European Parliament

Intra-African Migration

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STUDY

Intra-African Migration

ABSTRACT

This study provides a broad perspective of the main trends in intra-African migration, emphasising its regional variations and complex drivers. The analysis is focussed on mapping and describing the structures – routes, hubs, settlements and sites of migration within the continent – as well as identifying the relevant infrastructures that facilitate these movements – ranging from road, railway and transportation networks to social connectivities and brokerage. The analysis not only of spaces and flows, but also of infrastructure within these networks shows that there is a multiplicity of interrelations, interconnections and interdependences that need to be captured and understood in order to address both the potential and problems for intra-African migration. By grasping the 'big picture' of intra-African migration, policies and activities generated by both the African Union and the European Union will be capable of providing comprehensively integrated and tailored responses. Recommendations are directed towards: improving knowledge of the many structures and infrastructures, along with their articulations and functioning; identifying the negative and positive aspects of migration conducive to sustainable development; and addressing the present Africa-Europe polarisation of views through diplomacy and monitoring.

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Abbreviations

ACP	Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AVR	Assisted Voluntary Returns
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
EUTF	Emergency Trust Fund
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
NDICI	Neighbourhood and International Development Cooperation Instrument
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIDA	Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa
REC	Regional Economic Communities
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TEPSA	Trans European Policy Studies Association
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Executive summary

This study on intra-African migration was produced within the Framework Service Contract EP/EXPO/DEVE/FWC/2019-01/LOT3/R/04 between the European Parliament and the Trans European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA). The study aims to establish a comprehensive overview of regional and international circulations and inter-relations, spaces involved in migratory dynamics and the infrastructures facilitating these movements. The **background** comprises existing efforts by both African and European countries to gain a better understanding of intra-African migration and its relation to inter-continental migration. In 2018, the African Union (AU) in its 'Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community' relating to the free movement of persons, right of residence and right of establishment outlined a set of general rules to facilitate migration between the AU member states. In particular, this Protocol noted that 'the free movement of persons in Africa will facilitate the establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) endorsed by the AU'. At the same time, international migration has become one of the EU's top priorities. With a rise in the number of migrants trying to enter the European Union, the EU established an Emergency Trust Fund in 2015 to address the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa. Furthermore, in the framework of the next MFF, the Commission proposes that out of the envisaged Neighbourhood and International Development Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), 10 % will be dedicated to migration-related activities. Within this context, understanding the dynamics and trends of intra-African migration, its relations to extra-African migration and the policies of both the EU and AU in this respect will contribute to the European Parliament's policy agenda.

The main **findings and conclusions** of this study are: firstly, that migration is best understood in relation to broader issues of circulation, settlement, livelihoods, adaptation, family ties and changing economic activities, which combine to form the big picture of intra-African migration; secondly, that African migration to Europe is best understood and approached as a continuation of intra-African migration; and thirdly, that urban centres are central nodes in intra- as well as extra-continental migration.

The broad perspective of intra-African migration comprises established routes and settlement patterns (structures) along with associated migration networks that extend throughout the continent's physical infrastructure, made up of: roads and railways; commercial services around transportation and economic activity; as well as social and cultural infrastructures. Having a clear perception of the intra-African big picture as well as how it links to extra-continental dynamics is crucial for being able to address both general and specific issues appropriately from a policy perspective. Although varied and mixed, intra-African migration is in general terms motivated by three main regional trends: labour migration in the west and central areas; movement of refugees in the eastern and southern areas; together with migration of skilled professionals from west and east to southern Africa. Regarding its relation to extra-continental migration, more than 50 % of African nationals in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries are from the north, whilst almost 75 % of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa remain within the continent. As a consequence of intense internal mobility, Africa is urbanising faster than any other region in the world, with much of this growth caused by intra-African migration.

This analysis confirms an oft-asserted divide between European and African perspectives, both of which are primarily informed by selective and normative agendas. More effort is made to identify and address the negative aspects of migration – trafficking of goods and people, illegal as well as irregular migration – than to understand how these are interrelated and dependent on a series of other, more positive dynamics. In the confrontation between European and African policy interests, the 'big picture' of structures and infrastructures that configure and support the continuity of intra-African migration tends to be lost, due to the common focus on regulating migration. Furthermore, the distinct agendas tend to push in different directions. From a European standpoint, the main preoccupations are with irregular migration towards Europe, while for Africa issues to do with continental free trade and free circulation are central.

The overarching **recommendation** of this brief is for decision makers to address, see and understand 'the big picture' in relation to intra-African migration in its many forms and to approach African migration towards Europe as an extension of intra-African migration. Such a comprehensive approach will facilitate knowledge-based tailored policy and action. Recommendations in this area are fundamentally towards increased knowledge that can provide the broad perspective of a **'big picture'** along with a deeper understanding of the structures and infrastructures of intra-African migration through mapping. In this way we can determine what is working and beneficial to countries and populations involved in migration against aspects that are negatively impacting lives, societies and economies. This will entail identifying not only the 'blind spots', but also what works for people and hence needs to be kept if not developed.

A second set of recommendations focusses on the **sustainable development agenda.** At a more strategic level, the EU should work closely with the AU in order to reframe migration management within a wide-ranging approach focused on security through to development. This should be in line not only with the Global Compact for Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration, but also the African agenda for investing in migration as a development resource. The EU Emergency Trust Fund currently directs development finance towards regions and sectors that are seen as central to producing irregular migration towards Europe. However, increased development tends to lead to more rather than less migration in the short and medium term and hence funds should be re-directed to regularising African migration through development-related incentives rather than security-linked restrictions. By amplifying the broad perspective to this analysis of both positive and negative aspects of intra-African migration, the EU and Africa can more comprehensively address sustainable development. A better understanding of the wider context and continual reconfigurations of migrant routes, settlement and aspirations is crucial in addressing not only the management of intra-African migration, but also existing and potential links between migration and sustainable development. Migration policy and practice could benefit from investments in enabling migration structures and infrastructures at subnational, national and regional levels in order to decriminalise irregular migration and bolster positive aspects, such as livelihood options for aspiring migrants. These positive aspects include more emphasis on livelihoods, youth empowerment, gender mainstreaming and urbanisation.

The third set of recommendations refers to the political and policy orientations of the EU and AU. Most importantly, a research-based approach to the migration-development nexus will allow decision makers to **address polarisation** in the two sides' views regarding migration through a frank and informed dialogue. Moving beyond 'one-size-fits-all' approaches to migration governance implies an acknowledgement that the global migration governance agenda remains dominated by domestic security concerns in the global North. Whilst this strategy may appease voters, it has generally failed to address the needs and expectations of active and aspiring migrants across the whole African continent. This line of thinking also implies a more whole-hearted dialogue with the African Union around its migration governance agenda. Within an informed **dialogue** with key African member states less concentrated on irregular migration, European support to Africa through the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa will better address the interlinkages between rural-urban mobilities, regional migration, labour and urbanisation at subnational, national, regional and continental levels.

Finally, more comprehensive and nuanced **knowledge production** around African migration should be encouraged and applied in policy making. This should take into consideration regional as well as national specificities and requirements, enabling more substantial monitoring of trends and transformations in intra-African migration along with cross-continental comparisons.

Specific recommendations within the areas mentioned are:

Recommendation 1: Embrace and communicate 'the big picture' on intra-African migration

Rather than a narrow approach, focussed on smuggling, trafficking and displacement, migration policy should be linked and inspired by other topics, most notably in relation to livelihoods, youth empowerment, gender mainstreaming and urbanisation.

Recommendation 2: Reframe migration management from security-centred to a development-focussed approach

Moving beyond 'one-size-fits-all' approaches to migration governance implies an acknowledgement that the global migration governance agenda remains dominated by domestic security concerns in the global North. While this policy may appease voters, it has generally failed to address the needs and expectations of active and aspiring migrants across the African continent. This line of thinking also implies a more whole-hearted dialogue with the African Union around its migration governance agenda. The EU and AU should elaborate their common interests in reframing migration policies from a security-centred to a development–focussed approach, in line with the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the *Global Compact for Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration*. Adherence to the UN Compact should come alongside the development approach as well as to the SDGs, namely SDG9 on sustainable infrastructure.

Recommendation 3: Invest in migration-conducive regulation and infrastructures

Migration policy and practice could benefit from higher investments in conducive intra-African migration structures and infrastructures that generate positive outcomes at subnational, national and regional levels, in order to decriminalise irregular migration and bolster livelihood options for aspiring migrants.

Recommendation 4: Link migration governance to urban development

Migration flows produce new settlement spaces and continually change those that already exist; the physical structures of migration support the movements and are simultaneously shaped by them. In that regard, urban centres are key nodes in intra-African migration structures. As a central field of intersecting ideas, research and policy design relating to urbanisation and rural-urban mobilities is vital to engage with the stepwise nature of intra-African migration. Both the European and the African policy and knowledge-production stakeholders should engage and fund urban development and urban planning that engages with the integration of newcomers into urban housing and livelihood sectors, as well as the role of urban centres as transportation hubs for onward migration.

Recommendation 5: Address the polarisation in African and European perspectives on African migration

Addressing intra-African migration in the current context of EU and AU policy is centred in concerns about migration management. There is a common perception in Africa and the EU that irregular migration together with all the negative aspects it implies need to be 'regularised'. As a starting point, an EU-Africa dialogue should explicitly address the current polarisation in African and European perspectives in regard to migration within Africa. As part of this dialogue, support should be given by both parties to the monitoring of current developments in freer intra-continent migration which is central to the African agenda. Assess if this is leading to positive results for African trade or to negative results, implying outwards migration and consequent brain-drain. Relevant knowledge about the outcomes of the continent's free movement policy can help redefine EU-Africa relations regarding migration policy over the coming decades. Moreover, it leads to increased appropriation and leadership of migration issues by African decision makers at national, regional, and continental levels.

Recommendation 6: Comprehensively identify and map all the variations in structures and infrastructures of intra-African migration

The European Parliament should encourage knowledge production and dissemination that account for the scale, scope, context and variability of intra-African migration, not only as a valuable resource in its own right, but also as a tool to inform decision and policy making regarding migration. Both academics and policy stakeholders need to develop comprehensive studies about intra-African migration that identify and describe the relations and interconnections between the circulation routes, the spaces integrated in these circulations as well as the social, economic and material infrastructures that support migration.

1   Introduction

Based on a perception that intra-African migration has been rising considerably more than inter-continental migration from Africa, the African Union (AU) has been developing instruments and systems to facilitate migration between its member states in order to improve labour circulation and trade relations on the continent. While this AU-led investment in African intra-continental networks grows, the European Union is increasingly concerned with international migration, especially from Africa. It has become one of the top policy priorities since the 2015 European refugee crisis, which led to establishment of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. It has been proposed that in the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2021-2027), 10 % of the Neighbourhood and International Development Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) amounting to approximately EUR 3 billion will be dedicated to migration-related activities. One of the primary focus areas is now identifying and addressing the root causes of irregular migration to Europe and the dynamics of displacement in Africa.

This report provides a broad overview of the current routes, infrastructures and mechanisms within intra-African migration with particular attention to the conditions that shape and enable onwards migration towards Europe or elsewhere. We emphasise particularly: the regional specificities of migration flows; the informal nature of most migration brokerage on the continent; the close connections between intra-African and cross-continental migration; and the centrality of urban centres as migration hubs. The report also analyses the main policy priorities from both African and European actors as well as the current and potential effects of climate change together with the covid-19 pandemic.

The study is based on: generalist migration literature and data; migration policy documents from both the EU and the AU; more specialised scientific literature and data on intra-African migration along with its relations to the European continent; and specialised literature about intra-African and international routes along with settlement and migration infrastructure. We also include a limited number of targeted interviews with academics and policy stakeholders from Europe and Africa.

