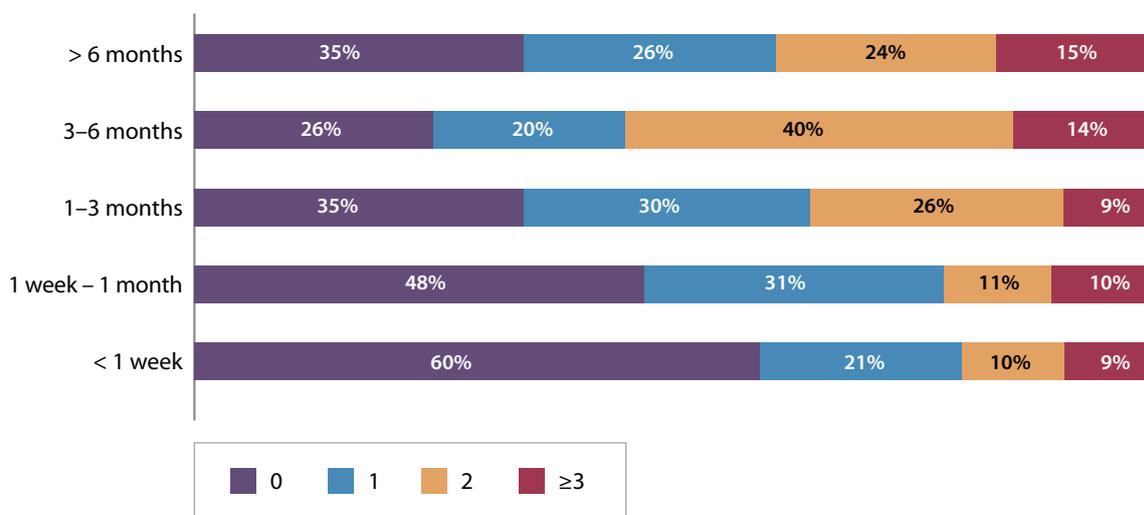


2.4 Duration on the road

The longer migrants are on the road, the more likely they are to be victims of trafficking. For example, 74% of migrants in our sample who had been on the road for three to six months had been trafficked, compared to 53% of migrants who had been on the road for one week to one month. Migrants who have been on the road longer are also more severely trafficked. Figure 33 demonstrates that 54% of migrants who had been on the road for three to six months had been victims of at least two forms of trafficking, as compared to 21% of migrants who had been on the road for a week to a month.

While it is intuitive to imagine that the longer someone spends on the route, the more chances they will have to be trafficked, there may also be other factors that contribute to such a scenario. The increased patrols, arrests and vehicle confiscations in Niger since 2016 has led to smugglers having to make increased attempts before they can successfully move migrants into Libya, which consequently makes the journey more expensive. Some migrants who were interviewed qualitatively had been in Agadez for years and had made over 10 unsuccessful attempts. If a migrant convoy is unsuccessful but the smuggler is not arrested, then he will allow the migrants to move with him again at no charge. However, smugglers have raised their prices to account for these increased difficulties. Also, if smugglers have to make several detours during a journey in order to avoid authorities, they will ask migrants to pay more than what had been agreed to at outset. The higher prices, coupled with the increase in failed attempts, means that migrants often deplete their financial resources in northern Niger. This places them in a vulnerable position, particularly because there are few avenues for income generation in the area, other than working for the smuggler. Increased raids and deportations in Algeria (to Mali and Niger) also cause migrants to have to keep redoing segments of the route, which can cause them to run out of money, creating vulnerability for them.

Figure 33: Trafficking score according to duration on the road

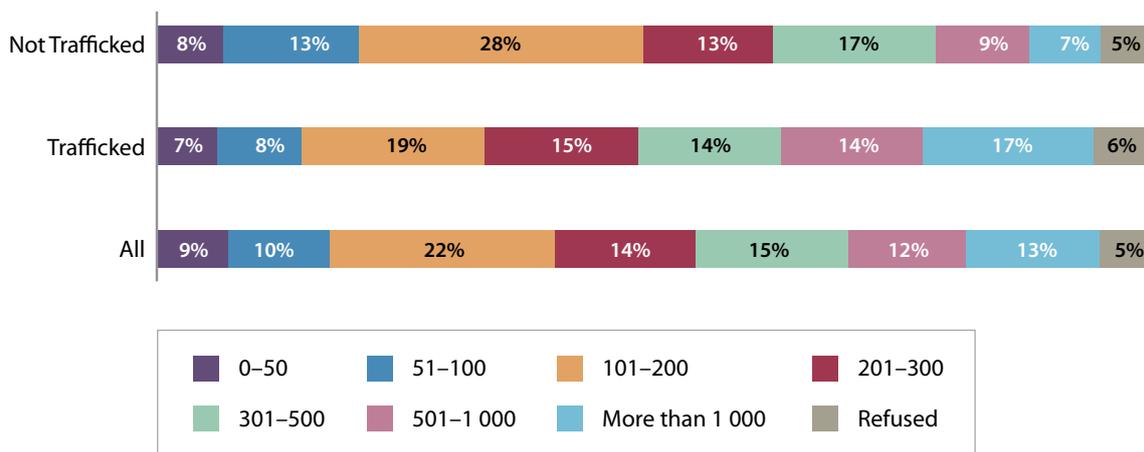


2.5 Finances

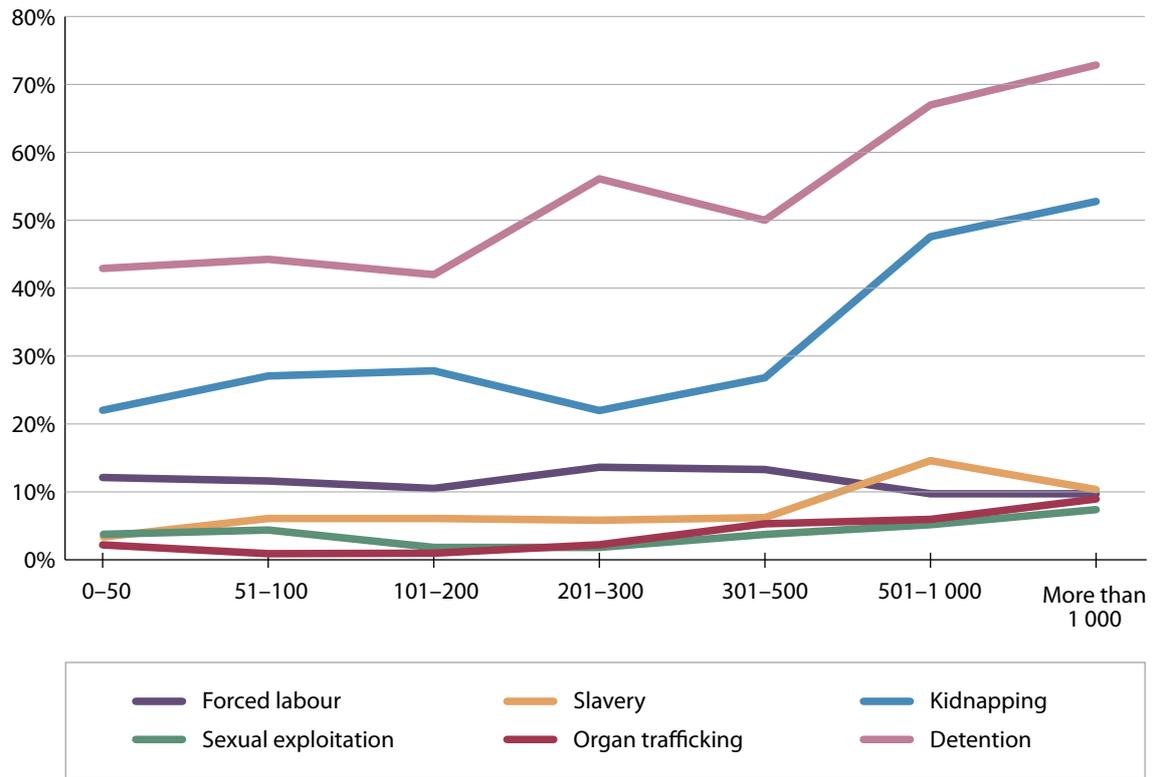
2.5.1 Budget on departure

As can be seen in Figure 34, victims of trafficking had, on average, more money with them when they left home than those respondents who were not trafficked: 31% of VOTs in our sample had more than 500 euros with them when they left home, compared to 16% of non-trafficked respondents. In fact, the average budget that VOTs had with them on departure was 571 euros, compared to 359 for those who were not trafficked and 484 euros for the overall sample. This implies that greater financial means can increase one's vulnerability to trafficking. Sometimes, even just a perception of greater financial means can have the same effect. For example, some nationalities are perceived as being wealthier than others (e.g. Eritreans) and sometimes migrants who travel a longer distance to arrive in North Africa can also be perceived as having greater financial means (e.g. Somalis).

Figure 34: How much money did you have when you left home (euros)?

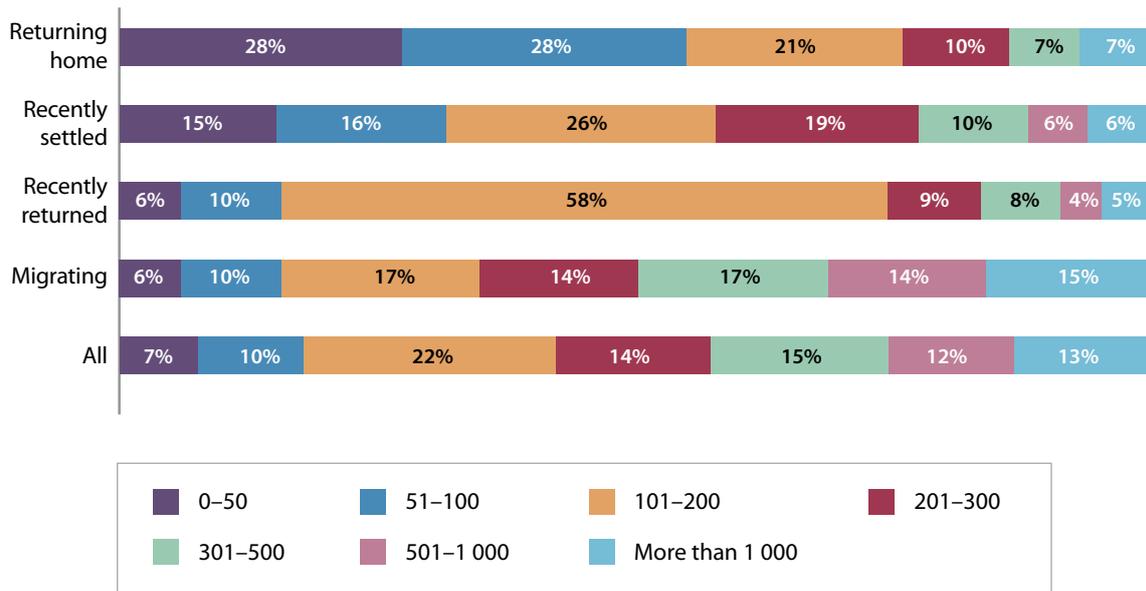


The VOTs in the sample who left home with greater financial means were likely to be victims of detention and kidnapping, and to a lesser extent, slavery and organ trafficking (see Figure 35). It should be noted, however, that only 7% of the sample reported experiencing slavery and only 3% were victims of organ trafficking so it is difficult to draw conclusions from these subsets. Those with less financial means were more likely to be victims of forced labour. Victims of sexual exploitation, who are predominantly women, as demonstrated in previous sections, do not show much variation across budget levels.

Figure 35: Amount of money migrants had when they left home (euros) against type of trafficking

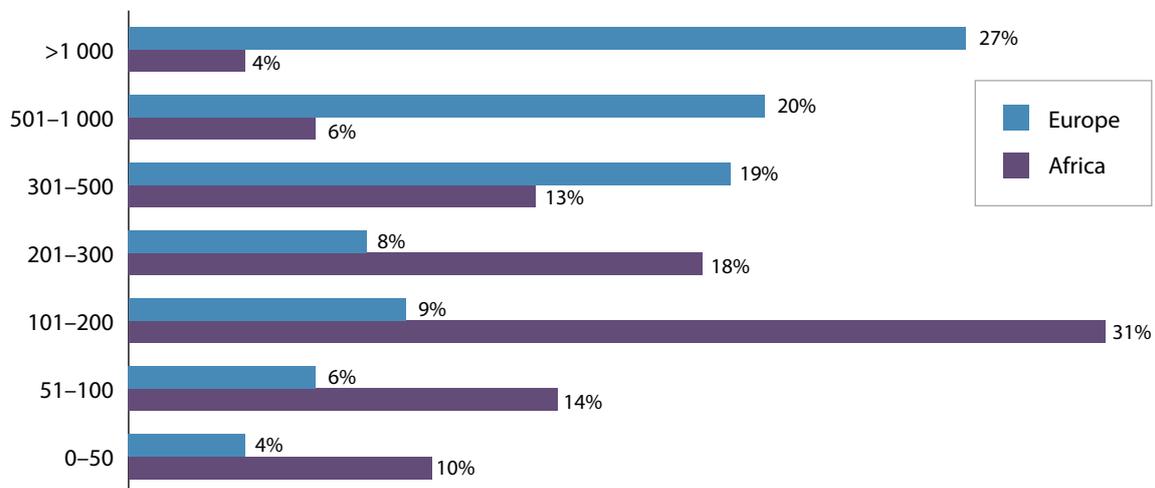
Migrating respondents also had, on average, more money with them when they left home compared to returnees and recently settled migrants. Figure 36 demonstrates that migrating respondents feature more heavily on the upper end of the budget spectrum and the other respondents feature more heavily on the lower end. The average amount of money that migrating respondents in our sample reported having with them on departure is 545 euros. The amount dropped to 265 euros for recently returned respondents, to 297 euros for recently settled respondents and to 225 euros for respondents who are returning home. This suggests that migrants have become aware of the increased prices on routes towards North Africa and Europe and are preparing accordingly. 6% of migrating respondents refused to answer the question, which also points to how sensitive this question is.

Figure 36: Amount of money migrants had when they left home (euros) against migrant type



Women had much higher budgets on departure than men. The average budget for women in the sample was 776 euros, compared to 447 for men. Christians also carried a higher budget on departure (an average of 570 euros) in comparison to Muslims (an average of 493 euros). Destination also had a strong bearing on the amount of money migrants had with them on departure: those who identified Europe as their destination had, on average, 821 euros with them and those who targeted Africa had 277 euros. Figure 37 charts budget on departure according to intended destination. Those respondents who targeted Africa fall predominantly on the lower end of the budget spectrum with a particular concentration around 100–200 euros. Those targeting Europe fall predominantly on the upper end of the budget spectrum.

Figure 37: Budget on departure, according to intended region of destination (euros)



When budget on departure is analyzed according to intended country of destination, budgets are on average higher for North African destinations when compared to sub-Saharan African destinations (see Figure 38). Respondents who targeted Libya had surprisingly low budgets on departure. However, this is most likely influenced by the fact that it is common practice for migrants to take little money with them as a strategy against kidnapping and extortion in the country. Many will keep their money with friends and family abroad and ask for it to be sent to them when required. Migrants travelling to Morocco possess on average the highest budgets for African destinations, with an average budget of 432 euros, compared to 212 euros for Libya. However, it should be noted that the average for the overall sample is 484 euros, which is slightly higher than the average for Morocco.

Respondents targeting European countries possess the highest budgets on departure, with close to 25% across the European countries cited, carrying more than 1000 euros with them. Respondents targeting France had the highest budgets of all European destinations, carrying on average, 867 euros on departure. Respondents targeting Spain had the lowest budgets of all European destinations, carrying on average, 707 euros on departure.

When analyzed according to route, European routes carry greater budgets with the Morocco/Spain route carrying a higher budget to the Libya/Italy route. Routes to other European countries carry the highest budgets (Figure 39).

Figure 38: Budget on departure according to intended country of destination (euros)

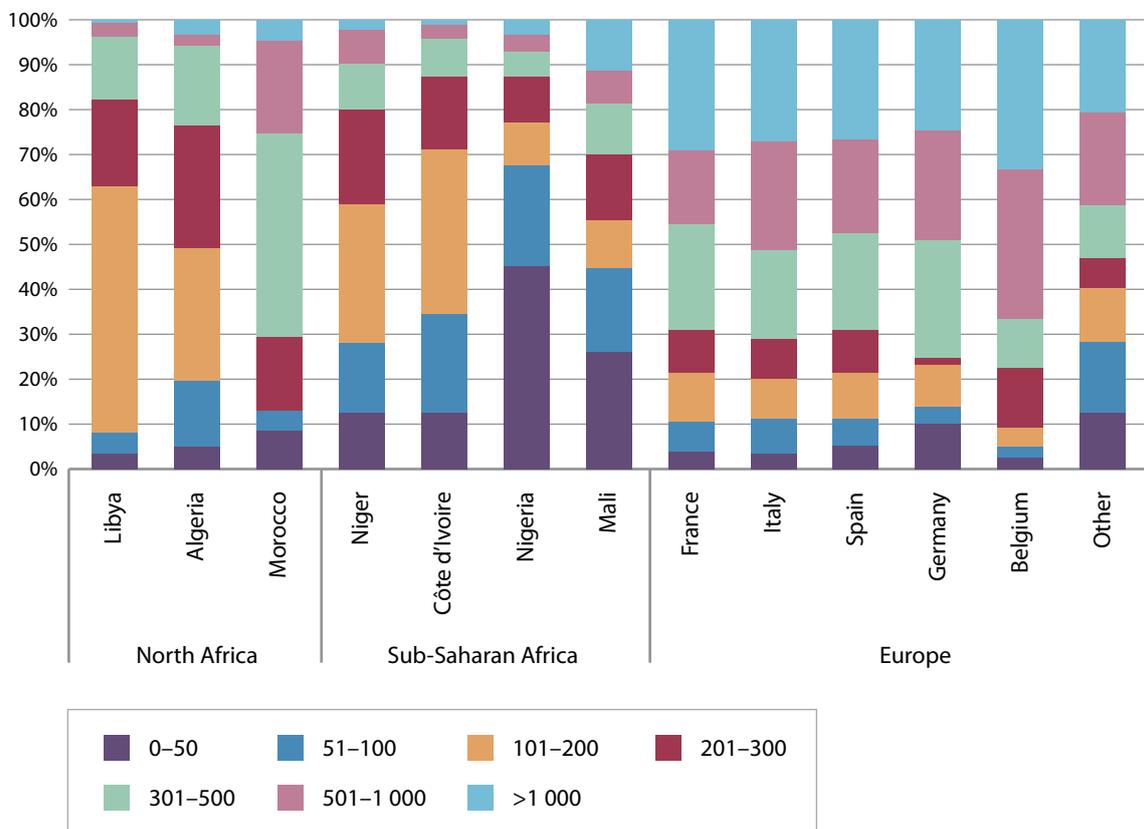
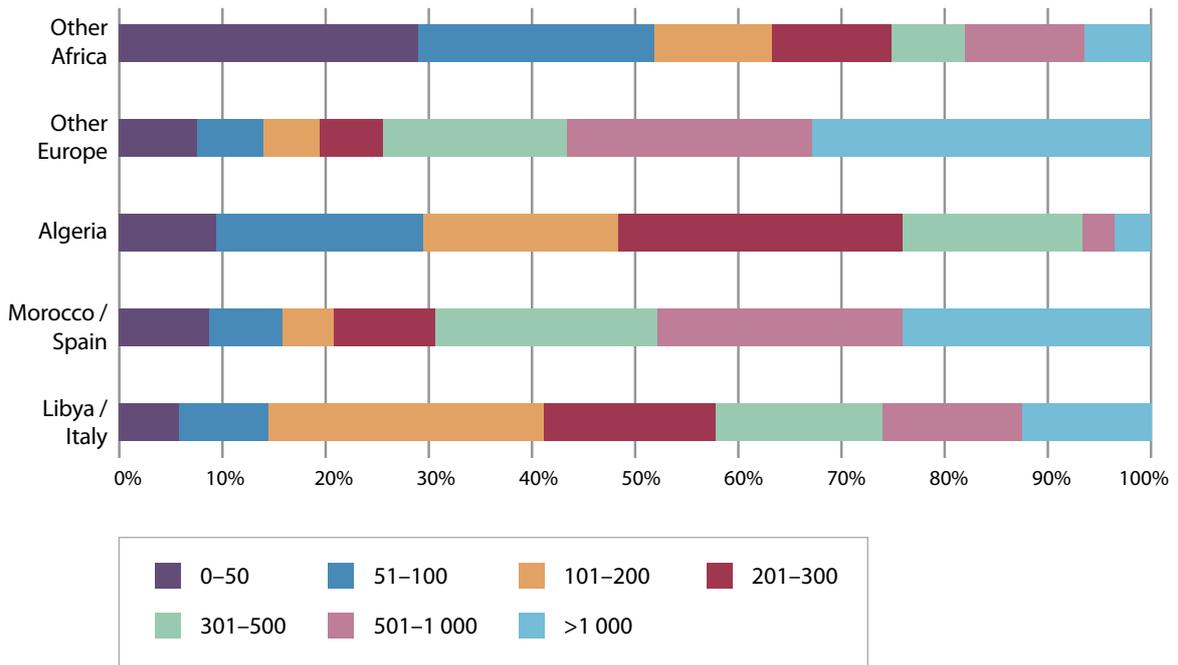


Figure 39: Budget on departure according to intended route (euros)



2.5.2 Leaving some money at home

One way in which migrants try to address their vulnerability to trafficking and abuse along the routes is not to take all of their money with them, and instead have it sent to them when it is required. This is so that if they are kidnapped, robbed, extorted or asked for bribes along the way, they will not have to hand over large sums of money. When the sample was asked if they had left some or all of their money with someone, only 35% responded affirmatively, and of those, only 3% reported that they had left all of their money with someone (see Figure 40).

Figure 40: Have you left some or all of your money with someone?

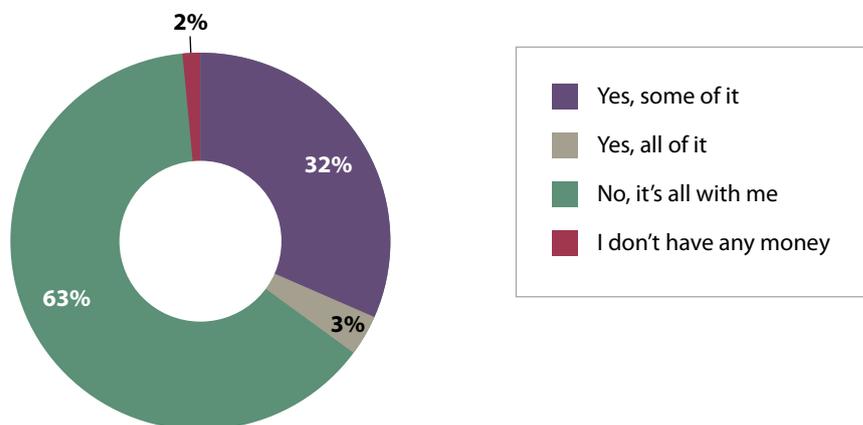
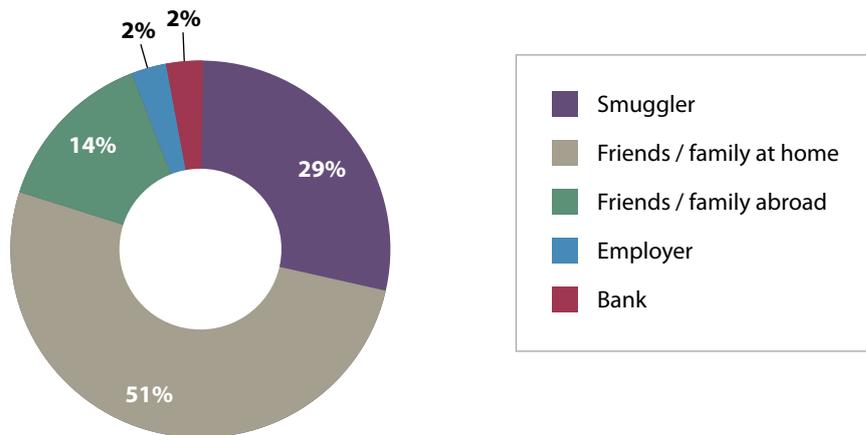


Figure 41: Who did you leave your money with? (multiple response)

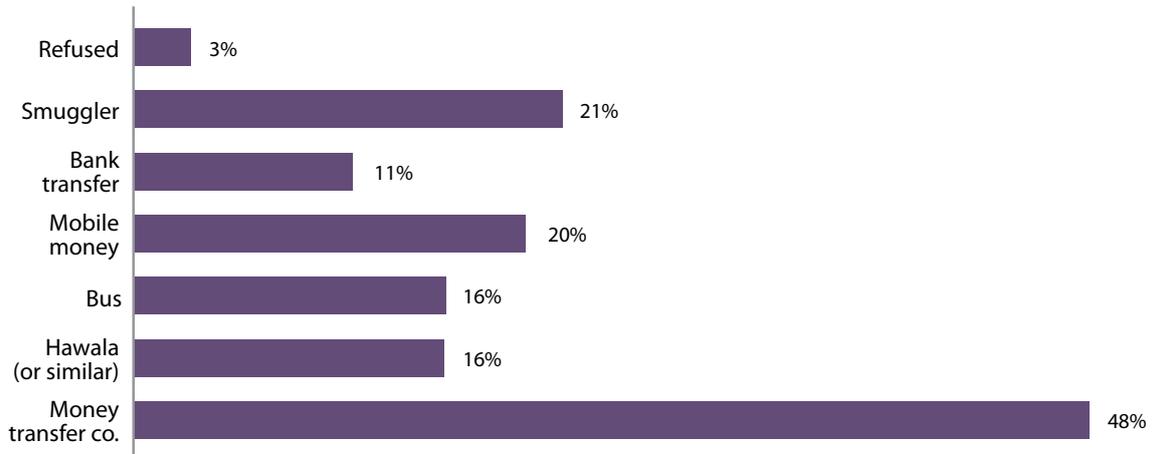
When the sample was asked who they had left their money with, the most common answer was friends/family at home, which was cited by 51% of respondents (see Figure 41). The second most common answer was the smuggler, cited by 29% of respondents who answered the question. Friends and family abroad followed at 14% and ‘employer’ and ‘bank’ were almost negligible, both being cited by only 2% of the sample each.

77% of respondents who left their money with a smuggler reported being victims of trafficking along the way, compared to 60% of the overall sample. The highest incidence of trafficking is reported by those who left their money with an employer, with a reported trafficking rate of 95% (although the number of respondents who answered this question is very small and thus the data may be skewed). Those who left their money with friends or family or with a bank reported trafficking rates below the overall sample, the lowest being reported by those that left their money at a bank. Not only do those who left their money with smugglers or employers report a higher prevalence of trafficking but they have also been trafficked more severely, with 60% having been victim of two or more forms of trafficking.