For the purpose of this report, we take a point of departure in the broad definition of migration currently promoted by most international organisations. As articulated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), a migrant is defined as: 'any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her[/their] habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person's legal status; (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement are; or (4) what the length of the stay is' (IOM, 2019c). In order to distinguish between movements that lead to settlement in a new location and those that do not, mobility and circulation are used interchangeably to characterise movements that are not intended to lead to permanent or temporary resettlement. This definition acknowledges that migrants may dwell in places for longer than expected, despite their intentions, which necessarily leaves some conceptual slippage in regard to the idea of migration. Furthermore, although the broad definition of migration includes involuntary movements, we use the terms displacement and forced migration interchangeably to refer specifically to 'the movement of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence' (OCHA, 2004). Irregular migration is understood as migration that takes place outside laws, regulations or international agreements, for example by entering a territory without the appropriate visa or other forms of permit. Hence, intra-African migration is defined for the purposes of this study as any movement within or between African states away from the migrant's habitual place of residence, regardless of the causes or legal status involved, which is intended to lead to temporary or permanent resettlement. Out-migration, finally, is used to refer to migration away from the place of habitual residence and may therefore refer to movements: within a country; between nation-states within a region; and between continents.

Structure of the study

Following the introduction, Section 1 begins by providing a broad overview of the main trends in intra-African migration at continental and regional levels together with a brief historical background to the roles that migration has played. It also looks at the variety of actors involved, including their generational, class and gendered characteristics. This identification of the main trends and motivations of intra-continental migration is also briefly compared to the global trends and characteristics of international migration. This general overview includes reflections about the effects of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic on migratory dynamics.

Section 2 presents the study's core analysis, concentrating firstly on mapping and describing the routes and spaces of migration within the continent and their relations to international migration. Secondly, the predominant infrastructures for migration are identified and described. Section 3 discusses the priorities and impacts of African and European migration policy, emphasising interactions between EU and member state programmes relating to Africa.

2   Overall characteristics of intra-African migration

Intra-African migration remains a pillar of social and economic life, as it has been for centuries. In all regions of the continent, internal and international migration share important overlaps and similarities; they can be alternatives to each other, coexist or proceed sequentially, but above all they all constitute an important 'part of livelihood strategies by thousands of households in the poorer Global South' (Vullnetari, 2020: 54). Migration plays a 'critical role in securing some people's lives and livelihoods' and governance measures that make it more difficult, dangerous or expensive to invest in such strategies may act against development (Bakewell, 2020: 74). Migration and mobility constitute central aspects of social, cultural, political and economic life on the African continent

> 'Across Africa, migration is considered normal rather than aberrant'.
> *Interview with Professor Paul Nugent, August 2020*

(De Bruijn, van Dijk, & Foeken, 2001). Despite the increased volume of and attention towards off-continent international migration, intra-African migration is more significant in terms of scale as well as its effects on African livelihoods and outlooks. Although some recent studies indicate a decrease in intra-African migration compared with its historical trends, 'the majority of African migrants continue to move within the continent' (Flahaux & De Haas, 2016, p. 22), highlighting the effects of rural migration towards cities and smaller urban centres (Potts, 2009, 2013).

Figure I. International migrants as a percentage of total population (estimates)

Legend:
- 40 per cent or over
- 20 to less than 40 per cent
- 15 to less than 20 per cent
- 10 to less than 15 per cent
- 5 to less than 10 per cent
- 2 to less than 5 per cent
- Less than 2
- No data
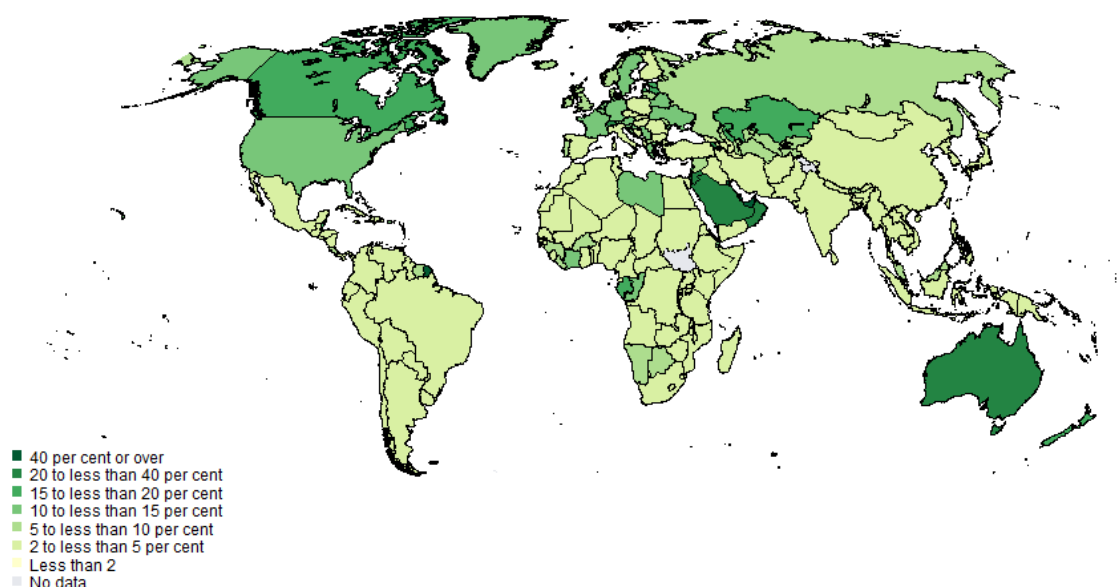
Source: UNDESA, 2019

The total number of African extra-continental migrants at mid-year in 2019 was 26.5 million, representing 2 % of the total African population (UNDESA, 2019). Studies have shown that more than half of all African migrants live in other African countries (European Commission, 2018). According to the IOM (2019), over 21 million African nationals were living in a neighbouring African country in 2019 (up from around 18.5 million in 2015) and the number of African nationals living in different regions within the continent was nearly 19 million in the same year (up from 17 million in 2015). Increased intraregional migration within the continent has influenced population changes, with countries such as Equatorial Guinea, Niger, Angola, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo witnessing noticeable growth. Although migration patterns may lead to social and demographic changes, migration within Africa has characterised the continent for centuries and continues to be an important feature of daily lives: 'the bulk of African

migration takes place within the continent, as people circulate within Africa, looking for economic opportunities' (Awumbila, 2017, p. 1). Most international migration, then, takes place within the continent (UNCTAD, 2018) and most intra-African migration is directed towards the immediate sub-region, particularly between neighbouring countries (Flahaux & De Haas, 2016; Schoumaker et al., 2015).

The growth of intra-African migration has been particularly significant since the beginning of this century: from 12.5 million in 2000 to 19.4 million in 2017 (UNCTAD, 2018). While all African countries experience out-migration, intra-African migration is concentrated in specific corridors, with 'South Africa, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Kenya and Ethiopia receiving most of the continent's migrants' (Awumbila, 2017: 1). The main migration corridors on the continent will be described below, but it is important to appreciate that even the major destination countries also experience out-migration, both within the continent and to other parts of the globe. This implies that intra-African migration should be understood in different terms than the classical 'push/pull' models might indicate: 'countries are no longer neatly classifiable as either the origin or destination of migrants but a mixture of these, and transit countries' (Adepoju, 2003: 38). Based on this caveat, two sub-Saharan **migration systems** stand out: a Southern African system, centred on South Africa as receiving migrants from most of the sub-region, and involving mostly labour related migration; and a West African system, based on the economic and sociocultural dynamism of the region, with no single country acting as a magnet (Agadjanian, 2016). Overall, the continent can be divided into three main **regions** characterised by different migration dynamics: Eastern and Southern Africa; West and Central Africa; and North Africa. These will be described in more detail later.

Within these broad geographical patterns, **rural-urban** migration, which is an important feature of internal migration in all countries, also involves international migrants who move from rural regions to urban areas of neighbouring countries. **Cross-border** mobility – permanent or seasonal border crossings, commuter circulations and so on – is at the heart of intra-African migration, mobilising and affecting large numbers of individuals and households (Nugent and Asiwaju, 1996). These movements, with all their variations and local specificity, critically support multi-local households with diversified **livelihoods** and lives.

> 'Regional integration initiatives and large-scale infrastructural movements have an impact on the lives and livelihoods of those who travel along transport corridors and inhabit border regions'.
> *Interview with Professor Paul Nugent, August 2020*

2.1 Historical dynamics of intra-African migration

African migration within the continent has a long history, shaping the way in which distinct regions have been populated and developed. This has played a key role for the continent's population ever since the early northward migrations, the Bantu expansions within Africa 2 000 years ago.

Before the colonial period, many societies also depended on different levels of mobility for their livelihoods. Rather than undertaking wage labour, people moved for: trade; seasonal agriculture; marriage; natural resource extraction; pastoral nomadism; and many other reasons. Since precolonial societies were less reliant on a physical infrastructure than, say, the European city-states, entire communities would occasionally move, for example in response to environmentally induced hardships or as a reaction to conquest and invasion. Of course, there are many notable exceptions to this dynamic across the continent, including: Timbuktu, Mali, which was founded as long ago as the 11th century BC, but flourished under the Mali empire in the 13th-16th centuries; Ife Ife, Nigeria, established during the same period; and what is known today as the ruins of the Great Zimbabwe, which were part of an influential trading town during the Shona kingdom of the 11th-15th centuries. But in order to appreciate the historical role of migration and mobility across the continent, it is important to understand that this was a key strategy for adaptation in many precolonial societies.

These large-scale movements inspired the notion that precolonial Africa was a 'frontier continent' (Kopytoff, 1987), meaning that such states were structured around their ability to remain adaptable, exploring new frontiers rather than being territorially anchored. Migration in this context could either be a deliberate strategy of conquest and expansion or a response to outside pressures from competing states. There could also be environmental factors, such as drought or floods. In some regions, the transatlantic slave trade caused the forced displacement of entire cohorts of young men and women between the 16th and 19th centuries, severely disrupting the social structures of those societies affected (Lucas, 2015).

> 'The historical patterns of migration continue, but are overlaid by other patterns that are of more recent provenance'.
> *Interview with Professor Paul Nugent, August 2020*

During the modern colonial period, which generally began in the late 19th century following the Scramble for Africa, colonial administrations used forced labour and taxation as means of compelling people to move within the new colonial territories, mainly to recruit labourers for infrastructure projects and plantation agriculture (Asiwaju, 1976; Cooper, 1996; Cross, 2013). The European occupation also famously led to the demarcation of territorial borders that were generally set by way of bargains between the colonial powers, with particular attention being paid to lucrative transportation routes from the interior towards the coast. As a case in point, the Gambia as a British colony was carved out of the surrounding French territory constituting present-day Senegal to ensure access to the River Gambia.

Independence from colonial rule in Africa left the vast majority of political borders unchanged, which is often argued to have been a central factor in many of the continent's internal and regional conflicts in the ensuing era. These conflicts led to forced migration on different levels, but independence also opened up new possibilities for intra-African migration, with the first steps being made towards regional collaboration and integration. Similarly, in Southern Africa the end of Apartheid in 1994 brought about new 'opportunities for internal and cross-border mobility and new incentives for moving' (Crush, Williams, & Peberdy, 2005, p. 1).