Out of the six forms of trafficking that the study covers – forced labour, sexual exploitation, slavery, kidnapping, organ trafficking and unlawful detention – those who left their money with a smuggler reported detention as the main form of abuse they had been exposed to, followed by kidnapping and then forced labour. Those who left their money with an employer follow the same trend.

When migrants were asked how they have the money sent to them when they need it, the responses were quite split across the spectrum of possibilities (see Figure 42), and migrants selected 1.3 responses on average (multiple-response question) indicating that they typically utilize more than one means. Respondents who said that they have their money sent to them by a smuggler when they need it also reported high rates of trafficking, with kidnapping being the most prevalent form.

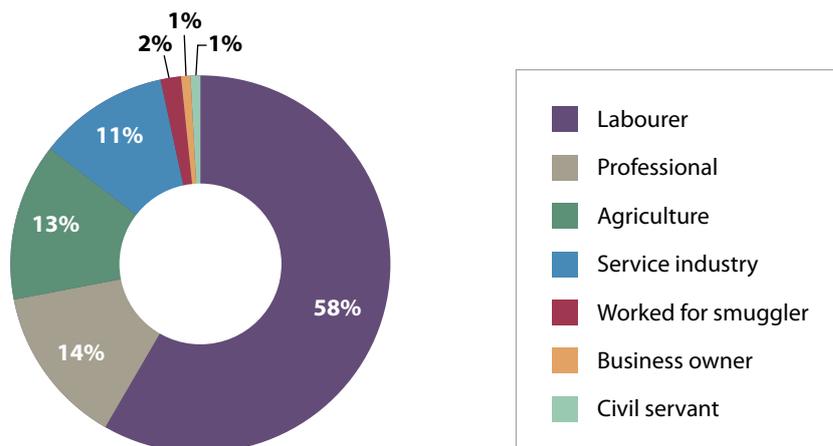
Figure 42: How do you have your money sent to you when you need it? (multiple response)



2.5.3 Sourcing money along the way

Respondents were also asked if they borrowed money from someone during their journey, and 39% answered affirmatively. When asked whom they borrowed money from, friends and family at home was the most common answer, reported by 64% of respondents that answered this question, followed by friends and family abroad (50%). Multiple responses were permitted for this question and respondents gave 1.28 responses on average, suggesting that migrants typically seek more than one source. Only 3% reported borrowing money from a smuggler.

Figure 43: What kind of work did you do along the way?



42% of respondents reported working along the way, 10% of whom were women and 90% men. This distribution follows closely the general gender distribution of the sample (12%/88%). The rest of the socio-demographic markers also follow the general sample. That is, there is little that sets apart those who worked along the way from the rest of the sample. Where a difference can be seen is in the choice of destination. That is, respondents who are targeting Europe are more likely to work along the way. The fact that journeys to Europe are more expensive is likely to contribute to this.

Those who worked along the way were more trafficked than the others, with a trafficking rate of 79%, compared to 45% across the overall sample. They were also more severely trafficked, with 76% of respondents who were victims of three or more forms of trafficking having worked along the way. They were more commonly victims of forced labour over others forms of trafficking. 17% of the sample reported that they had to work along the way and borrow money.

2.6 Smugglers

61% of respondents reported using a smuggler thus far on their journey, and 63% of migrants who moved with a smuggler reported being trafficked. Migrants who moved with several different smugglers reported a higher incidence of trafficking (74%) and were more severely trafficked (22% experienced three or more forms of trafficking, compared to 9% for those who moved with one smuggler and 12% for the overall sample).

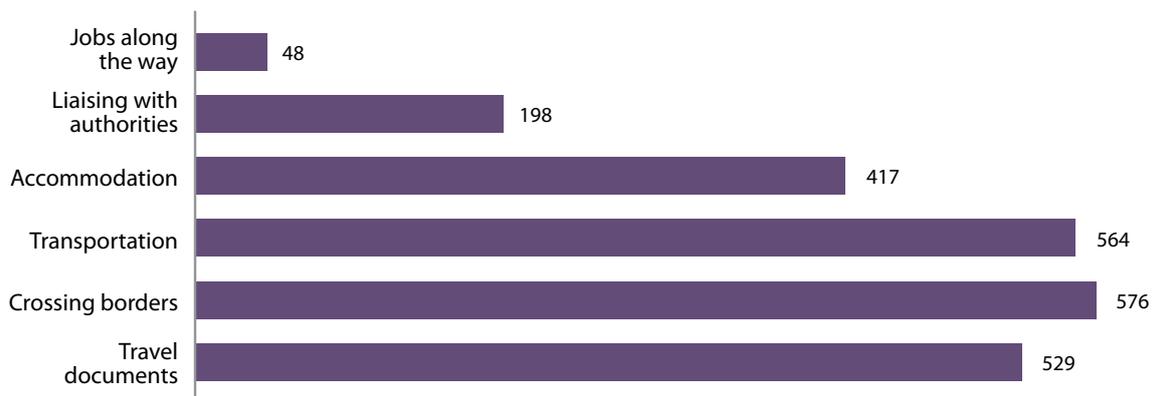
All profiles of migrants reported using smugglers. Even 59% of the 'migrating' respondents had used a smuggler to reach the Sahel, confirming that West African migrants sometimes still use smugglers within ECOWAS, despite the free-movement protocols.

This can sometimes be because they don't have the right documentation to cross the border legally. The ECOWAS free-movement protocol requires West African nationals to be in possession of a travel document and a health certificate in order to cross borders regularly. Some migrants did not have these documents because they were not aware of the requirements. For others it is because the difficulty of obtaining these documents outweighs their usefulness, particularly for migrants from rural areas who would have to travel to their nation's administrative centre in order to obtain them. Other migrants have reported that despite their right to cross ECOWAS borders regularly, they are often charged bribes at borders in order to be able to pass, even when they are in possession of the required documents. When this happens at multiple borders, it can severely decrease the migrant's financial resources. Moving with a smuggler can help migrants avoid corrupt border officials, either because they will avoid the official border crossing points or because the smuggler will have arrangements with the officials.

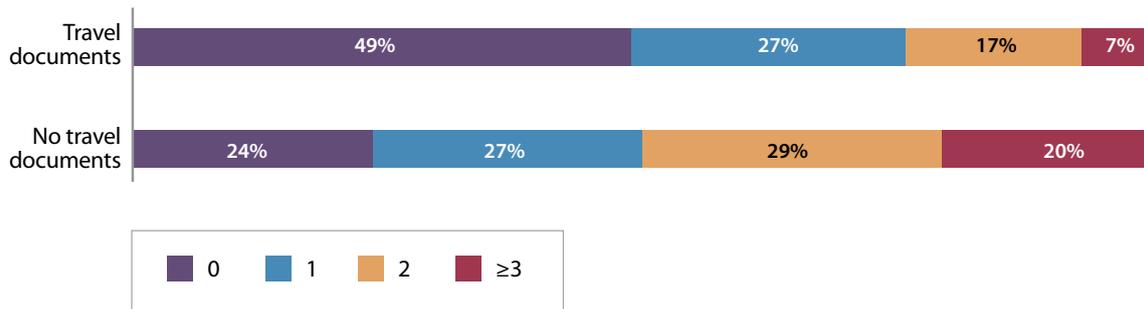
While Agadez has traditionally been the main smuggling hub in Niger, Agadez and Arlit were also the most common locations for trafficking in Niger. Since the passing of the anti-smuggling law in 2015 when new routes developed from Tahoua, Koni and Zinder, human trafficking also increased in these locations. The smugglers and traffickers have increased their cooperation, and most migrants who were interviewed qualitatively reported that they had been taken to a trafficker by their smuggler. This could be seen as a consequence of the anti-smuggling law, which forced smugglers deeper into illegality. Consequently, migrants who use smugglers before reaching Agadez face a higher risk of trafficking than those who take public transport without the help of a smuggler.¹⁹

Figure 44 charts the services that were offered by smugglers, as reported by migrants who moved with at least one smuggler during their journey. While the most commonly provided services were crossing borders, providing transportation, providing travel documents and accommodation, 19% of respondents reported that the smuggler had helped them liaise with authorities and move through controls, and 5% reported that the smuggler had offered them jobs along the way.

Figure 44: Services offered by the smuggler (multiple response, n=1 038)



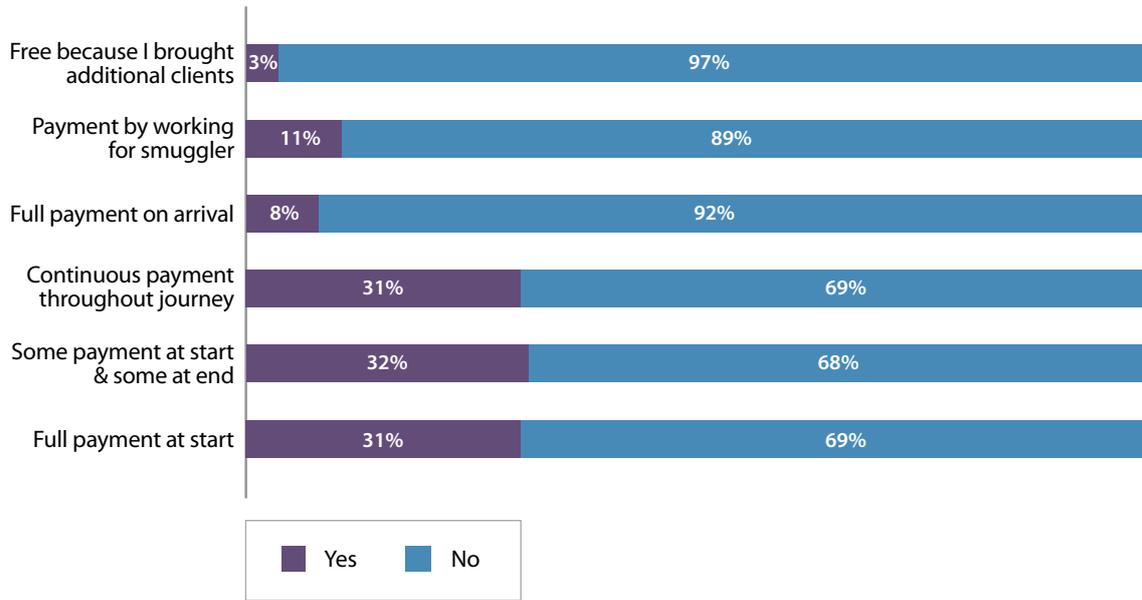
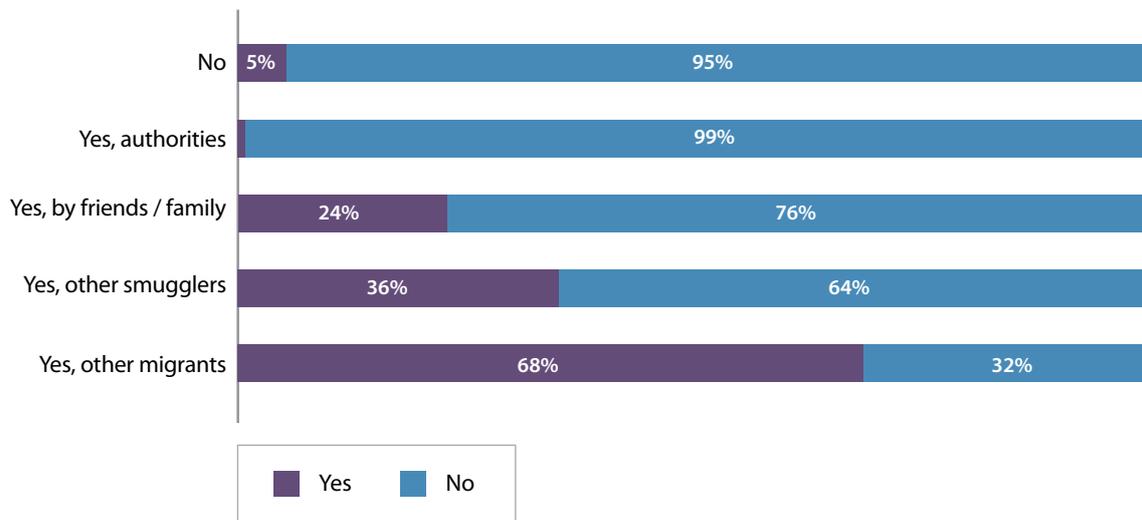
76% of migrants who said that their smuggler had not prepared travel documents for them reported being victims of trafficking, compared to 51% of migrants who did have papers prepared for them. That is, where smugglers prepared travel documents for migrants, migrants showed decreased rates of exposure to trafficking. Migrants who did not have travel documents prepared for them were also more severely trafficked, as shown by Figure 45. 21% of migrants without travel documents reported being victim to at least three forms of trafficking, compared to 8% of migrants with papers. The same trend applies to accommodation. That is, where smugglers provided accommodation for migrants, the reported rate of trafficking dropped from 68% to 56%.

Figure 45: Severity of trafficking according to travel documents prepared by smuggler

In the face of increased counter-smuggling work in Niger and the increased risk of detention and abuse in North Africa, payment modalities to smugglers have become increasingly important. For example, the increased risk of arbitrary detention in Libya and extortion across North Africa has encouraged migrants to move from the Sahel to Europe in one network, with at least some part of the payment being made on arrival at their destination. That way, migrants remain in the protection of a network all the way to their destination and the payment modality creates an incentive for the smuggling network they're moving with to deliver them safely so that they can be paid. Moreover, the increased difficulty in reaching North Africa from the Sahel also means that if migrants pay in full on departure and they do not successfully arrive at their destination, they will lose their money.

When respondents were asked about their payment methods, a surprisingly small proportion of the sample reported paying the smuggler on arrival (8%), as shown in Figure 46, 32% declared that they paid some on departure and some on arrival, which does provide a sense of insurance for the migrant, and a further 31% declared paying continuously throughout the journey. While paying at least some of the fee on arrival creates an incentive for the smuggler to deliver the migrant to their destination safely, a modality of paying continuously throughout the journey can also create risks for migrants. That is, if they run out of money along the way and are in locations where it is difficult to find a job (in northern Niger, for example), their desperation for an income may create vulnerability to trafficking. 31% of the sample declared that they made full payment at the start.

Only 3% of the sample declared that they travelled for free as a result of introducing new clients to the smuggler. However, a good 11% of the sample declared that they made payment by working for the smuggler. It is impossible for us to know if this was in a context of trafficking or not, but what we do know for certain is that working for the smuggler does create a vulnerability to being trafficked. In fact, the respondents who worked for their smuggler did show a higher rate of trafficking than the rest of the sample: 83% of them said that they had been trafficked, compared to 60% of the overall sample. More specifically, those who worked for the smuggler experienced higher rates of kidnapping (64% compared to 32% in the overall sample), higher rates of sexual abuse (8% compared to 4% in the overall sample) and higher rates of detention (78% compared to 54%). The rate of trafficking attached to the other payment modalities did not show much variation from the overall rate of trafficking.

Figure 46: How did you pay your smuggler?**Figure 47:** Was the smuggler recommended to you, and by whom?

95% of the sample reported that the smuggler they moved with had been recommended to them. Recommendations by other migrants were most common (68%), followed by recommendations from other smugglers (36%) and friends/family (24%). 1% of the sample said that the smuggler had been recommended by authorities (see Figure 47). Respondents who followed a recommendation from friends and family were less trafficked than the others.

When migrants were asked to describe their smuggler (see Figure 48), it became clear that the majority see their smuggler as a service provider and mainly a professional one. Only 13% called their smuggler a criminal, whereas 61% called him a travel agent and 65% called him a professional businessman. A further 19% reported that their smuggler was a fellow migrant who was helping them, thereby reflecting the possibility that there are migrants working with smugglers along the routes and migrants who do become smugglers. The 9% who referred to their smuggler as a government official are referring to situations where they bribe local officials for passage over borders, thereby demonstrating the prevalence of corruption as well as collusion between state officials and smugglers along the routes. Of interest, migrants who referred to their smuggler as a government official reported lower rates of trafficking than the rest of the sample (37% compared to 60%).

When the perception of the smuggler is analyzed against the services provided by the smuggler it becomes clear that they are positively correlated. That is, the more services provided by the smuggler, the more positive the perception of the smuggler. Figure 49 demonstrates that respondents who viewed their smuggler as a professional businessman or travel agent also reported a high level of all services: travel documents, crossing borders, transportation, accommodation, liaising with authorities, and jobs along the way.

Figure 48: Which of the following statements best describes your smuggler?

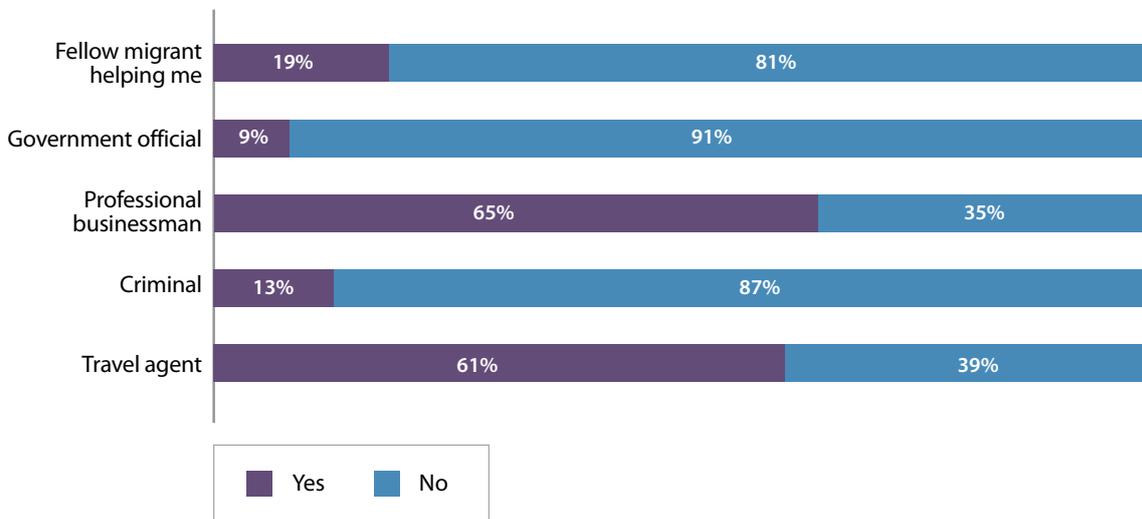
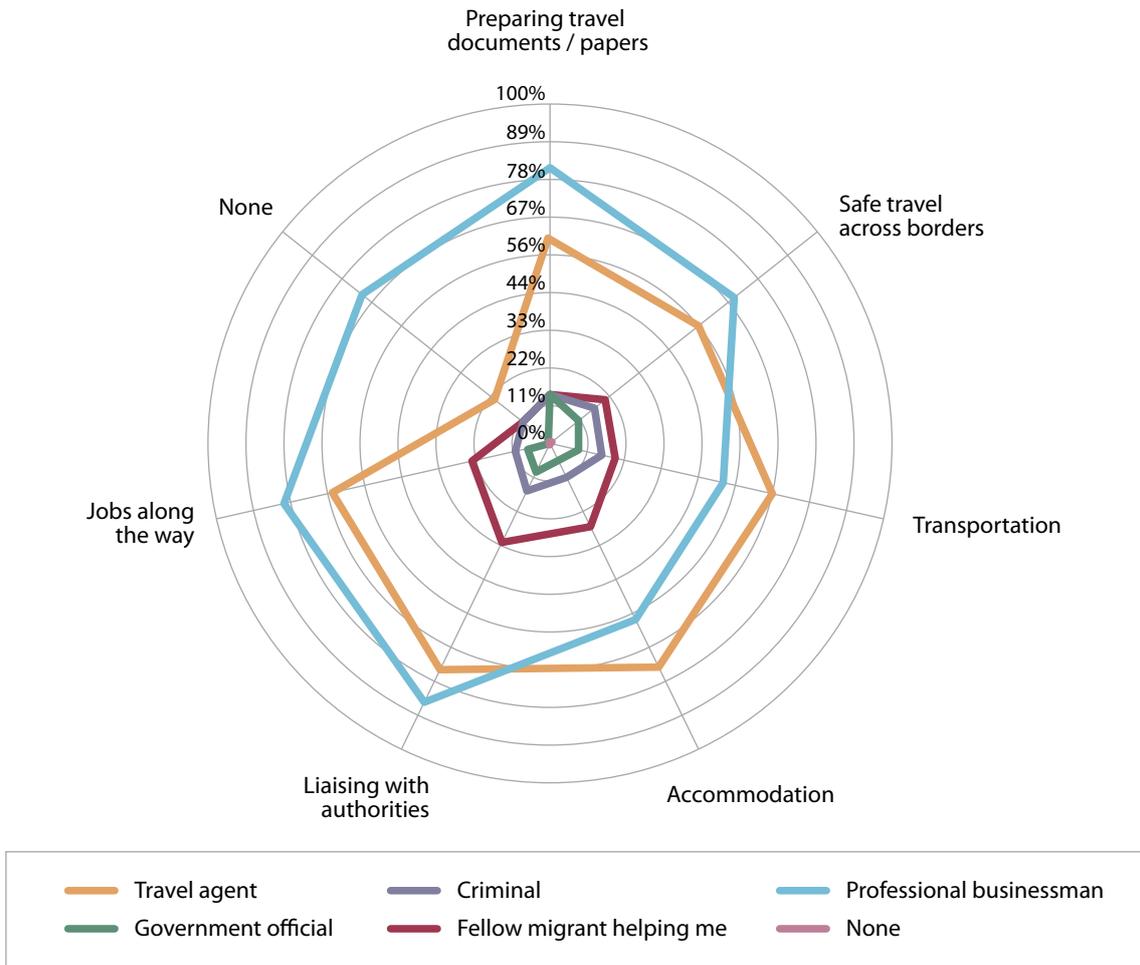


Figure 49: Perception of smuggler against services provided by smuggler



2.7 Level of information

In order to explore how well prepared migrants are for their journeys, a series of questions was posed about information sourcing and respondents' level of information on departure. As can be seen in Figure 50, 86% of respondents reported discussing the journey with other or former migrants before leaving home, meaning that the vast majority of migrants do not undertake the journey without preparation. Of the 14% who said they had not discussed with former migrants, the vast majority were repeat migrants who were already familiar with the journey. 72% of the sample reported speaking to at least one smuggler before commencing the journey: 49% with one and 23% with several. On the whole, 89% of the sample, an overwhelming majority, felt that they were sufficiently informed about the journey on departure.

However, the data suggest that information about the nature of the journey does not decrease one's vulnerability to trafficking. 90% of those who were trafficked in our sample felt that they had enough information about the journey, as did 91% of those who were trafficked three or more times (more severely trafficked). Overall, talking with other or former migrants and smugglers before leaving home does not help migrants avoid trafficking.

Figure 50: Level of information prior to departure

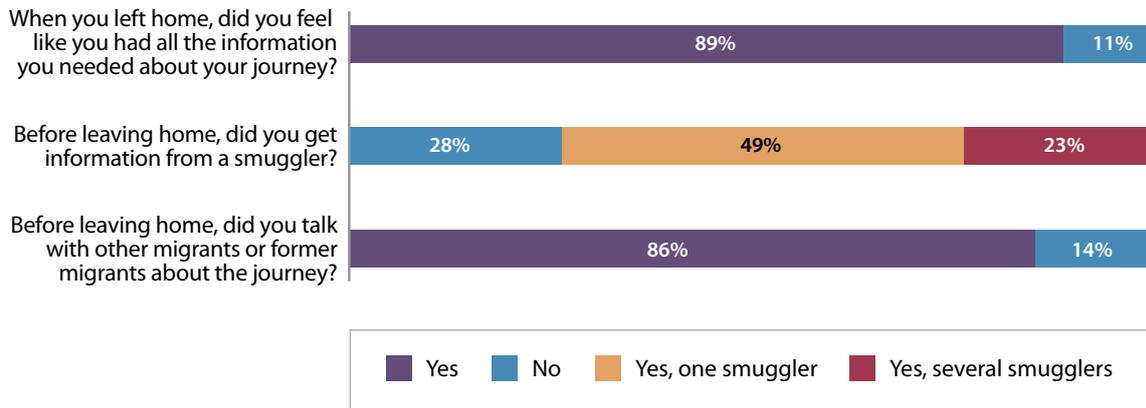
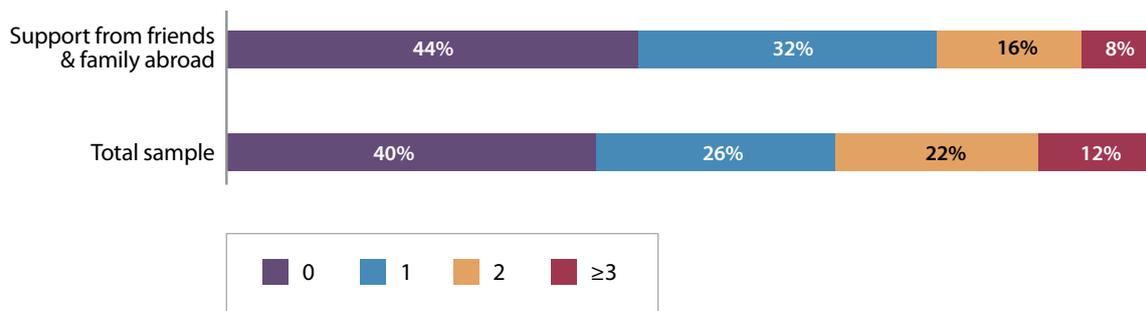


Figure 51: Prevalence of trafficking for migrants supported from abroad against entire sample



Support from friends and family abroad was defined by a ‘yes’ answer to any of the following questions in the survey:

- Who lent you the money? Friends/family abroad.
- Did anyone encourage you to migrate? Yes, family in another country (diaspora).

The data demonstrate that those who were supported by friends or family abroad were more likely to:

- discuss with a smuggler before leaving (55% compared to 49%)
- discuss with several smugglers before leaving (26% compared to 23%)
- discuss with other/former migrants before leaving (94% compared to 86%)

They also felt that they were better informed (96% compared to 89%) and they were less often trafficked than the general sample (55% compared to 60%) and less severely so (see Figure 51). Therefore, while information does not decrease one’s vulnerability to trafficking, support from friends or family abroad does correlate with decreased vulnerability to trafficking.

The data does suggest, however (although not providing conclusive results), that working with a deceptive smuggler, or being misinformed by a smuggler, does increase one’s vulnerability to trafficking. 63% of the sample who travelled with a smuggler felt that their smuggler had misled them, and Figure 52 charts the precise factors that respondents felt they had been misled about.

Figure 52: Did your smuggler mislead you, against what did the smuggler mislead you about?