More recently, migration and particularly intra-African migration has been an 'integral part of labour markets and livelihoods' across the continent for at least the past century (Black et al., 2006, p. 2). Intra-African migration has been estimated to have increased from 6 million migrants in 1960, to 8 million 20 years later and to 10.5 million in 2000 (Flahaux & De Haas, 2016, p. 7). However, migration intensity, that is its rate based on the total population, has been decreasing over the years. The post-independence barriers and conditions for circulation within the continent (Flahaux & De Haas, 2016) might partly explain this. Independence, though, catalysed rural-urban migration across the continent, including migration to neighbouring countries' cities and urban agglomerations.

Independence also changed the patterns of African migration to other parts of the world: in the early 1960s, less than one in four of the estimated 8.1 million African migrants (23 %) lived outside of their native region and most of them (1.3 million or 16 %) moved to a European country (European Commission, 2018, p. 10). It is important to emphasise that in the post-independence era European migration management was far less restrictive towards African nationals, with student and labour mobility primarily restricted by the cost of travel and resettlement, rather than visa requirements.

2.2 Where are people going? Present-day routes and circulations

The African countries with the largest numbers of outgoing international migrants tend to be in the north. For incoming international migrants, South Africa remains the most significant destination country (IOM, 2019). Figures show that more than 50 % of African nationals in the OECD countries are from North Africa, while almost 75 % of migrants from sub-Saharan Africa remain within the continent, with very few of these crossing the Sahara Desert into North Africa (Lucas, 2015). Migration in Northern Africa, in other words, is markedly extra-continental compared with sub-Saharan trends.

According to UNCTAD (2018), in 2017 Eastern and Western Africa were the regions from which most African migrants **originated** as well as the main areas of **destination**.

Table I. Foreign-born residents in 2017

Region	Number	Most important destinations
Northern Africa	1.6 million	Libya, Egypt
East Africa	6.9 million	Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda
Western Africa	6.1 million	Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria
Central Africa	3.1 million	Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, Angola
Southern Africa	4.0 million	Republic of South Africa

Source: adapted from (European Commission, 2018: 13-14).

Four main regions shape the dynamics of migration within Africa. In these areas, migration takes place mostly within the region. As Awumbila summarises, '[i]n West Africa in particular intra-regional movements make up 84 % of migration movements making it the region with the largest intra-regional movements' (Awumbila, 2017, p. 1).

Figure II. Migration corridors in Eastern, Southern and West Africa
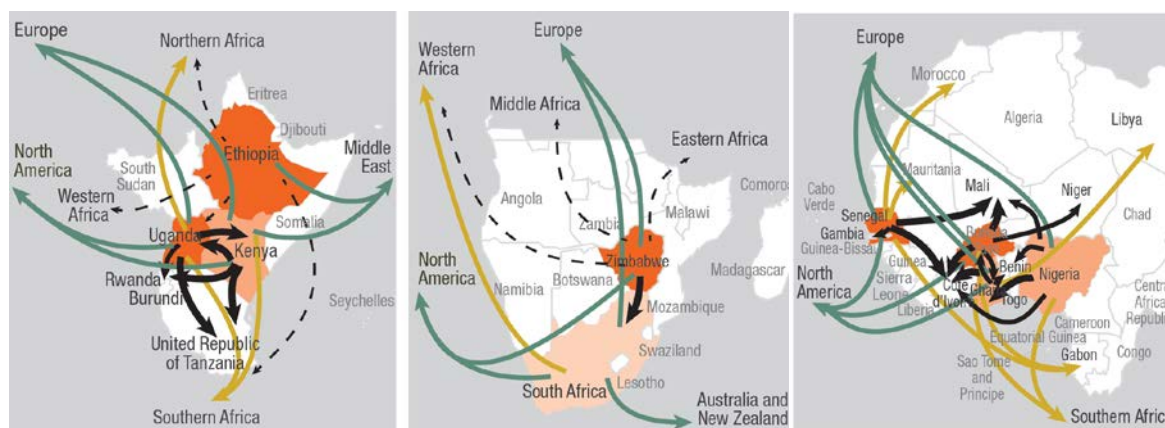
Source: UNCTAD, 2018.

The **main routes** for migration in Eastern and Southern Africa are: eastern routes to the Arab Peninsula and other countries in the Middle East; southern routes towards South Africa; and northern routes to North Africa, Europe and North America. Routes in the Horn of Africa are also significant, with a large number of people moving from or within the region (IOM, 2019). In West and Central Africa, the main routes link countries to the important transit hubs in Niger and Nigeria, while in North Africa the Central and Western Mediterranean routes are the most active, linking the continent to Europe. Before 2011, Libya was a destination for labour migration, but in recent times the country has become a major smuggling hub to Europe, with previously active passageways from Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia towards Egypt and Israel becoming less viable (IOM, 2019).

It is worth noting, though, that while the identification of routes and nationalities of people on the move in Africa and to other continents is somewhat feasible, individual trajectories are difficult to predict. Similarly, motivations and intentions may change over time (Cummings, Pacitto, Lauro, & Foresti, 2015).

Related to these routes, the 2018 UNCTAD report on migration (UNCTAD, 2018) identified fifteen key **migration corridors** on the continent. The top intra-African corridors in 2017 were: Burkina Faso-Côte d'Ivoire – with a circulation of 1.3 million people in that year, mainly linked to commercial agriculture and

informal trade – and Côte d'Ivoire-Burkina Faso (0.5 million people); the South Sudan-Uganda corridor (0.9 million people) and the Sudan-South Sudan (0.5 million people) were characterised by conflict-related forced migration; and the Mozambique-South Africa corridor (0.7 million people) was linked to labour migration in the mining, farm and domestic work sectors.

Most of the migration corridors within and from Africa are 'related to geographic proximity and historical ties, as well as displacement factors' (IOM, 2019, p. 58). In 2019, the most important corridors leading away from the continent were those connecting northern Africa to Europe, with the Algeria-France corridor accounting for approximately 1.6 million migrants and routes from Morocco to southern Europe surpassing 2.2 million. There was also a level of labour migration to the Gulf States. However, more than half of the main corridors were within Africa, with the corridor from Burkina Faso to neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire being the second largest overall. Migration from South Sudan to Uganda, Sudan and Ethiopia, motivated by large-scale conflict-related displacement, also stands out among the intra-African routes along with the Mozambique-South Africa corridor.

Figure III. Most salient African migration corridors, 2019
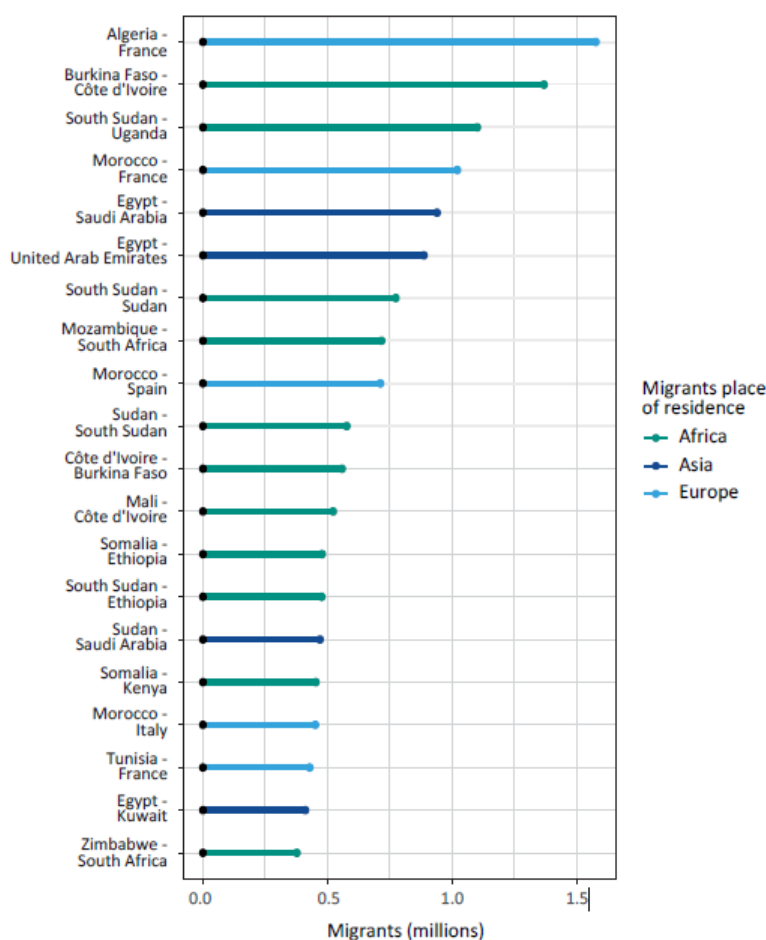
Source: (IOM, 2019, p. 58).

The IOM has identified the continent's main migration hubs as Abidjan, Johannesburg and Nairobi, with top destinations for intra-African migration being South Africa, Côte d'Ivoire and Uganda. Migration hubs, though, can be found along all routes connecting the origin and destination areas.

Figure IV. Major routes of migration in Africa

Source: [Africa Centre for Strategic Studies](), 2019
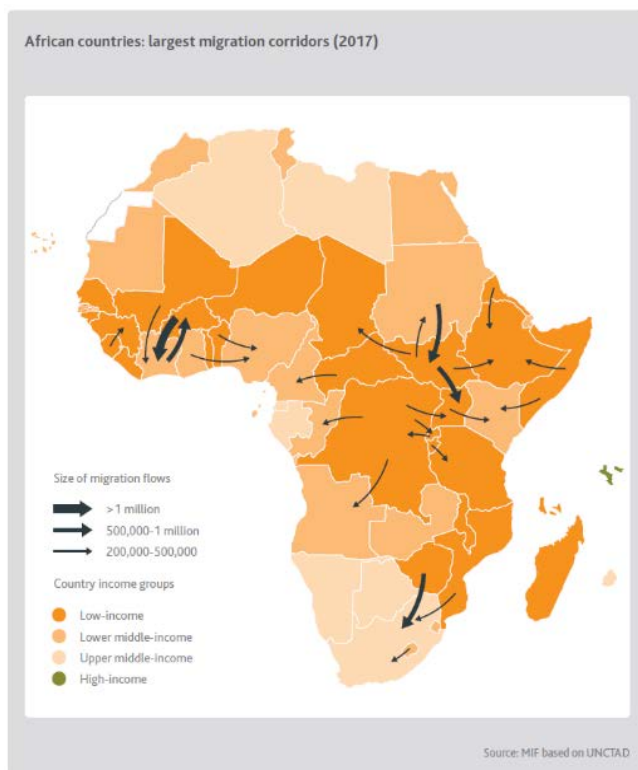
Source: Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2017

While major routes and passages dominate the bulk of migration and mobility on the continent, meso- and **micro-scale** dynamics are equally important in people's everyday lives. These formal and informal micro-regions differ from the macro-regions and interstate formal frameworks (Söderbaum & Taylor, 2008), although they are interconnected. At the local level, migration and mobility is intense throughout the continent, especially in relation to cross-border circulations and rural-urban connections. The characteristics of such local intra-African migration involve a variety of actors that shape these local dynamics (Söderbaum & Taylor, 2008). Porous borders, which characterise the continent, are an important factor maintaining the intense international and regional migration and circulation, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa (Lucas, 2015). In certain regions cross-border mobilities and passing specific border-crossing points are more intense. Rural-urban migration takes place throughout the continent, constituting the main driver of African urbanisation and urban growth.

'As AFRIGOS is seeking to publicise, some of the most rapid urban growth is occurring in border regions, which reflects the fact that a large number of African capitals are located in or close to a border, but also the economic dynamism of borderlands that tend to suck in migrants. Abandoning a purely national lens and getting to grips with the realities of border urbanism is something that ought to be a priority for researchers and policymakers alike'.
Interview with Professor Paul Nugent, August 2020

Figure V. Border points and stops in Africa

Map of OSBP in Africa

Source: Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), 2020

The African continent is urbanising faster than any other region in the world, with much of this growth caused by intra-African migration.

Figure VI. Urbanisation prospects in Africa
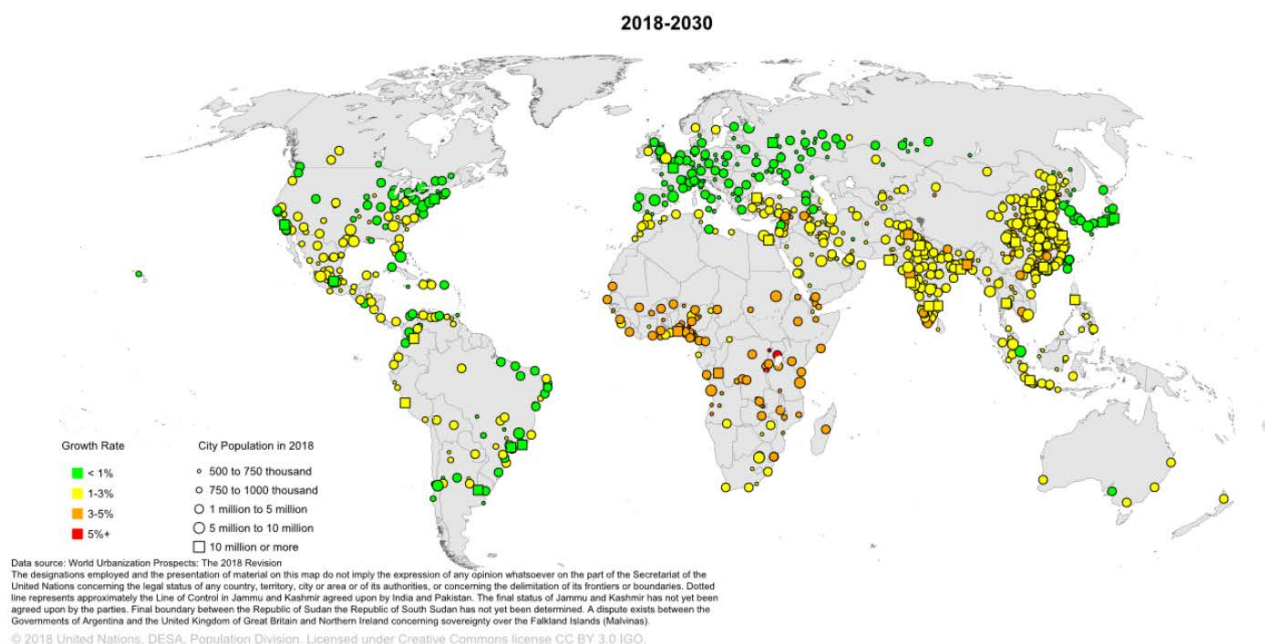
© 2018 United Nations, DESA, Population Division. Licensed under Creative Commons license CC BY 3.0 IGO.

Source: [UNDESA](), 2019

2.3 Recent developments: effects of climate change and the Covid19 pandemic

Climate change concerns have increasingly contributed to analyses of migratory dynamics, particularly in regard to the links between climate change, conflict and migration (Abel et. al., 2019). There is widespread consensus that climate change and extreme weather events will play a key role in driving international migration, particularly from affected regions to neighbouring countries. Africa is a part of the world which is most likely to be affected by climate change, due to the combination of strong impact and low adaptation capacity (Klepp, 2017). African regions where the effects are expected to be the most severe are the populated arid regions in the Maghreb, Egypt, Sudan, parts of Southern Africa and the Great Lakes region of Eastern Africa (European Commission, 2018: 28). High temperatures are expected to reach extreme levels (above 100 days per year), particularly in Central and Eastern Africa, hitting the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, Sudan, Rwanda and Burundi the hardest. Countries projected to be affected by consecutive dry days and particularly extreme conditions are Egypt, Zambia, Algeria and Malawi (European Commission, 2018, p. 29). Climate-related phenomena can act as both drivers and inhibitors of migration within and out of Africa, depending on the intensity of shocks or, for instance, the types of economic activities in which the affected countries are engaged and how dependent they are on climate conditions (Wesselbaum, 2020). However, it is important to note that environmental push factors are hard to disentangle from other migration influences.

Environmental factors are gradually being integrated into migration management: prevention, preparedness and response to displacement; border management; labour migration; governance and integration; as well as return and reintegration (IOM, 2019). Understanding the relation between climate change and migration implies recognising that environmental factors have always been and will continue to be a cause of migration, that they are interconnected with other factors and that the migration trends resulting from them take many forms (IOM, 2019). This applies to both regional migration within the continent and internal migration within African countries. It includes permanent or temporary migration, affecting the most vulnerable and the poor in particular (for an illustration, see case study in box, adapted from Tschakert and Tutu, 2010, p. 6). According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the most acutely impacted spheres of human life are food production, livelihoods, health and economics, which all directly motivate mobility. Climate change is projected to increase displacement, particularly in developing countries. However, contexts are varied and the influence of direct climate causes on mass migration from Africa towards Europe in the near future is expected to be limited (Borderon et al, 2018). Primarily, there is no evidence that environmental change is the sole cause of migration. Moreover, demands from the variety of countries and cases involved have contextualised analyses: different types of migration related to livelihoods are affected in different ways; demographic characteristics such as age, gender, economic status and education shape climate-induced migration patterns differently; the nature and duration of environmental pressures lead to varied migratory outcomes; the variety and structure of social networks or kinship ties, for instance, shape climate-induced migration; and climate-motivated migration can also be a result of more attractive conditions in destination locations (Borderon et al, 2018). By contrast, the current outbreak of **COVID-19** has directly affected global mobility, primarily through travel disruptions and restrictions. An IOM report from June 2020 (IOM, 2020) attests that since the beginning of the pandemic, restrictions related to travel and entry in African countries have grown sharply to the point where practically all states are imposing restrictive access measures to travellers coming from other countries or regions and only a few are establishing controlled entry systems. The impacts of these restrictions are more significant in West and Central Africa, as shown by IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) (IOM, 2020b). The region recorded a 39 % decrease in migration flows between

> 'We […] found environmental factors to be associated with the north–south migration in Ghana. Most respondents, who were mainly farmers before they migrated, indicated that their low earnings were further depleted by poor yields that they felt resulted from climatic variability and change. As one respondent remarked '… my family members are farmers, and in that year (when he migrated), we had poor yield due to prolonged dry season. So, we had no money for anything else except food for home consumption. Hence, I had to travel.' Respondents reported that rainfall was reduced and irregular, and the onset of rainfall was increasingly difficult to predict, resulting in significant crop failure. Migrants also complained that the quality and fertility of soil had depreciated, and that they attributed it to persistent farming on the same piece of land for a long period of time'.

> 'One of the topical questions regarding COVID-19 is about how it will affect migration, especially the desire to migrate'
> *Interview with Oliver Bakewell, August 2020*

> 'Global terrorism has compelled Europe to adopt a protectionist (Fortress Europe) approach to migration from Africa and the COVID-19 pandemic has compounded this situation adding the health threat'.
> *Interview with Khabele Matlosa, September 2020*

> 'There is a strong (temporary) reduction in migrant smuggling both within Africa and then as a consequence to Europe, which however quickly picked up again when strict COVID-19 measures were lifted in Africa. Post-COVID-19 economic recovery both in Europe and in Africa but also in other migrant hosting countries (e.g. Middle East) will influence opportunities and challenges for migrants and hosting communities and likely influence migrant destination choices'.
> *Interview with Anna Knoll, September 2020*

January and May 2020 at key transit points across the region, followed by a subsequent rise. These restrictions left at least 21 000 migrants stranded throughout the region, including those in quarantine and transhumant herders who regularly cross borders, and brought about the imposition of conditions for ongoing return and reintegration programmes. Over eight million displaced people in the region experienced worsening living conditions, principally in terms of their already vulnerable livelihoods, access to healthcare, water and sanitation facilities, as well as overcrowding and poor shelter. Along the Eastern Corridor migration route, overall migrant arrivals in Yemen from the Horn of Africa decreased by 43 % between June and July and over 65 % in relation to arrival trends between January and July in 2019 (IOM, 2020c). Deportations from South Africa and Botswana, by contrast, constitute an ongoing key concern in the southern region since the pandemic there has become a valid reason for evicting hundreds of mainly illegal migrants. Reflecting the deteriorating conditions for migrants around the world, remittances from African migrants living abroad are projected to decrease dramatically and, as argued by the UN, people on the move are particularly vulnerable to the pandemic's effects, which they characterise as three crises rolled into one: a health crisis; a protection crisis; and a socio-economic crisis (United Nations 202, p. 4).

In these ways, intra-African migration has already been impacted by climate change in regions affected by extreme environmental phenomena – droughts, flooding, rising sea levels – and the COVID-19 restrictions on circulation. It is likely that migrants will continue to suffer the combined consequences of these recent developments. Climate change impacts are predicted to continue and potentially increase in the foreseeable future, while in a more optimistic scenario the immediate COVID-19 effects will be relieved by a new vaccine over the next few years.

> 'The COVID-19 pandemic is […] changing migration trends. For instance, in the East African community, the circulation in the corridor to the middle-east has been affected' … 'The start of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), planned for June, was postponed due to the coronavirus and is only expected to start in early 2021'.
> *Interview with Dr. Linda Adhiambo Oucho, September 2020*

2.4 Who migrates? Some characteristics of intra-African migrants

At the global level, migrants are predominantly male, aged between 15 and 34 and come from households with relatively higher levels of education (FAO, 2017). The average share of **women** in international migration within the African continent was 47 % in 2017 and no significant changes in terms of this proportion have been registered in recent years (UNCTAD, 2018). While there has been a tendency towards an increased percentage of female migrants from 1960 to 2010, these regional differences persist, with the migration of women in West and North Africa being markedly lower than in Central and Southern Africa, which may be linked to stigma associated with unaccompanied female migration (Lucas, 2015).

In terms of **education**, studies point to low levels among intra-African migrants, with the exception of some highly skilled migration towards South Africa (Lucas, 2015). Discussions around the problems of 'brain gain', 'brain circulation' and 'brain waste' are central in the debates about migration not only out of Africa, but also within the continent. While South Africa attracts the highest numbers of skilled migrants, other countries on routes to other attractive international destinations also serve as a first step in migration of highly-skilled migrants. Brain drain from Africa to the OECD countries is 'one of the highest in the world' (Lucas, 2015, p. 1503). These figures should, though, be measured against the long-term impacts of remittances and 'brain circulation' (Patterson, 2007) on household income and educational levels. Education, often related to class and poverty levels, tends to be an important factor for decisions to migrate both for the poor and less educated migrants seeking the means to cope with livelihoods, and for those with higher educational standards aspiring for career improvements. Africa remains one of the (demographically) youngest continents in the world, which continues to influence the likelihood of migration. In 2019, people aged 15-24 made up 19.3 % of the population, while those aged 25-64

represented 36.7 %. Migrants' average age is particularly low among inter-continental migrants in Africa, when compared with other continents.