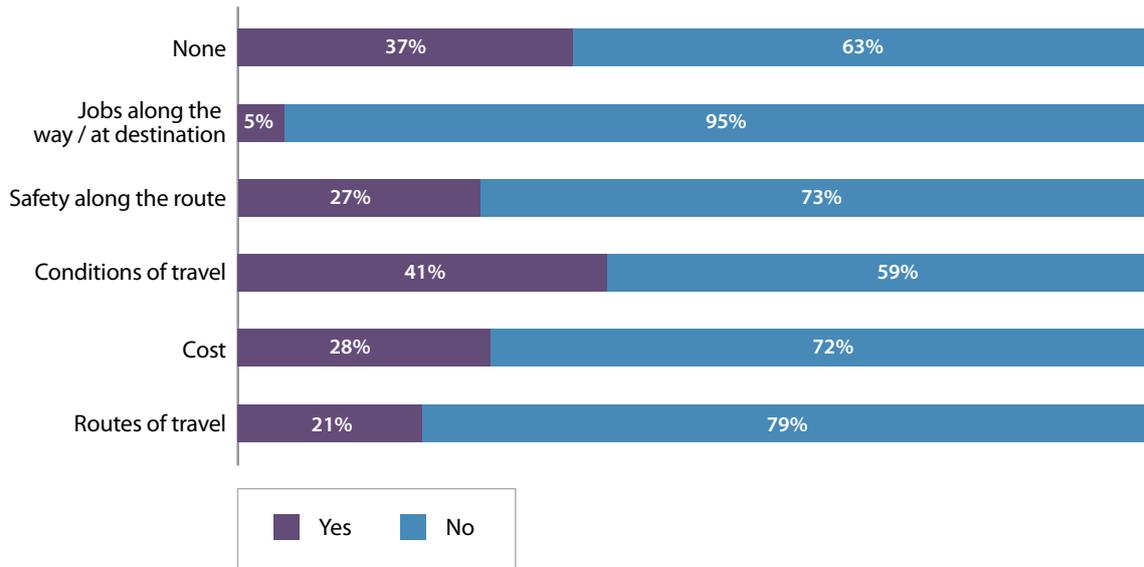


Figure 53: Factors on which migrants felt misled by smugglers, against severity of trafficking

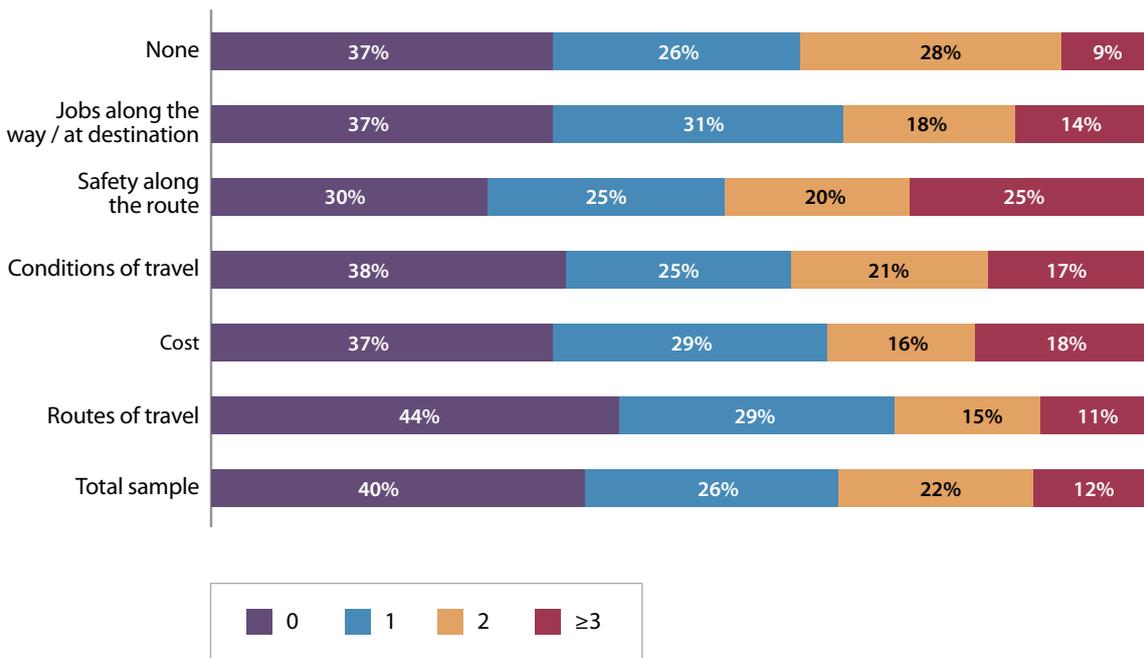


Figure 53 compares the factors on which migrants felt their smuggler had misled them against the severity of their trafficking. All types of deception correlated with higher levels of severe trafficking (three or more types of trafficking, shown in red). However, the highest rates belong to deception about safety along the route, cost, and conditions of travel.

2.8 Perceptions

Overall, migrating is perceived as difficult, expensive and risky by everyone (Figure 54). Only 6% of respondents think it is either very easy, easy or neither easy nor difficult to go to Europe. Moreover, the situation is not getting better on any front (Figure 55); at least 66% of respondents think it has become more difficult, dangerous and expensive to go to Libya and Europe.

On Libya specifically, a whopping 88% of respondents think it is difficult or very difficult to enter Libya, but 60% think it is getting more difficult (only 4% believe that it is less difficult; the rest of the sample felt that it has remained the same). Taking a boat from Libya is difficult or very difficult for at least 80% of the respondents, increasing up to 90% among migrants who have not been trafficked.

Those who have bigger budgets find it less expensive and less difficult to go to Libya, and less difficult to take a boat from Libya (by far), than the others. When it comes to the difficulty and cost of going to Europe and the dangers of going to Libya, there is no variation amongst the sample: everybody believes it is dangerous and difficult to the same degree.

Figure 54: Perception of difficulties on routes to Europe and Libya

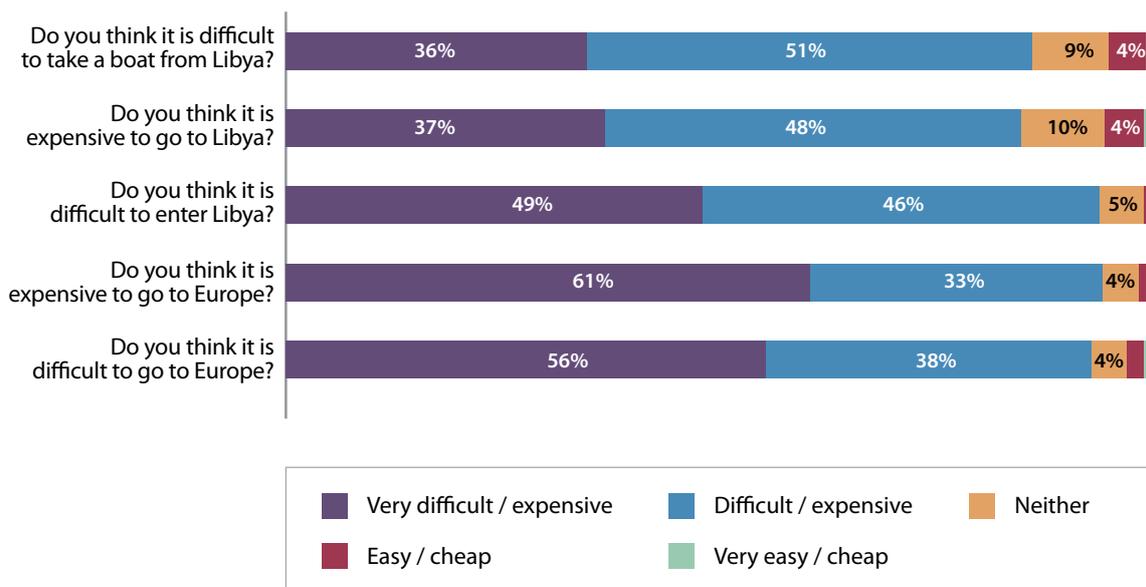
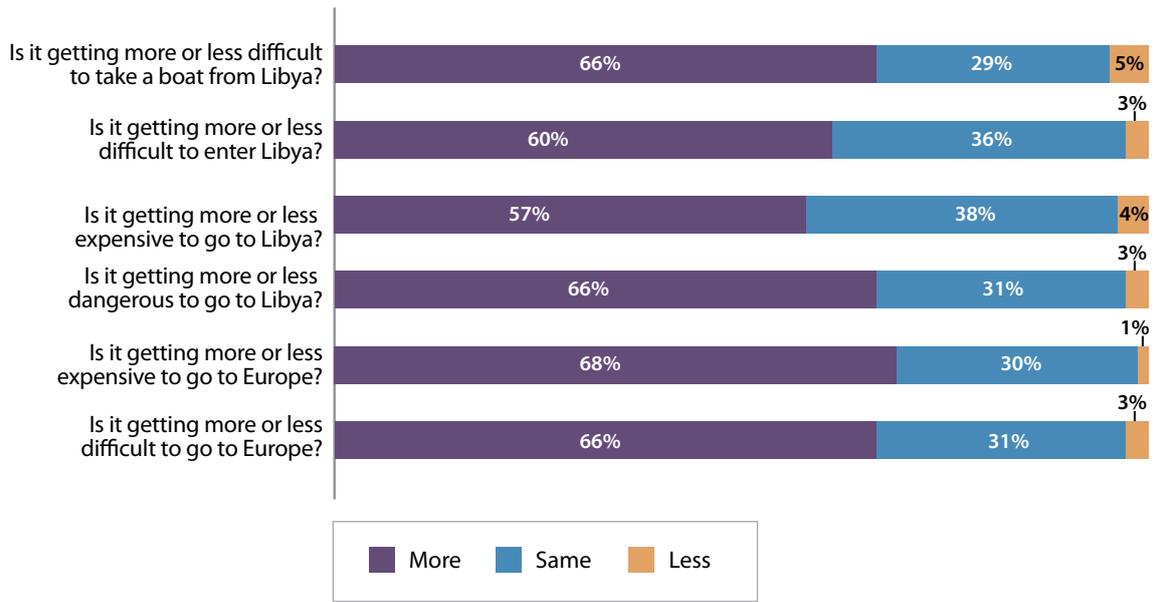


Figure 55: Perception of changing difficulties on routes to Europe and Libya



E. TRAFFICKING IN SOURCE COUNTRIES

1. NIGERIA

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country, with more than 200 million inhabitants in 2019.²⁰ The country is divided into 36 states with over 500 ethnic groups, the largest being the Hausa in the north, the Ibo in the south-east and the Yoruba along the border with Benin. Christianity (in the south) and Islam (in the north) are the major religions.²¹ According to the United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (2018–2022), Nigeria has one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa with a GDP per capita of 1 645 dollars. It is also Africa's largest oil producer and ranks sixth in the world for oil production.²²

Yet despite the country's natural and human resources, it also faces serious economic and social challenges, including low literacy levels, lack of access to education, high rates of unemployment, endemic corruption, and exclusion and inequality among social groups, including gender inequality.²³ A total of 64% of Nigerians live below the poverty line, and in early 2018 Nigeria overtook India as the country with the largest number of people in extreme poverty.²⁴ According to the World Bank, more than half of Nigerians, most of them women, live in absolute poverty.²⁵ There are also high levels of displacement as a result of the ongoing conflict in the north-east with Boko Haram and violent communal clashes in five north central states. This displacement exacerbates vulnerability to trafficking and exploitation by increasing economic desperation and weakening the rule of law. Nigeria also faces serious child-protection issues. Large numbers of children are out of school, and violence against children is widespread. Compounded by limited avenues for safe migration and a lack of implementation of existing laws and policies designed to address human trafficking, these issues create an environment where trafficking thrives.²⁶ In the 2018 Global Slavery Index, which provides a country-by-country ranking of the number of people in modern slavery, Nigeria was ranked 32 out of 167 countries.²⁷

While there is also no comprehensive, reliable data on the number of smuggled migrants from Nigeria, there were 18 158 detected Nigerians who arrived by boat in Italy in 2017.²⁸ In 2017 a former Nigerian permanent representative to the United Nations said that in 2016 alone, 602 000 Nigerians tried to migrate to Europe via the Sahara desert, a large number of whom died during the journey.²⁹ By 2019 the number of Nigerian arrivals in Italy had dropped to 241, although the total number of arrivals was only 11 471 in that year.³⁰ IOM DTM recorded 1 208 individuals moving out of Nigeria per day in January 2020, and estimates that 51% were Nigerian. Extrapolating from the DTM data, we can estimate that there are currently 37 000 individuals moving out of Nigeria per month, 19 000 of whom are Nigerian.³¹ If they are not detected on boats that arrive in Europe, where are these Nigerians going?

1.1 Trafficking

Nigeria is a source, transit and destination country for human trafficking. Internal trafficking is the most prevalent form, accounting for 75% of cases in the country, according to the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons. There are various forms of internal trafficking, and they differ according to region. Edo state and the regions of Lagos and Abuja are known for child exploitation for labour (mainly from rural to urban areas) and sex. The regions of Adanawa, Taraba and Ondo are known for labour exploitation in the agriculture sector, and sexual exploitation is present across the entire territory.

In terms of regional trafficking, Nigeria's relative economic prowess and the local demand for cheap labour and commercialized sex creates the opportunity for traffickers to exploit people who migrate in search of economic opportunities. Regional VOTs in Nigeria are generally from Togo, Benin or Burkina Faso.

In terms of international trafficking from Nigeria, while the forms have not shifted greatly in recent years, the routes and destinations have. Traditionally victims from Nigeria were destined for North Africa or Europe, via the central Mediterranean route, the Gulf, and other West and Southern African countries. Given the greatly reduced mobility to Europe through the central Mediterranean, new trafficking routes have emerged towards Morocco and Mali, but also towards the Gulf countries. Muslims from northern Nigeria (Kano is becoming a hub) are inclined to go or to be trafficked to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran or Afghanistan, while the people from the south (predominantly Christian) want to reach Europe. This diversion began in 2017. Cases of trafficking by sea have also been reported in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea and Mali, where victims are recruited under false promises and end up being forced to work on farm plantations, or as hawkers or salespersons, usually to lift heavy loads at warehouses or stores, and domestic servants.³²

1.1.1 Child trafficking

There are a number of structural and cultural factors that create a vulnerability for children in relation to trafficking in Nigeria. Millions of children are not going to school, lack birth registration, and experience inadequate education, social protection and access to health care. Three out of four children in Nigeria are affected by multidimensional poverty, and children make up more than half of the country's internally displaced population.³³ According to a 2017 government survey:

- Only 57% of children below five years have their birth registered with a civil authority.³⁴
- 50% of children are involved in child labour, while 39% are working in hazardous conditions.³⁵
- About 85% of children between the ages of one and fourteen were subjected to at least one form of violent discipline.³⁶
- Only 65% of children of school-entry age, 60% of children of primary-school age and 40% of children of secondary-school age are attending school.³⁷ In fact, according to UNICEF, Nigeria has the largest number of out-of-school children in the world, estimated at 10 million, most of them girls. This amounts to 20% of the global total of children who are out of school.³⁸

Focus box 3: Overview of children's work in Nigeria³⁹

Agricultural sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Production of manioc/cassava, cocoa, rice, tobacco
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fishing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Herding livestock
Industry sectors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mining and quarrying of granite and gravel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Artisanal gold mining and processing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Harvesting sand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Construction, including making bricks and carrying construction materials
Services sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Domestic work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Collecting money on public buses, washing cars, automotive repair
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Street work, including vending, begging and scavenging
Worst forms of child labour⁴⁰
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Commercial sexual exploitation, including in the production of pornography, sometimes as a result of human trafficking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Forced begging; domestic work; street vending; textile manufacturing; mining and quarrying gravel, granite and gold; labour in agriculture – sometimes as a result of human trafficking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recruitment of children by non-state armed groups for use in armed conflict and in non-conflict support roles

Child trafficking in Nigeria mainly takes the form of exploitative child labour. More specifically: domestic servitude, forced begging, farm labour, labour on illegal mining sites, child soldiers and suicide bombing (see Focus box 3). The trafficking of children usually springs out of poverty and economic hardship, and the recruiters are often part of the communities of the victims, exploiting the vulnerability of these families. It is also common for poor families living in poor rural areas to send a child to a wealthier family member living in an urban area to work. Most child beggars come from the Islamic Quranic school system, which is an

informal system in which children are taken away from home to study the Quran, and are expected to beg to raise money for the school. These children are highly vulnerable to recruitment by Boko Haram, which has been forcibly recruiting children for combat, suicide bombing and as concubines.⁴¹

Child marriage is also widespread. Nigeria has the largest number of child brides in Africa, and the second-highest number globally. Government estimates predict that two in ten girls and more than one in two marry before their 15th and 18th birthdays respectively.⁴² Trafficking for organ removal is also on the rise amongst children.

1.1.2 Organ trafficking

Organ trafficking is fuelled by increasing demand due to the shortage of organs globally. It is estimated that 10% of the transplants done in the world are completed using organs from the black market. Although there is no reliable data on the phenomenon, the World Health Organization believes it is steadily increasing, with brokers charging recipients at least 100 000 dollars and paying donors as little as 1 000 dollars.⁴³

Organ-trafficking victims are recruited through brokers, who link them with organ recipients. These brokers are generally members of the community of the victim, and promise them large sums of money after convincing them that the organ they want to harvest is not essential for life.⁴⁴ As a result of the low rates of recruitment for organ trafficking in Nigeria, coupled with high levels of demand for organs, most organ trafficking in the country is accomplished through deception. Usually, victims are taken to the recipient's country with the promise of a job on arrival. Through a range of abusive practices throughout the journey, both physical and emotional, the traffickers ensure that the victim is totally dependent and weak enough to be convinced into selling their organs to repay their debt on arrival.

While traditionally organ trafficking in the Nigerian context was destined for Europe and North Africa, new destinations have emerged in recent years, particularly Malaysia and Singapore. There are cases of women being fooled into believing there are jobs for them in these countries; there are also cases of organs being harvested in Libya for sale in Malaysia or Singapore.⁴⁵

There is also an emerging trend where women who are recruited for trafficking for sexual exploitation end up being trafficked for the purposes of organ removal, often resulting in death. The special rapporteur on trafficking in persons, after a trip to Nigeria in 2019, detailed scenarios where, during the voodoo ceremony that is conducted before victims of sexual exploitation begin their journey northwards (for the purpose of controlling them), some girls were singled out and beheaded before buyers arrived to purchase body parts and organs.⁴⁶ It is likely that the increased difficulty in reaching Europe, particularly through greater interceptions at sea, has damaged the market for Nigerian prostitutes, and this has caused traffickers to reorient into new business models and markets.

1.1.3 Baby factories

Baby factories are places where women are held against their will (after being kidnapped), raped and forced to carry and deliver a child with the purpose of selling it later, or where women come to deliver unwanted babies who will be sold later. Such factories have been recently discovered in Lagos, indicating an increasing trend in child harvesting, but most of them are in the south-west and south-centre of the country, in the states of Ondo, Ogun, Imo, Akwa Ibom Abia and Anambra.

Child harvesting such as this developed in Nigeria because of an increasing demand from wealthier families for cheaper methods than surrogacy, in-vitro fertilization or adoption. The majority of victims are young unmarried women from poor areas who are afraid of the social stigmas around teenage pregnancy. The babies are sometimes sold with the intention of forcing them into sexual and labour exploitation later.⁴⁷

1.1.4 Sexual exploitation

There is little data on the trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation in Nigeria, and thus it is hard to say how many are trafficked from, into and within the country. However, the US State Department Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons identified trafficking victims in over 34 countries in Europe in 2018.⁴⁸ In 2017 IOM reported a 600% increase in the number of potential sex-trafficking victims arriving in Italy by sea, most of whom were Nigerian. They also estimated that 80% of women and girls arriving from Nigeria arrive in a context of sexual exploitation.⁴⁹

Most Nigerian trafficking victims in Europe come from Edo State in Nigeria, and typically arrive via Libya. There are also movements from Morocco to Spain. In the 1990s Benin City, which is the capital of Edo State, became a hub for international organized crime where sponsors and madames covered women's travels to Europe in exchange for their exploitation into prostitution upon arrival.⁵⁰ Benin City is also a hub for migrants from neighbouring countries which makes Nigeria the centre of the regional market for sexual exploitation. For a girl who has been sexually exploited, the debt is between 40 000 and 70 000 euros, which is almost impossible to pay back. This keeps the women and girls perpetually indebted to their traffickers. More recently, traffickers have started to recruit women and girls from camps for internally displaced people in north-east Nigeria for ostensibly legitimate jobs in Italy, coercing them in prostitution once they arrive.⁵¹

More recently, trafficking for sexual exploitation has been combined with other forms of trafficking. As mentioned previously, girls who are recruited for sexual exploitation are sometimes forced into organ trafficking without their knowledge and against their will. Trafficking for sexual exploitation is also often linked to forced labour where the women and girls are expected to engage in domestic work also.

Focus box 4: Terminology related to trafficking for sexual exploitation in the Nigerian context

Madame: A woman who is part of the trafficking ring, who controls women and girls and to whom the victims are usually indebted. She usually acts as their procurer. Madames are usually former victims themselves who end up moving up within the hierarchy after they have paid off their own debt.

Oga: The masculine equivalent of a madame.

Native doctor: A shaman who submits victims of trafficking to voodoo rituals ('juju' in Nigeria).

Boga: The person who accompanies the girls from Nigeria to Libya for the purpose of sexual exploitation in order to deliver them to the madame or oga. The boga can also transport the newly arrived victims from reception centres in Italy to the designated madame.

Connection man: The connection man is the smuggler who organizes trips from Nigeria to Italy through Libya. The route to Europe from Nigeria can involve multiple connection men.

Ghetto: holding locations where migrants are hidden while they wait for departure, whether it be by boat or overland. It may be because they are waiting for the right conditions to depart or because the smuggler is waiting to amass more clients before moving.

Connection house: Refers to brothels in Libya or Italy/Europe where victims are forced into prostitution. In Italy and Europe, it is often the youngest victims who are locked in connection houses, because they might attract too much public attention, whereas others may solicit on the streets. Connection houses can also be brothels inside ghettos.

1.2 Modus operandi of trafficking networks

There are three types of traffickers in Nigeria:

1. **The small networks:** They are usually individuals who are well embedded in the community and who link with traffickers, for example, families, teachers, pastors or policemen. They are difficult to detect, locate and arrest, given both their local social status and the fact that they are from the same community as their victims. This also makes recruitment easier for them, however. The victims are recruited in markets, schools, villages or even in church.
2. **The private labour agencies:** These agencies are licensed to operate for labour recruitment, and they will typically send clients somewhere legally for employment but then pass them on to traffickers on arrival. They advertise their services on the radio and have offices in urban centres.
3. **The mafias:** These are very organized, and are usually transnational networks. They are typically in the south of the country and have connections in Europe but also in the USA and South America. They are usually involved in other types of trafficking as well, such as drugs. There will be madames within their network who will recruit and manage victims of sexual exploitation.

In response to the situation in Libya and the decreased movement to Europe, the UAE has emerged as an important destination for private labour agencies since 2017. A pre-existing job is offered to the victim and the victim is move to the UAE regularly, within the framework of bilateral labour agreements between the UAE and Nigeria. Once the victim arrives their passport is confiscated, and they become a prisoner of their trafficker.

In 2018 flows to Russia increased for Nigerian trafficking victims. Traffickers took advantage of the relaxed visa requirements that were implemented for the 2018 FIFA World Cup and fraudulently recruited Nigerian women for jobs in Russia. Once they arrived, the women were forced into prostitution. According to the US State Department's 2019 Trafficking in Persons Report, as of early 2019 there were close to 2 000 Nigerians stranded in Russia without travel documents.

Since 2016 some Nigerian VOTs have found themselves stranded in Libya, where trafficking networks that were previously transporting women to Europe through Libya started to take advantage of the instability there and linked with Libyan traffickers to create new business models. This means that Nigerians in Libya are exploited by both Libyans and Nigerians and they are trafficked into forced labour in the construction and agriculture sectors as well as prostitution in Tripoli, Sabha, Benghazi, and Misrata. Even though they are told that they are going to Europe, the victims will be held in control houses on the outskirts of Tripoli and Misrata until they can repay their travel debts. Sometimes traffickers sell them again before they can repay their debt. Some trafficking victims in Libya reported that Nigerian embassy officials in Tripoli asked for payment before removing victims from Libyan detention camps.⁵²

1.3 Legal and institutional framework

The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) operates under the Ministry of Justice and is responsible for investigating, arresting and prosecuting perpetrators of trafficking in persons as well as providing protection and assistance to victims. It is also tasked with prevention, capacity building and awareness raising. The agency collaborates with the Nigerian Immigration Office, the police and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and has offices in Lagos, Benin City, Uyo and Kano. It has also created shelters in Lagos, Benin City and Abuja. Since 2004 the NAPTIP has convicted 396 persons, with 50 in 2018 only and 8 between January and May 2019. Convictions included crimes such as domestic labour, modern slavery, child labour, baby factories, sexual exploitation and forced prostitution and the sale of human beings. The traffickers were punished with jail sentences ranging from 6 months to 13 years.⁵³

In 2017 Edo State created a task force against human trafficking to investigate and prosecute traffickers, prevent and raise awareness, and offer protection and support for the return and reintegration of victims. The task force works in partnership with the government, UN agencies and international NGOs as well as with the private sector to achieve its objectives. Since its creation it has received 58 cases of human trafficking and has prosecuted 25 suspects in 11 cases. It also received 4 767 returnees between November 2017 and May 2019 and provided them with support and protection (592 have been trained in different vocations, which decreases their vulnerability to trafficking as they developed certain skills for the employment market).⁵⁴ This task force is being replicated in other states such as Ondo, Delta and Ekiti with the support of UNODC and NAPTIP.⁵⁵

The domestic legal framework in Nigeria has solid foundations to combat trafficking in persons, but it is mainly oriented towards the prosecution of traffickers rather than the prevention of trafficking and the protection of victims. See Focus box 5 for a full list. It also has a strong focus on trafficking for sexual exploitation, which, while the main form of trafficking in the country, is by no means the only one. Characteristics of the general lack of protection mechanisms include:

- Only the NAPTIP has the power to identify victims.
- Coordination between border guards, law enforcement agents and other relevant stakeholders is hampered by a lack of funding.
- There is a lack of sufficient financial resources to manage NAPTIP shelters which affects the quality of services provided.
- There are concerns about the 'closed shelters' infringing the freedom of movement of survivors who already face limitations in access to healthcare and education because of their stigmatization as VOTs.
- Corruption is prevalent in Nigeria, and often allows traffickers to avoid prosecution.
- There is a lack of confidence in the judicial system on the part of victims.
- Law-enforcement officials are poorly trained in trafficking issues.
- There is a lack of political will to prosecute high-level perpetrators and conduct lengthy judicial proceedings.
- Prosecution relies on the testimony of victims, and often ends up in complaints being withdrawn.⁵⁶

Focus box 5: Nigeria's legal framework for trafficking in persons**National legal framework**