Figure VII. African young population growth
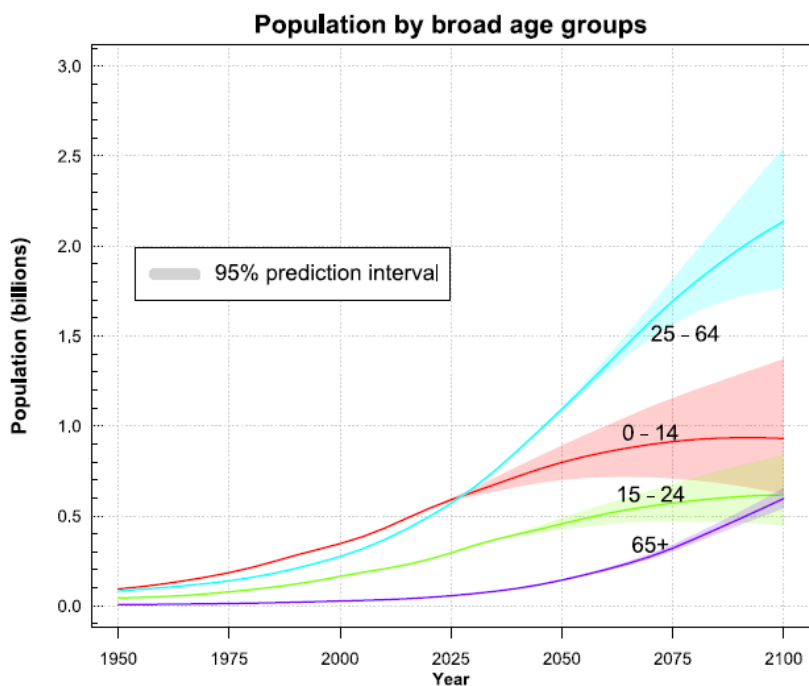
Source: UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs, 2019

Source: UNDESA, 2019

> 'One important trend is the feminisation of migration. Evidence suggests that independent transnational, intra-African female migration is highly prevalent, and that women are increasingly migrating alone and as heads of households'.
> *Interview with Aissata Kane, IOM, Sept 2020*

Despite the importance of Africa's young population, the general characteristics of migrants within the continent are varied – as demonstrated by age pyramids for the three African regions above – and closely related to the type of migration, the demography in countries of origin and gender-related migration dynamics.

2.5 Why do people move? Drivers and aspirations of intra-African migration

Intra-African migration, although varied and mixed, is shaped by three main regional trends: labour migration in the west and central areas; movement of refugees in the eastern and southern areas; and migration of skilled professionals from west and east to southern Africa (Adepoju, 2019). That said,

the **drivers** of migration are varied, often multi-directional and/or sequential, which shows how 'unfinished' simple correlational conclusions often are. Push-pull explanations – with poorer countries and conditions pushing migrants away and richer having the reverse effect – are therefore too simplistic. Looking at household strategies, networks and culture provide better perspectives of what moves migrants in African contexts. In addition to economic drivers of migration, especially inequality, social factors are also influential, such as: education and family obligations; political

> 'Migration is part of life and not just the result of poverty. People move to work, to meet others, for adventure' 'The focus regarding migration in Africa has been on exceptional and problematic migration, like on refugees, and not on the preponderant undocumented and uncounted everyday movements'
> *Interview with Oliver Bakewell, August 2020*

and security/conflict-related issues; and environmental considerations, including natural hazards or land productivity. All are key to understanding the drivers of intra-African migration.

In more structural terms, a recent study (European Commission, 2018) identified elements that shape migratory flows and make migration more likely[1]. Some factors were particularly important for intra-African migration: the existence of diasporas in receiving countries – this involves reuniting with family members, marriages and support in finding economic opportunities; the intensity of trade relations between countries and regions; income differentials; the share of urban population in the country of origin, which stimulates migration to other urbanised and more prosperous regions; and the geographical distance between the country of origin and the country of destination, with a propensity for moving to neighbouring countries.

Regarding **aspirations**, they constitute an important part of migration stories. The same European Council study found that the desire for moving to another country for an extended period or permanently among Africans aged 15 or older was very significant: between 24 % and 30 % of respondents. But while the aspirations are quite high, the study found that on average only 1 % actually took concrete steps to prepare for migration and as little as 0.12 % of Africa's total population actually migrated outside of the continent (European Commission, 2018, p. 17). Migration is then to be understood as essentially 'a function of people's aspirations and capabilities to migrate' (Flahaux & De Haas, 2016: 4), underscoring that migrant aspirations must be considered in relation to the likelihood of those intentions ever being realised (De Haas, 2010; Carling, 2002).

A recent European Union study has identified distinct African migration patterns, both within the continent and connected to the rest of the world (European Commission, 2018). The former involves migration from

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[1] It should be mentioned that this study (conducted from 2010 to 2015) was based on a limited number of migrants and cannot, therefore, be said to be representative of the continent's migration dynamics as a whole.

Western Africa to neighbouring countries with migrants falling into different categories. They are mostly temporary workers and long-term labour migrants from Central Africa heading to neighbouring countries for work and refuge. There are some from Southern Africa moving to neighbouring countries who again comprise mainly temporary workers and long-term labour migrants. The motivations for migration, though, are complex, often contradictory and change over time for each individual migrant.

Poverty has long been highlighted as the main cause of migration from and within Africa. It may seem reasonable to assume that people leave to seek better opportunities elsewhere and that those with the fewest opportunities should be the most likely to migrate. However, this logic has been widely criticised. Rather than showing a strict correlation between poverty and migration, data from a variety of historical and geographical cases actually show that (up to a point) higher levels of economic and human development are associated with higher overall levels of migration (De Haas, 2010). This dynamic, often referred to as the 'migration hump', implies potential migrants require a certain level of resources to actually move and that as individuals or households increase their level of development, they are likely to continue migrating until they reach an 'income threshold' at which the potential gain of migrating is deemed too small. This potential gain depends on the income disparities between sending and receiving contexts, which means that as long as wages or other sources of income are significantly higher in the receiving context, people are likely to continue migrating, even when they reach relatively high levels of income in the sending contexts (UNDP, 2019). In other words, this dynamic implies that inequality rather than poverty should be seen as a main driver of migration (Bjarnesen, 2020).

> 'Intra-African migration is an important driver of economic and social development and structural transformation on the African continent. Seeking employment and other socio-economic reasons are the main drivers of migration across Africa'.
> *Interview with Aissata Kane, September 2020*

Labour migration stems from individuals' and families' efforts to improve economic conditions, but this does not necessarily imply that all labour migration is the result of poverty. While labour migration and migration related to trade and other economic activities plays a crucial role in migrant livelihoods, the number of African migrant workers is not as significant as it is in other continents.

Figure VIII. Migrant workers in the world

DISTRIBUTION OF MIGRANT WORKERS
IN 2017, BY REGION

Breakdown of migrant workers

41.6% Female   **58.4%** Male   **8.3%** 15 - 24 years old

164 million migrant workers (ILO estimates)

23% Northern America
32% Europe
2.7% Latin America & the Caribbean
7.9% Africa
7.1% SE Asia & Pacific
13.3% Asia*
13.9% Arab States

*Asia includes: Central & Western Asia, Eastern Asia and Southern Asia

● 1 MILLION migrant workers

Source: ILO, 2018.   © IOM's GMDAC 2019

In 2014, out of 15.9 million African migrants, 8.3 million were migrant workers (4.7 million male and 3.6 million female) according to the African Union Commission (AUC, 2017). The estimated number of nearly 13 million migrant workers in 2017, though, is much higher than the number of refugees in sub-Saharan Africa – 6.3 million in 2019 (UNHCR, 2019) – which underlines the importance of labour- and trade-related migration compared to forced migration, commonly perceived as the main cause for mobility on the continent.

An important characteristic of labour migration within the continent is that it is not fully and systematically recorded. Both voluntary and regular labour migration, as well as involuntary and irregular migration, fall outside most of the existing monitoring systems. Human trafficking for labour - especially child labour - are central concerns on the continent, which makes irregular migration in general a focus of intra-African migration management. In Eastern and Southern Africa, it involves a large number of people – migrants, smugglers together with those supporting circulation locally and internationally – with the main destinations being the Middle East, Europe and Southern Africa. While many smuggling networks are based in the Horn of Africa, countries such as Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania are largely transit countries. In the south, intraregional irregular migration is especially prevalent from Zimbabwe and Mozambique to South Africa, as well as from other countries outside the sub-region, namely from the Horn

of Africa (IOM, 2019). In West and Central Africa, despite the ECOWAS Protocol on the Free Movement of People and Goods, smuggling is also widespread, particularly because identity documents are scarce. Niger is an important country of transit for migration to Europe and a major smuggling hub in the region. Being a key hub of transit activity for migrants originating from many countries to the south, the North African sub-region faces an immense challenge related to irregular migration and here the smuggling networks are becoming increasingly well organised.

Forced migration within and from Africa continues to be a major factor, with refugees and asylum seekers mostly migrating to neighbouring countries. In 2016, there were some 5.3 million registered international refugees in Africa (European Commission, 2018), with Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya and the Democratic Republic of the Congo hosting the highest numbers. Additionally, 12.6 million Africans were internally displaced in 2016, because of political violence and civil wars (European Commission, 2018, p. 14). The main events affecting African forced migrations over the past decade were, according to the UNHCR (2019): South Sudan's displacement crisis, which followed its independence in 2011; the crisis in Africa's Sahel region, where conflict and climate change are endangering many communities; conflict in the Central African Republic; internal displacement in Ethiopia; together with renewed outbreaks of fighting and violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (UNHCR, 2019).

Table II. Refugees in the world in 2019

Table 1 | **Refugees, people in refugee-like situations and Venezuelans displaced abroad by UNHCR regions** | 2019

UNHCR regions	Start-2019				End-2019				Change (total)	
	Refugees	People in refugee-like situations	Venezuelans displaced abroad	Total	Refugees	People in refugee-like situations	Venezuelans displaced abroad	Total	Absolute	%
- East and Horn of Africa and Great Lakes	4,388,900	3,700	-	4,392,600	4,388,700	-	-	4,388,700	-3,900	-0.1%
- Southern Africa	777,500	-	-	777,500	755,300	-	-	755,300	-22,200	-2.9%
- West and Central Africa	1,164,100	-	-	1,164,100	1,204,700	-	-	1,204,700	40,600	3.5%
Total Africa*	6,330,500	3,700	-	6,334,200	6,348,700	-	-	6,348,700	14,500	0.2%
Americas	534,800	108,800	2,606,500	3,250,100	592,800	108,800	3,582,200	4,283,800	1,033,700	31.8%
Asia and Pacific	4,141,600	54,600	-	4,196,200	4,133,700	48,700	-	4,182,400	-13,800	-0.3%
Europe	6,402,500	28,100	-	6,430,600	6,543,500	27,000	-	6,570,500	139,900	2.2%
Middle East and North Africa	2,649,800	42,900	-	2,692,700	2,602,400	40,300	-	2,642,700	-50,000	-1.9%
Total	20,059,200	238,100	2,606,500	22,903,800	20,221,100	224,800	3,582,200	24,028,100	1,124,300	4.9%

*Excluding North Africa.

Source: UNHCR, 2019.

South Sudan produced the highest number of refugees throughout Africa in 2018 and ranked third in the world, producing 2.3 million refugees, most of them moving to Uganda (IOM, 2019, p. 59). Somalia produced the second highest number of refugees on the continent and the fifth highest in the world, with the majority hosted in Kenya and Ethiopia. Other significant numbers of refugee populations originate in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic and Eritrea. Uganda is the dominant destination, hosting around 1.2 million refugees in 2019, with significant numbers also hosted by Sudan and Ethiopia. The Central African Republic had the highest proportional rate of internal displacement in the same year (11 %) (IOM, 2019). Countries with large numbers of internal displacements (the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia or Somalia) simultaneously host and produce significant numbers of refugees and asylum seekers, while countries such as Mozambique and Zimbabwe have experienced climate related displacements in 2018 (IOM, 2019).