- Edo State Trafficking in Persons Prohibition Act (2018)
- National Framework for the Development and Integration of *almajiri*⁵⁷ Education into the Universal Basic Education Scheme and the Action plan for Ending Violence against Children (2017)
- National Referral Mechanism for Protection and Assistance to Trafficked Victims (2017)
- Section 1, G–H of the Immigration Act (2015) and the Immigration Regulation (2017)
- Guidelines on National Referral Mechanism for Protection and Assistance to Trafficked Persons in Nigeria (2015)
- Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act (2015)
- Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act (2015)
- National Policy on Child Labour (2014)
- National Policy on Protection and Assistance to Trafficked Persons in Nigeria (2008)
- Sections 17, 34 and 42 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999)
- Sections 223, 224, 365, 366, 369 of the Criminal Code (1990)
- Labour Act (1974)
- Sections 275, 278–280 of the Penal Code (1960)

International conventions

- African Charter on Human and People's Rights (Enforcement) Act (2004)
- ECOWAS Declaration and Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons (2001)
- UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child, Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict (2000)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child, Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (2000)
- UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (2000)
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (1999)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990)
- Article 6 of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981)
- Minimum Age Convention (1973)
- UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- Forced Labour Convention (1930)⁵⁸

2. SENEGAL

Senegal is among the continent's most stable countries. It has not experienced any major political crisis since its independence in the 1960s and it has enjoyed significant economic growth since 2014, leading to decreases in poverty levels. More specifically, the proportion of people living under the poverty line decreased from 38% in 2010 to 33.4% in 2018. The unemployment rate also moved from 10.3% in 2011 to 6.5% in 2019.⁵⁹ Despite this, however, Senegal is still considered a low-income economy and inequalities are particularly high.⁶⁰

In 2019 Senegal had over 16 million inhabitants, more than 60% of whom are younger than 24.⁶¹ The Senegalese economy and employment market continue to be dominated by agriculture and informal activities, despite economic growth. The urbanization of the country also failed to stimulate industrialization, and not all the young people who migrated from rural areas managed to access the formal employment market.⁶² In fact, the youth unemployment rate is higher than the overall unemployment rate, sitting at 8.4% in 2019.⁶³ Women also face higher unemployment rates than men (7.6% compared to 5.8%), and this has been increasing since 2017 (when it was 6.9%).⁶⁴

2.1 Trafficking

In the 2018 Global Slavery Index, which provides a country-by-country ranking of the number of people in modern slavery, Senegal was ranked 109 out of 167 countries.⁶⁵ Senegalese human traffickers exploit domestic and foreign victims in Senegal, as well as victims from Senegal abroad.⁶⁶ Victims from all over the region are exploited within the country, and the majority of VOTs are women and children.

There are Senegalese migrants in Libya, who are vulnerable to trafficking by both Senegalese and Libyan traffickers. According to IOM DTM, there were 4 540 Senegalese migrants in Libya in September 2019. The main route to Libya from Senegal is through Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, where migrants are also at risk of trafficking. Senegalese migrants are also seen travelling through the western Mediterranean route, with over 2 000 Senegalese arrivals being recorded in Spain in 2018 and 2019 each. Given the dynamics through the western Mediterranean, it is very likely that a greater number attempted the journey to Spain, meaning that there is likely to be a sizeable population of Senegalese migrants in Morocco too.

2.1.1 Forced begging

Forced begging is the most prevalent form of trafficking in Senegal. In 2018, Human Rights Watch estimated that there are 100 000 boys living in traditional Quranic boarding schools (*daaras*) in Senegal who are forced to beg for daily quotas of money, rice or sugar by their Quranic teachers (*marabouts*). Children in these *daaras* are often beaten, chained, bound, and subjected to other forms of physical or psychological abuse.⁶⁷ A study conducted by the Global Solidarity Initiative revealed that in 2018 there were about 183 835 *talibé* children in Dakar, 27 943 of whom were forced into begging. In the religious city of Touba

(Senegal's second-largest city), the study found that there were 127 822 *talibés* of whom 85 000 were practising begging.⁶⁸ The phenomenon of trafficking of *talibés* in Senegal does not concern Senegalese children only, but also those from neighbouring countries such as Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Gambia and sometimes Mali who are sent to Senegal.

2.1.2 Forced labour

Like Nigeria, Senegal is a hub for labour agencies recruiting for work in Gulf countries, the Middle East and Europe, most of which are used as cover for trafficking networks. Since it has become more difficult to recruit for Libya, given the greater awareness of dangers present there, networks in Senegal have also re-oriented towards the Gulf.

The main development in the last three years, however, has been greater movements towards South America, which has become the primary destination for labour migrants from Senegal. They are mainly heading for Brazil, where there is a poultry industry that serves a Middle Eastern market and must therefore be halal. As Senegalese workers are familiar with the halal method, they are easily employed. However, most of them are exploited, especially because they are not legally in the country.

To get to Brazil, the migrants fly to Casablanca. From there they fly to Brazil via Ecuador in order to benefit from visa exemptions. Casablanca airport has been a regional hub for West African migrants and smugglers since 2017. This was prompted by two particular developments: first, as part of Morocco's strategy for re-entering the AU, visa exemptions were created for passport holders from Algeria, Tunisia, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Guinea Conakry, Congo, Gabon and Cote d'Ivoire (a pre-registration requirement was instituted in late 2018 for nationals from the Republic of the Congo, Guinea Conakry and Mali). Second, Royal Air Maroc's network was expanded into the region at competitive rates, positioning Casablanca as a regional hub. Today there are over 20 flights coming into Mohammed V airport in Casablanca from African capitals per day.⁶⁹

2.1.3 Sexual exploitation

Forced prostitution has been on the rise in Senegal since 2017, particularly in the south-east of the country, in the gold-mining region of Kedougou where a gold rush has fuelled demand for sex workers. Both Senegalese and foreign women and girls are tricked into sexual exploitation around the mining sites. Those that are trafficked into the country come from from Togo, Nigeria, Benin, Guinea or Sierra Leone and are lured by false promises of employment. A mining boom across West Africa and the Sahel in recent years has brought wealth to local communities but, because the mines are often in remote areas and far from the purview of the central government, they have also allowed criminality to thrive. Gold mining has a long history in Kedougou, but the arrival of foreign firms and migrant workers in recent years, coupled with the region's porous borders, has seen the numbers of women trafficked into sex work increase. Experts believe that most of the women are from Nigeria, with traffickers there looking for new markets since the collapse of the Libyan system. Senegalese are also victims of forced labour in the gold mines.

2.2 Modus operandi of trafficking networks

The main route out of Senegal today is by plane via Casablanca. There are smuggling and trafficking networks for migrants wanting to continue on to Spain, which move them quite rapidly from the airport to the coast, and then across the Mediterranean in speedboats, yachts or jet skis that are very hard to detect. As explained previously, these air routes to Casablanca opened up in 2017, as a reaction both to Morocco's reorientation towards Africa and to the counter-smuggling work in the central Mediterranean that almost closed the route to Italy.

While some of the migrants moving through the Casablanca modality are trafficked to Europe, most are travelling with smugglers for actual pre-arranged jobs. However, sometimes migrants who are not trafficked and not moving with a trafficking network arrive at Casablanca airport, only to be kidnapped by people claiming to be working with their smugglers. They are taken to holding locations where they are asked to pay a ransom in order to be released.

Smugglers and traffickers often live in Europe, particularly France, but work with middlemen on the African continent both for recruitment and logistics. They typically head a number of trafficking networks that are involved in the traffic of commodities as well as human beings.

2.3 Legal framework

The Law to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Related Practices and to Protect Victims by Criminalising Sex and Labor Trafficking (2005) punishes sex and labour trafficking by five to ten years' imprisonment and a fine, while forced begging is punished by a penalty of two to five years' imprisonment and a fine.

The Cellule Nationale de Lutte Contre la Traite des Personnes (CNLTP) was created in 2010, under the authority of the prime minister and attached to the Ministry of Justice. Its role is to detect and monitor human trafficking in the country, to investigate any reported cases, to implement regional structures to combat human trafficking, to raise awareness on the issue and to help authorities adapt the legal framework in order to improve the judicial process around human trafficking. The cell is composed of representatives from a variety of ministries (the ministries of Family, the Interior, Justice, Armed Forces, Foreign Affairs, Education, Labour, Professional Training and Employment, Health and Communication) along with the presidency and the prime minister's office. Civil society is also represented through non-state actors and religious representatives.⁷⁰

Three Year Action Plan (2018–20) on the strategic axes of prevention, protection and judicial prosecution of human trafficking by the CNLTP and the Ministry of Justice operates with the support of UNODC.

The Système de Suivi de la Traite, or Systraite, which is a human-trafficking case-law database, was launched in October 2019. It is a joint initiative of the Senegalese Ministry of Justice, the CNLTP, the Direction des Affaires Criminelles et des Grâces and IOM Senegal. The database aims to collect information on the profiles of trafficking survivors, the type of abuse they faced, the methods of referral procedure before trials and the profiles of traffickers.⁷¹

The Ministry of Good Governance and Child Protection took the lead for child-trafficking victim protection and adopted the following:

- Standards on the Protection of Children on the Move (2016): with seven steps to support children on the move, consisting of emergency care; study of personal situation; family tracing and assessment; alternative placement; social and professional reintegration; follow-up and monitoring; and family and community support.
- Strategic Framework on Child Protection (2017): Member states committed to concrete measures to protect children from trafficking by focusing on five priority areas: sexual, physical and emotional violence against children, including female genital mutilation; child marriage; child labour; civil registration and vital statistics; and children on the move.
- ECOWAS Child Policy and its Strategic Action Plan (2019–23): Resolution to promote the retention of all children in formal or alternative education systems until the age of 18; inclusion of gender-sensitive policies and programmes; enhanced cooperation on all levels to mobilize financial and technical support for planning and implementing laws and policies; monitoring and evaluation.⁷²

Article 298 of the Senegalese Penal Code (1965) punishes those who beat children, deprive them of food or health care or commit any violence or assault with one to five years' imprisonment and a fine of 25 000 to 200 000 CFA.⁷³

Senegal ratified the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2003) and its protocol to prevent, suppress and punish human trafficking, especially of women and children (2007). It is also signatory to various international conventions and laws:

- ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999)
- Minimum Age Convention (1973)
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its protocols on armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.⁷⁴

F. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The data gathered in this report can be synthesized into the following key takeaways:

- Women are categorically vulnerable to trafficking along the routes, as a result of their gender. There are no other socio-demographic markers that show a difference in trafficking rates.
- Migrants who are aiming for Europe are more often trafficked because they are perceived to have greater financial means. In fact, the more money migrants have with them, the more likely they are to be trafficked and the more severely so.
- The news has circulated that prices have increased along the routes in the face of increased controls, and migrants are taking more money with them as a result. However, these higher budgets are also increasing their vulnerability to trafficking. Some categories of migrants (women, Christians) hope that increased their means will decrease their vulnerability, but are unwittingly magnifying their risk of being trafficked.
- The longer migrants spend on the road, the more likely they are to be trafficked. Longer duration also equates to multiple trafficking experiences. This is as a result of a combination of becoming more desperate for a way forward, after multiple setbacks, and running out of money as a result of the same setbacks.
- One way in which migrants try to address their vulnerability to trafficking and abuse along the routes is not to take all of their money with them, but rather to have it sent to them when it is required; however, the majority are still taking all of their money with them.
- Of those who do leave their money with someone, it most commonly left with friends and family at home, but a good proportion leave their money with their smuggler. Many of them also have their money delivered to them by a smuggler when they need it. Both these categories of migrants experience higher rates of trafficking and are more severely trafficked. The highest incidence of trafficking is reported by those who left their money with an employer.
- Migrants who are perceived as having financial means are vulnerable to detention and kidnapping as forms of trafficking. Those who work along the way are more vulnerable to forced labour. Sexual exploitation and organ trafficking are not common along the routes (more so in source countries).
- In the face of increased counter-smuggling work in Niger and the increased risk of detention and abuse in North Africa, payment and engagement modalities with smugglers have become increasingly important. Migrants try to move from the Sahel to their destination within the protection of one network, with at least some part of the payment being made on arrival at the destination, as this payment modality creates an incentive for the smuggling network to deliver the migrant safely.

- Migrants who use smugglers before reaching Agadez face a higher risk of trafficking than those who take public transport without the help of a smuggler. Migrants who moved with several different smugglers reported a higher incidence of trafficking, compared to those who moved within the same network, and they were more severely trafficked.
- A good proportion of the sample is still paying smugglers in full on departure, despite their knowledge of the dangers it presents, perhaps pointing to limited negotiating power.
- The smugglers and traffickers have increased their cooperation in Niger, and most migrants reported that they had been taken to a trafficker by their smuggler. This could be seen as a consequence of the anti-smuggling law that has forced smugglers deeper into illegality.
- While paying at least some of the fee on arrival creates an incentive for the smuggler to deliver the migrant to their destination safely, a modality of paying continuously throughout the journey can also create risks for migrants, particularly if it means they need to find work along the way.
- The data suggests that information does not decrease one's vulnerability to trafficking. The vast majority of VOTs in the sample were well prepared and well informed. Overall, migrating to Libya or Europe is perceived as difficult, expensive and risky by everyone, and the situation is not getting better on any front. The majority also believe that it has become more difficult, dangerous and expensive in recent years.
- The increased difficulty in entering Libya and in crossing from Libya to Italy has pushed traffickers in source countries into other business models. This includes connecting with new destinations, but has also led to the mixing of various forms of trafficking. For example, women who are recruited in Nigeria for sexual exploitation being forced into organ removal. There are also cases of organ harvesting in Libya for markets in Malaysia and Singapore.
- Victims are trafficked in Libya by both Libyans and traffickers from their own country of origin, suggesting greater transnational networking.
- The data suggests that exploitation and abuse is rife across Niger, Mali, Algeria and Libya, with the abuse in those countries being sometimes on a par with Libya.
- Collusion between smugglers and state officials and traffickers and state officials is commonly reported, and often facilitates abuse. In some instances, migrants work with smugglers in geographies where they don't need them (for example in ECOWAS where they have the right to free movement), simply to protect themselves against bribery by border officials, but this then increases their vulnerability to trafficking through their smuggler.

- Migrants who leave their homes voluntarily and end up being trafficked en route might constitute the highest number of trafficking victims. The profiles also vary. While women and children are more vulnerable to trafficking in source countries, men face higher risks of being trafficked along the way because they constitute the majority of migrant flows in the region.

Given the dire situation of abuse and exploitation along the routes to Europe, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Information as protection

Increasing awareness about the risks that await migrants along the way is imperative. However, the data has shown that migrants are fully aware of the risks of the journey and knowledge alone has not decreased their vulnerability. Past research has also shown that knowledge of the risks does not deter migrants from wanting to undertake irregular migratory journeys. Thus, information about the risks needs to be accompanied by practical information on how to best prepare for these risks. That way, those who choose to continue regardless will be able to better protect themselves as a result of greater information. Providing information on alternatives to the risky journey, whether that be legal and safe migration channels or opportunities in source or transit countries to live a life of dignity, may also persuade some to consider alternatives.

Careful thought needs to go into what would constitute a reliable information source and what would make information trustworthy. Experience has shown that messaging, as has been the focus of previous information campaigns, does not work. Rather, focusing on what migrants want to know and what information they are searching for (for example, tracking the rumours that are circulating and rectifying them) yields greater results.

When such information is received in multiple forms (reinforcement) and from people that one trusts, it has an effect. Thus, in addition to official information sources and local media, it is important for the information to also spread via smugglers, employers, border officials and other migrants. It has been demonstrated that the various migrant ghettos in different countries in North Africa are linked and that communication flows exist between them. This implies that spreading the information through one of them will circulate it through all of them.

2. Community-led prevention and reintegration

The report has demonstrated that the victims, whether recruited at origin or along the way, are affected by poverty and inequality, and this has driven much of their decision making. When these individuals return back to origin, particularly if they have been forcibly returned, they will have to contend again with the same conditions that rendered them vulnerable to traffickers. Thus, to address trafficking in a meaningful way, the involvement of local communities is imperative, especially given that many of the networks operate through recruiters who are embedded in these communities. It is proposed to engage with traditional rulers, religious leaders, teachers, prominent families, social workers, local CSOs and the like in order to develop both victim-identification systems and victim-reintegration systems that are grass roots and community led.

3. Psycho-social support along the route

Psycho-social treatment for victims is paramount for their healing process, especially given that a large portion of the sample has been exposed to multiple forms of trafficking along the way. However, many of the migrants do not return home after their experiences of trafficking and exploitation, and instead continue trying. In the context of Libya, we have migrants being detained and tortured/trafficked, escaping and then being re-detained and re-traumatized. Sometimes they return to Niger for a short time to rest, and then attempt to travel to Libya again. This continuous cycle of abuse and exploitation with no professional help to move through the traumas not only makes the migrants more vulnerable to deceptive traffickers but also destroys their mental stability. Thus, it is recommended that psycho-social support be offered in transit countries more systematically, and more thought be put into how to target these profiles so that they can receive the support they require along the way.

4. Help national governments to take the lead

Help national governments take the lead in their countries through the establishment of national commissions for counter-trafficking. The Nigerian example can offer lessons learnt. The experience of Nigeria in creating a database of missing persons, in an effort to increase official data, could also be emulated. In the short term, the involvement of local CSOs is imperative so that they can help the government task force in the provision of services to victims, such as shelters and psycho-social support.

Counter-smuggling work at the national level (for example, in the case of Niger) must also be accompanied and informed by efforts to explicitly counter trafficking, lest driving smugglers deeper into the illicit economy leads to increased trafficking.

5. Combating corruption

Collusion between state officials and smugglers and state officials and traffickers is commonplace all over the region, and enables exploitation. Generally, when smugglers try to avoid border officials, it is not because of the fear of being reprimanded, it is because they do not want to share their profits. While there are a number of projects funded by the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) that aim to increase the capacity of states in the region to protect their borders, just one corrupt border official can destroy the best intentions. Thus, increasing border management capacity is ineffective without efforts to address corruption. Moreover, the study has shown that corruption at borders drives migrants to seek out smugglers, which then has the potential to place them in a vulnerable situation vis-à-vis trafficking in the Sahel. This suggests that addressing border corruption could decrease the demand for smuggling and the risk of trafficking. While corruption is already being addressed within many of the EUTF programmes, further efforts are recommended. A package of interventions could involve:

- improving internal oversight mechanisms: to monitor corrupt border officials;
- some accountability mechanisms: for example, declaration of assets;

- human-resource management policies: how often are officials rotated etc., reviewing salaries for border officials;
- undercover agents: who monitor what is happening at the borders;
- briefing migrants on corruption: find out where they paid bribes, provide incentives ‘if you cooperate with us, we will be willing to give you a work permit’ etc.

6. Ongoing research

The study has demonstrated that the typologies of victims and the factors that create vulnerability to trafficking are sensitive to exogenous factors, many of which shift rapidly and dynamically (for example, in the case of Libya and Morocco). Therefore, in order to develop targeted and effective protection solutions, regular and comprehensive surveys are required to track the impact of these shifts and to flag other exogenous factors that are driving changes which may be less overt.

G. APPENDICES

1. ADDITIONAL DATA

Figure 56: Irregular arrivals (land and sea) in Spain according to nationality, 2014–2019⁷⁵

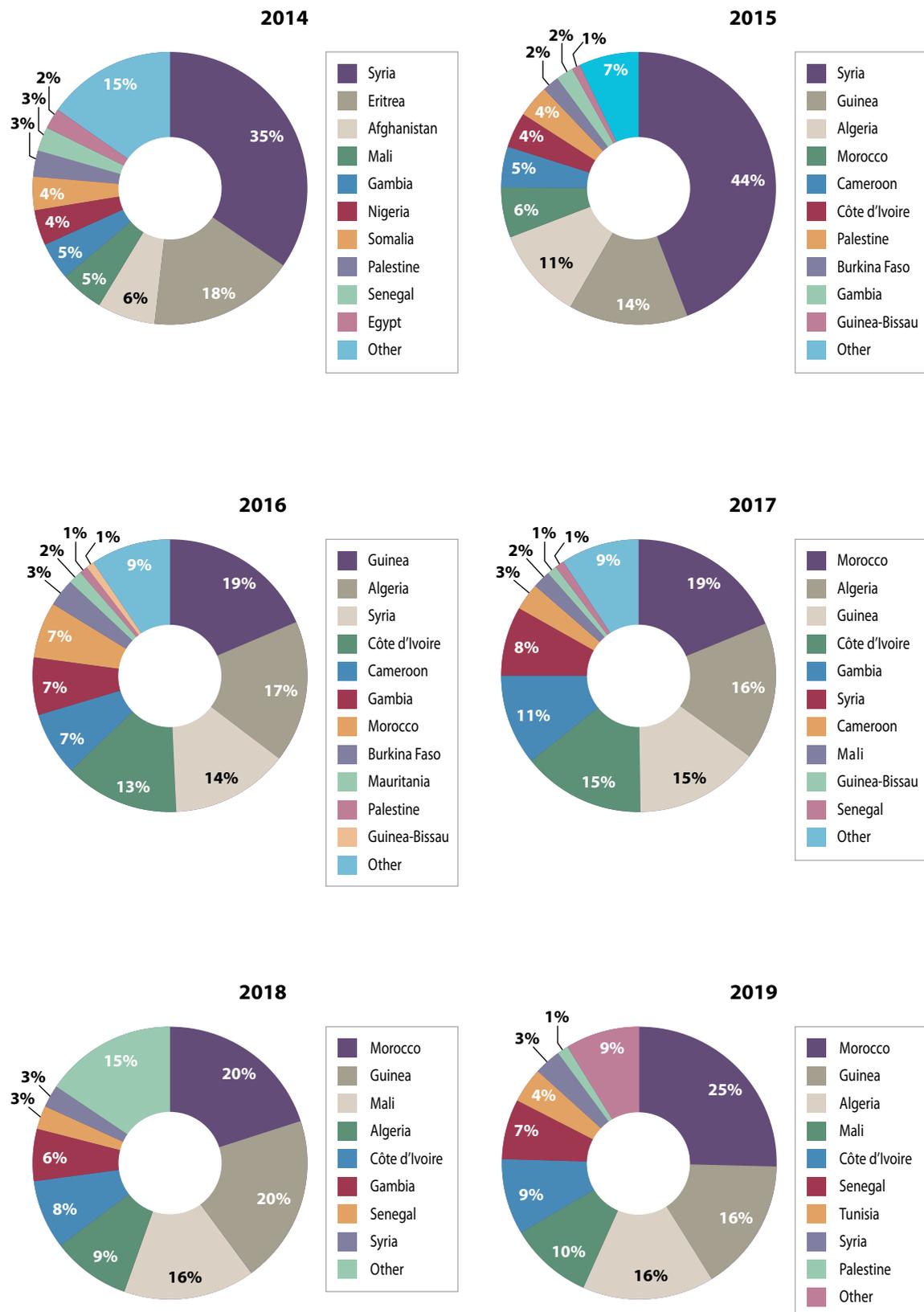
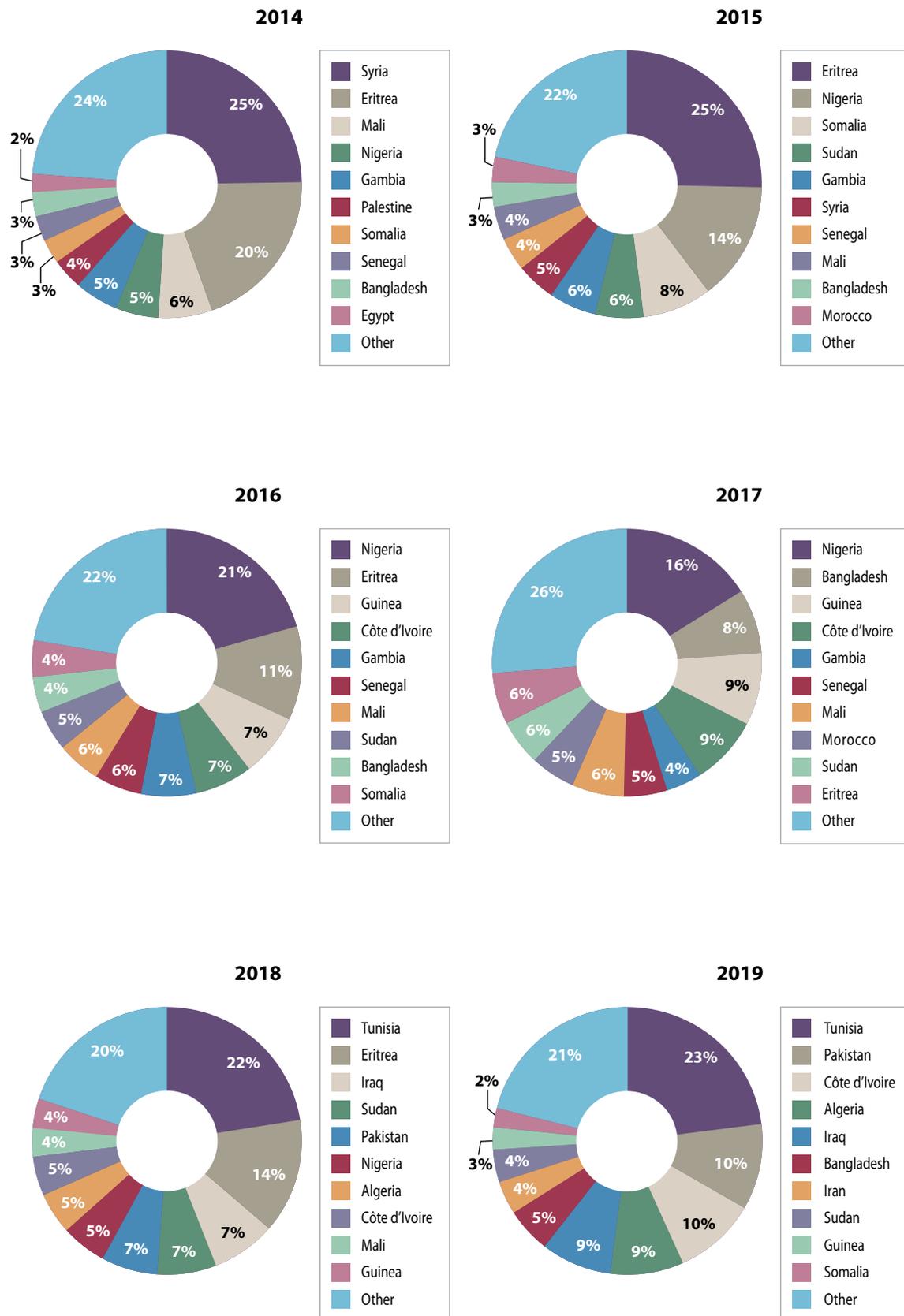


Figure 57: Irregular arrivals to Italy by year according to nationality⁷⁶



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8. The 'other' category refers to nationalities that have fewer than three respondents in an individual country; they are: Gambia, Chad, Congo, Sudan, Algeria, Central African Republic, Gabon, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mauritania, Equatorial Guinea, Botswana, Mozambique, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, South Sudan, Zambia and Madagascar.
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18. For explanation on how the trafficking score is calculated, please refer to section D.1.2, Prevalence of Trafficking.

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Arezo Malakooti



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