2.6 Comparisons with trends and characteristics of other international migration

While research and literature on intra-African migration 'remains scarce and disconnected from the body of international migration research in other settings' (Agadjanian, 2016, p. 407), there are key elements that link it to global trends. One of most salient features of African migration is the centrality of conflict-related movements, an aspect similar to that found in other parts of the world. For Africa, as elsewhere, labour migration dominates, involving short and long-distance mobility, in many cases through well-established routes and infrastructures. Regarding both forced and voluntary migration, the irregular character of migration is prevalent worldwide, rendering certain border-crossings, travel or integration as dangerous endeavours. Furthermore, intra-African migrants share the burden of all international migrants in facing the long-term effects of climate change and more immediate effects from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table III. Summary of the trends and key elements of African migration

Region	Key features
Eastern and Southern Africa	- Conflicts and violence led to the displacement of millions - Have long been major destinations for migrants from within Africa and other regions - Intraregional migration is also driven by the growing demand for labour - High numbers of irregular migrants - Environmental change and disasters influencing human movement and displacement - Xenophobic attacks on migrants and the emergence of new armed groups in Southern Africa have contribute to increased displacement back to countries of origin
West and Central Africa	- Significant intraregional migration facilitated by visa-free movement among the ECOWAS, the relatively small sizes of many countries and the strong ethnic networks along with labour mobility - Irregular migration remains prevalent - Conflict and violence shaping internal or cross-border displacement - Environmental changes impacting human livelihoods and mobility
North Africa	- Migration to Europe and Gulf States continues to be central and dominant in this region - Major migrant transit area and key hub facing numerous challenges associated with irregular migration to Europe - Considerable migrant smuggling routes to, within and from North Africa Hosting notable populations of international migrants, including refugees - Conflict and violence contribute to displacement

Source: (IOM, 2019).

Therefore, intra-African migration is generally aligned with international trends at continental levels. International migration increased globally in 2019 (272 million migrants, 3.5 % of the world's population), with the number of migrant workers rising in the lower income countries. As a result, international remittances from African migrants grew. It is worth noting the importance of intra-African remittances on development and livelihoods, which play a significant role in neighbouring economies. This is particularly true for remittances from Côte d'Ivoire (with a 2018 outflow of EUR 780 million) and from South Africa (with a 2018 outflow of EUR 934 million) to their neighbouring countries (Migration Policy Institute, 2020). Furthermore, as in the rest of the world, there are many refugees (the global refugee population was 26 million at the end of 2019, according to UNCHR); a high number of internally displaced persons due to

violence and conflict (45.7 million globally); and stateless persons (4.2 million globally). Sub-Saharan Africa hosts more than 6.3 million or 25 % of the world's refugees and 18.5 million IDPs. In this regard, the continent is carrying a disproportionate share of the world's displaced people. Overall, as elsewhere, African migration is characterised by a variation of migration patterns from region to region, with migration being a key determinant of population change and displacement a major feature in some regions (IOM, 2019).

3 How do people move? Structures and infrastructures of intra-African migration

Our analysis of intra-African migration recognises the centrality of existing and continually adapting structures and infrastructures that support and maintain mobilities. As understood here, **structures** are the routes, passages, transit and provisional settlement locations of migrants along with their interconnectivities. **Infrastructures** are facilitators and intermediaries, transportation and circulation brokers, lodging facilities at transition residences, transit economies, transnational relations, transportation infrastructure and networks, as well as sociocultural or even humanitarian migration facilities. Both the structures in place and the infrastructures supporting them are simultaneously a product and a producer of migration, both configuring and being configured.

3.1 How is intra-African migration shaped?

Migration and mobility are key elements in regional relations that link rural and urban areas, influencing and shaping their economies (Baker, 2012). Both regular and irregular forms of movement are shaped in relation to specific spaces of origin, transit and destination, which are often existing agglomerations, but also those that emerge as a result of these circuits (Udelsmann Rodrigues, 2020).

Figure IX. Trans-Saharan trafficking

Source: https://www.politico.eu/article/the-smuggling-capital-of-africa-agadez-niger/
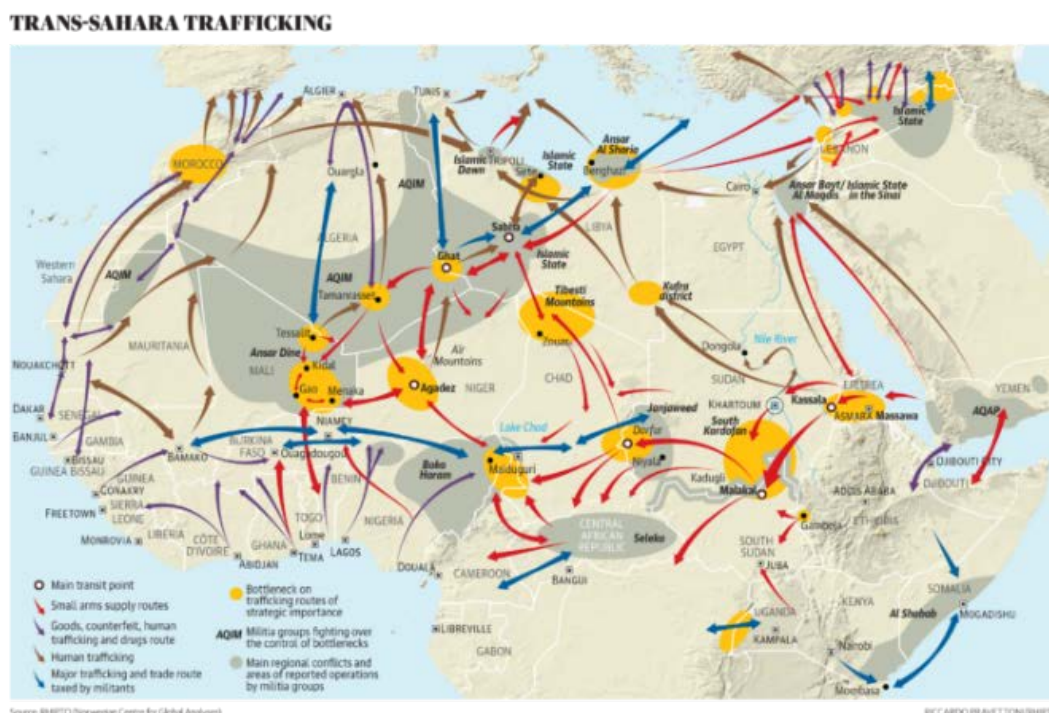
Studies of routes within the continent have identified not only key **origin and destination** locations, but also numerous **migratory hubs**, connected to both regular and irregular circulation. These studies and assessments have also shown that transit hubs may become destinations for migration over time and that

small towns along the migration routes can expand to accommodate significant numbers of people. Border towns stand out throughout the continent as important migration hubs, as do other urban spaces connected to transportation nodes, such as ports and towns within road and railway systems.

Figure X. Origin and destination of migration in the world
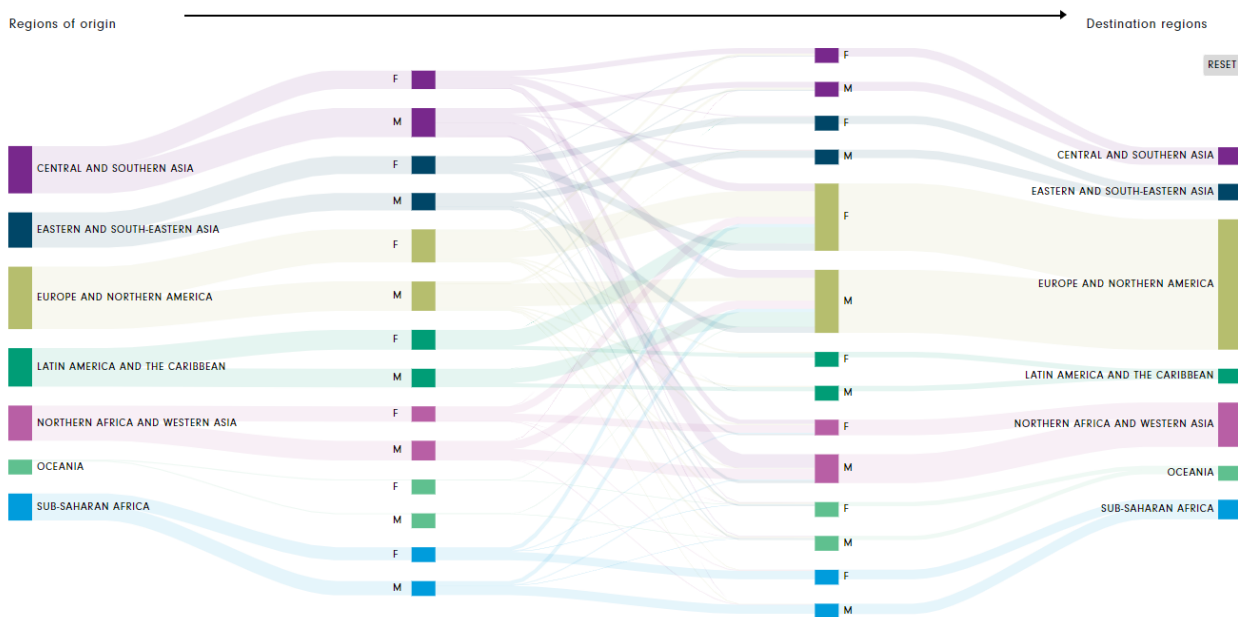
Source: UN DESA (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs). 2019. "International Migrant Stock 2019." Accessed 12 December 2019.
Note: Data on international migrant stock are presented in the 2019-2020 edition of Progress of the World's Women using UN DESA 2017 figures. This interactive has been updated to reflect UN DESA 2019 figures. Destination figures does not include data from 'Other North' and 'Other South' as those cannot be assigned to a particular geographic region.

Source: UNWOMEN, 2020

Figure XI. West and North African urban migration networks

Figure 1. Migration Routes in West and North Africa

Source: Migration Policy Institute (MPI) compilation based on International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Migrants and Cities: New Partnerships to Manage Mobility* (Geneva: IOM, 2015), available online.
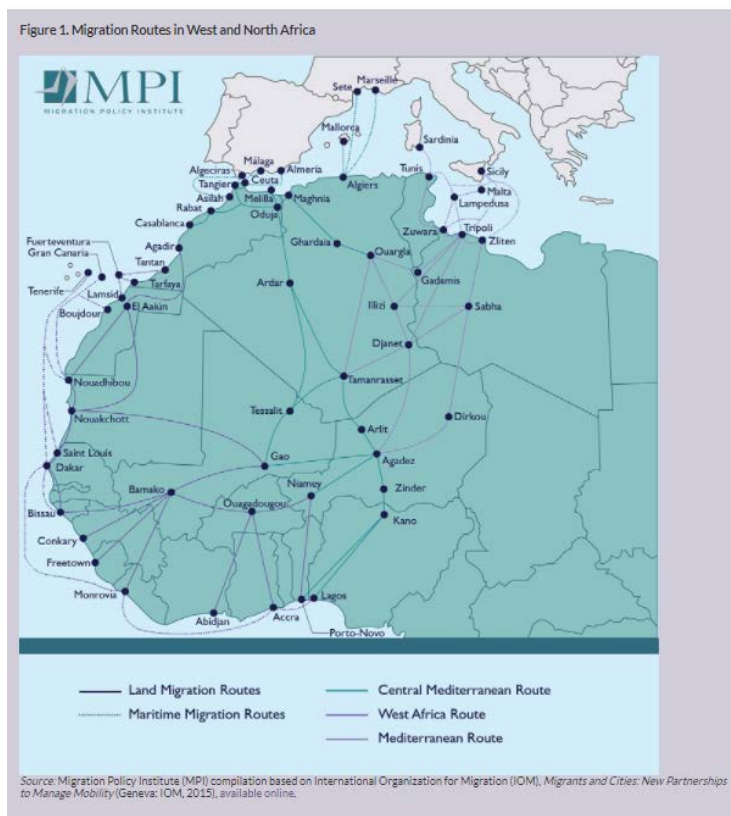
Cities and towns connected through transportation networks are not just transit locations, but often end up being destinations for migrants within Africa. Changes in factors related to circulation, such as 'transport costs, have played a critical role in determining the growth of cities' (Storeygard, 2016, p. 1263). 'Transport corridors' are particularly key in fostering urban growth (Zeller, 2007, 2009) and transport corridors such as the Maputo, Walvis Bay, the trans-Cunene, or Beira are expected to stimulate the growth of additional border towns (Duarte et al, 2015; Nugent, 2012).

Figure XII. East African migration networks: areas of departure, 2019
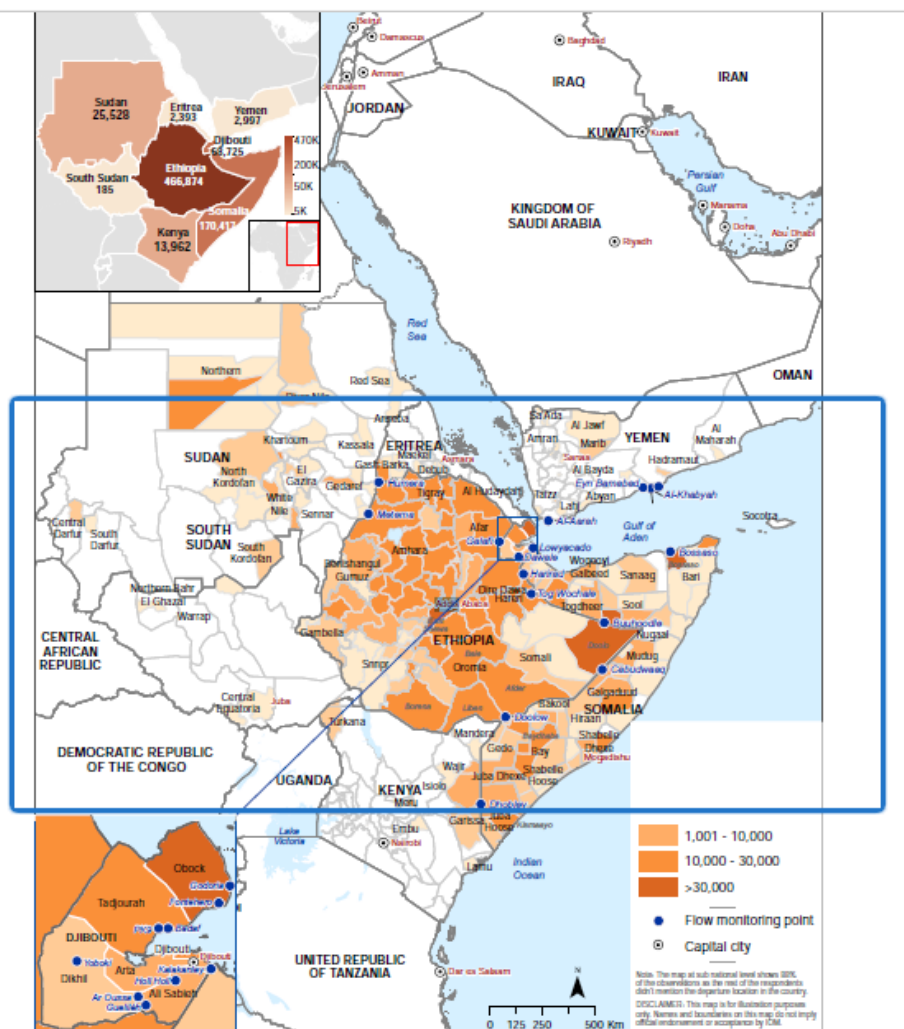
Source: Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), 2019

Figure XIII. Trans-African transport corridors
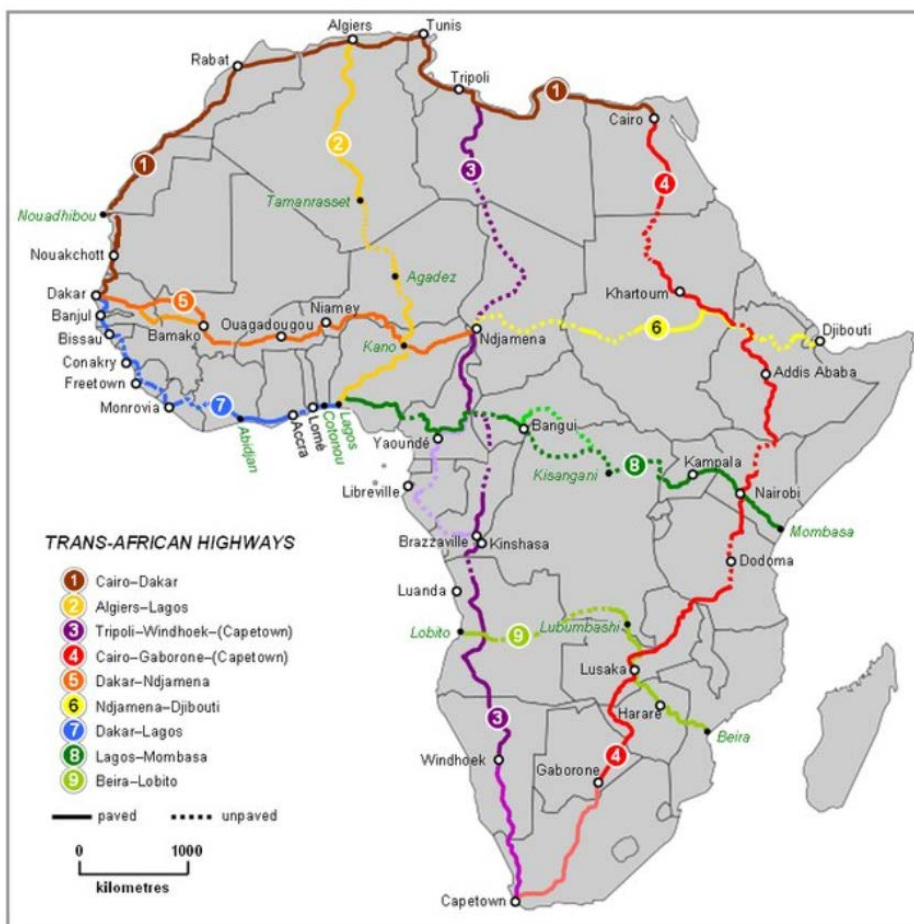
Source: Creative Commons, available via license CCBY.

Circulation in border regions, as well as through border cities and towns, is particularly significant. Most of this is sustained by cross-border trade, passing through 'green' bush paths and villages, 'grey' roads, railways and border towns, or 'blue' transport corridors to oceans and airports (Dobler, 2016). Border towns are formed, expand and consolidate in line with trends in circulation and associated trades (Zeller, 2007, 2009; Nugent, 2012). Furthermore, temporary settlement, often as a result of forced migration and refugee movements, is an important aspect of intra-African migration, implying that both places and flows are always in flux.

Urban and rural migration

Migration involving rural-urban mobilities (of various lengths) constitutes one of the most important features of intra-African migration. African rural-urban migration is not just motivated by the economic vibrancy of cities, but also by commitments and connections to extended family networks, the availability of higher education and the possibilities of onward migration. While internal migration continues to exceed inter-continental movement, natural growth is also one of the main explanations for urban expansion (Potts, 2013).

> The ODI is currently working with European and African mayors, and are approaching migration as an integrated part of understanding urban contexts, and also in articulating strategies to improve the lives of urban residents. It is important to acknowledge and explore the role of cities in intra-African and extra-continental migration. Cities are the places where people move to, and then move from; it is less about intra-African or European migration; much migration is a movement between cities.
> *Interview with Marta Foresti, September 2020*

A significant portion of African 'households have livelihoods that straddle rural and urban places and income opportunities' (Potts 2013: 28). Studies have shown how 'variability in the population dynamics of rural regions is explained by the intensity of linkages with urban areas' (Veneri & Ruiz, 2013, p. 3). This intensity also influences places and lives in 'frontier' regions, between the city and the countryside (Agergaard, Fold, & Gough, 2009). In this light, most intra-African migration is better understood as 'circular migration', where movement is activated and 'hibernated' according to changing contexts (Ferguson, 1999; Potts, 2010).

There are fewer cases across the different regions where **urban to rural** migration takes place. In Nigeria, a study showed that the relatively few people who left urban centres for the rural areas did so because of their inability to secure jobs in the towns, because of the high costs of living in cities, or due to retirement (Adewale, 2005). Decreasing or stagnant rural migration and growing urban out-migration has also been signalled in Côte d'Ivoire (Beauchemin, 2011).

Temporary and protracted settlements

For some time now, research has shown that migration does not necessarily result either in integration and assimilation of migrants or in the maintenance of strong relations with places of origin in contexts of temporary migration (Castles, 2002). Globalisation and new technologies of transport further invalidate this dualist perspective of human settlement and mobility, showing their fluidity and unfixed character. Moreover, analysing mobility and immobility (Lubkemann, 2008) involves looking not only at physical movement, but also its representations in order to understand the related history and geography which make up its diverse 'constellations' (Cresswell, 2010). Migration and varied forms of human mobility within Africa and worldwide are continually 'redefining the meanings of home, community and belonging' (Landau & Bakewell, 2018).

> 'In West Africa, there are changing patterns of rural-urban migration - for example, the migration of women from the Casamance region to Dakar, which used to be seasonal, but has increasingly taken on a more permanent character. The phenomenon according to which migrants 'stick' is clearly something that is feeding rapid urban growth in a number of countries'.
> *Interview with Professor Paul Nugent, August 2020*

Urban growth, often motivated by temporary or transit settlement and not exclusively by rural in-migration, explains the emergence and expansion of many towns and cities on the African continent. 'While migration is no doubt an important component of urban growth, urban natural increase and rural transformation are almost certainly more significant' (Fox, 2016, p. 26). The relations between urban areas of different sizes and dimensions are also complex (Bertrand & Alain, 1997) and cannot be understood out of their local contexts. While some studies have shown that migration to smaller towns in Africa does not necessarily lead to increased incomes for migrants – whereas migration to larger cities more often does – secondary

cities remain attractive due to proximity, network density and sociocultural similarities (Christiaensen, De Weerdt, & Todo, 2013).

Protracted refugee situations are mostly found in Africa, with the United Nations (UN) recently estimating that Africa hosts 30 % of the world's displaced people (UNHCR, 2017). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) specifically notes that today 'over 2.6 million refugees currently live in camps worldwide and have been displaced for over five years, some for over a generation' (UNHCR). These settlements were not intended to be permanent, but some camps have become towns and cities. The best-knowing African example is the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya. Some Kakuma residents have lived their entire lives there. In such places, both international and local authorities deal with people as temporary refugees or migrants and the situation as a crisis, despite the camps having persisted for decades (Anderson, 2014). This influx of people and aid has created 'anomalous' spaces and practices (Landau, 2008), but at policy level the provisional methods of working with them have yet to evolve into more permanent solutions. Refugee camps and other temporary forms of settlement form part of the continent's migration-settlement networks.

Findings

In this section, we have illustrated structures that support, configure and are reconfigured by intra-African migration. As such, our key findings are that:

- Established routes and settlements are fundamental structures for continued migration and movement, but both are continually transformed by contextual factors as well as migration itself and its changing patterns.

- Migration flows produce new settlement spaces and change those already existing; the physical structures of migration both support the movements and are simultaneously shaped by them.

3.2 How do people move? Infrastructures of intra-African migration

In order to understand how the corridors, routes, settlement and trajectories outlined above are used, it is important to elaborate on the physical infrastructure together with the actors and institutions that make these movements work. The migration research community currently shows increased interest in the notion of 'migration infrastructures' in order to analyse ways in which certain kinds of movement are facilitated by others (Xiao & Lindquist 2014, Kleist & Bjarnesen 2019). This sub-section details how the various aspects of African migration infrastructures facilitate the mobility of migrants along old and new routes. Building on this research, the idea of migration infrastructure is taken to include: the material infrastructures of road and rail networks; the commercial infrastructures of migration brokers and other actors directly involved in offering services to migrants; the social and cultural infrastructures which include ideals and practices relating to the reception and integration of migrants; as well as transnationalism in connection with family structures and fostering practices.

3.2.1 Historical infrastructures

As outlined in the previous section, most African economies have historically depended on significant levels of labour migration and other forms of mobility since the independence era of the 1960s (Cordell et al. 1996; Madiéga and Nao 2003; Rain 1999). The European colonial powers invested heavily in infrastructure projects, using forced labour to construct roads and railways in order to transport workers as well as produce and other resources to the coast or administrative centres. Most of the main railway lines in Africa were completed in the first decades of the 20th century, not only serving colonial settlements and linking Africa to Europe, but also making the trade and exploitation of natural resources possible. In North Africa, the Casablanca-Rabat line completed in 1923 added to existing connections of Alexandria-Cairo (1856) and Wadi Halfa-Karthoum (1898). In East Africa, the Mombassa-Lake Victoria line was the first completed in 1901, followed by the Tanga-Usambara hills (1905) and later the Djibouti-Addis Ababa (1917)

lines. Earlier West African railways are Sekondi-Kumasi (1903), Lagos-Kano (1912) and Brazzaville-Pointe Noire (1932). In southern Africa, historical railways link Cape Town to Bulawayo (1897) and the Zambian Copper belt to Benguela (1931).

3.2.2   Contemporary material infrastructures

Today, **railroads** generally serve as a transportation alternative for heavy freight on the continent's main roads, which face continual maintenance problems. For example, West African states and private mining companies in the region are investing in a substantial railway project which, when completed, will be 3 000 km long, linking Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger, the Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo. This project will require considerable renovation of the existing railway, primarily built during the colonial period, and the construction of more than 1 200 km of new tracks. The primary incentive for this ambitious project is the potential for transporting freight, including minerals, metals and agricultural produce, towards the coastal regions for export. This is a transportation infrastructure that has been challenged by poorly maintained roads (and rails) for decades. The same degradation existed in Angola after the lengthy civil war that ended in 2002. Reconstruction of the Benguela railway took many years (2006-2014), with trains reaching Huambo in 2011, Kuito in 2012 and Luau near the Congolese border in 2013. Inauguration of the complete line linking Lobito Port to the Zambian Copperbelt and mineral rich regions in the Democratic Republic of Congo took place in 2015, constituting the Lobito corridor's backbone (Duarte et. al., 2015).

Air transport has increased considerably in the past decade, with off-continent transportation to the US, the Middle East and China accounting for most of the expansion. Intra-continental air routes remain relatively sparse, a privilege of the wealthiest. Most departures for both off-continent and intra-African flights are from either South Africa, Addis Ababa, or the North African capitals.

Figure XIV. Africa air transport 2013
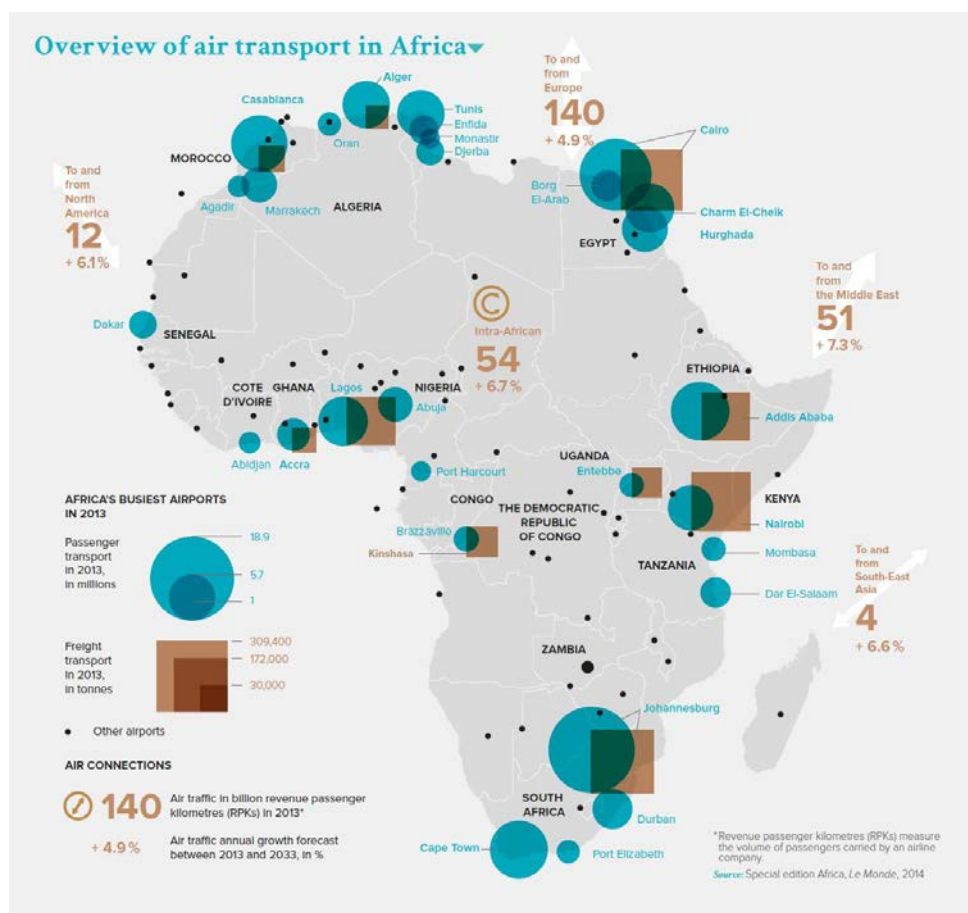
Source: Africa Visual Data

25

Overland transportation remains the most important infrastructure in most parts of the continent, with road maintenance a key challenge for most states and Regional Economic Communities (RECs). Even in regions where heavy-duty lorries are crucial for transporting crops or minerals and other natural resources to processing plants or harbours, road networks are difficult to maintain and generally cause transportation chains to operate at a very slow pace, with considerable delay and expense caused by the wear and tear on vehicles. The African Union addressed these infrastructural shortcomings at its 12th General Assembly in 2009 through the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), vowing to 'take all appropriate measures to complete the missing sections in the major transport corridors and remove all physical and non-physical barriers to the development of inter-State transport in Africa' (African Union, 2009). PIDA's vision, as represented in figure XV here, centres on: strengthening and expanding cross-continental trade corridors; providing more effective connections between the RECs; linking land-locked countries and regions to the coast; and connecting coastal regions, including capital cities, to each other and their main transportation hubs.

Figure XV. Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) –Trans-African Highway (TAH)
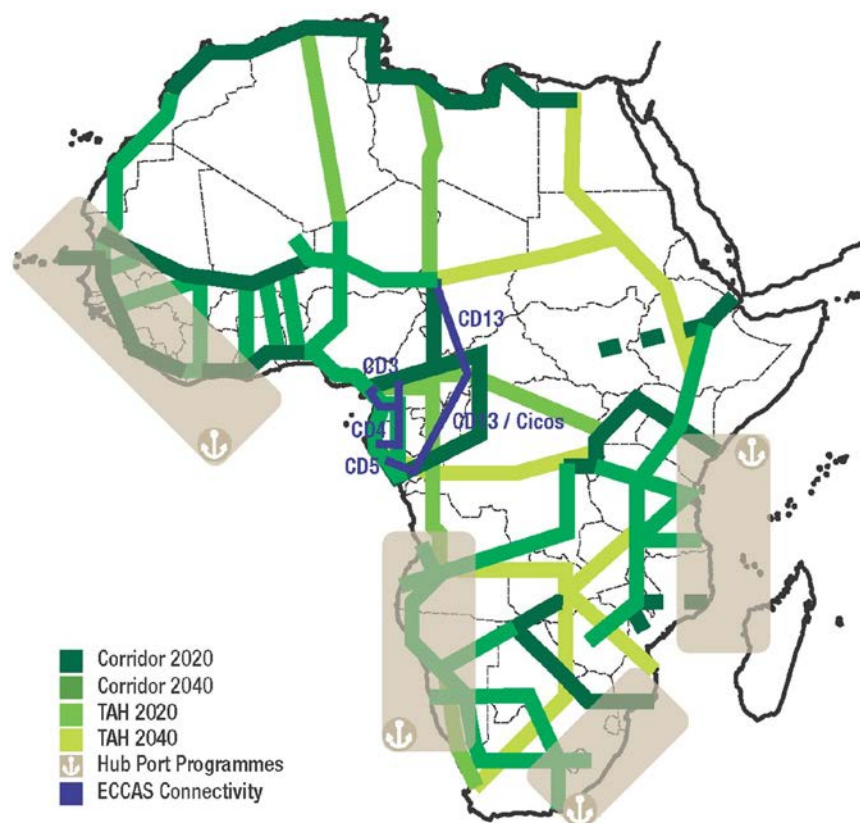
Source: PIDA, 2012

As a facilitator of human mobility and migration, Africa's material infrastructure is primarily geared towards industrial transportation networks, with passenger transportation a secondary, or collateral, consideration. This tendency is also present in external investment priorities, most decisively through the investment strategies of China, which has been the largest foreign investor by far in African infrastructure over the past two decades. As seen in figure XVI, China accounted for 26 % of total infrastructure investments in Africa in 2018, second only to the combined African governments themselves, who accounted for 37 % of total investments. Put differently, China has devoted 'approximately two-thirds of its financial investments in Africa to infrastructure' (Oliete Josa & Magrinyà, 2018, p. 722). Furthermore, it seems clear that these priorities reflect a strategy of investing in the transportation of gold and minerals from inland extractive industries towards the main industrial ports on the coast (Bonfatti, R., & S. Poelhekke, 2017).

Figure XVI. Financing flows into Africa's infrastructure in 2018

Europe					
EIB	EU-AITF	France	Germany	Italy	Non-ICA
2,225	20	1,936	1,608	20	282

Arab Co-ordination Group					
AFESD	BADEA	IsDB	KFAED	OFID	SFD
541	123	518	752	140	370

Asia
25,680 — China
517 — Japan
762 — India

The Americas
US — 297
Canada — 39

37,525 — African National Governments

11,824 — Private Sector

4,538	744	95	7,989
AfDB	EBRD	IFAD	WBG

Multilateral Development Banks

78	300	307	1,055	500
Africa 50	AIIB	BOAD	RSA	NDB

Other Sources

Source: ICA, 2018

Against this backdrop, although there are wide variations, most regions have seen an increase in both formal and informal[2] commercial bus companies, offering national and sub-regional transportation in a growing spectrum of price ranges. Short to medium distance public transportation is crucial for poorer households, forming a ubiquitous part of both rural and urban everyday life across the continent (Trans-Africa Consortium, 2008). Although difficult to assess due to the informal nature of a significant number of operators, these modes of transportation often move within or connect to urban centres as transportation nodes. The hubs within such urban nodes range from the massive terminals of megapoles such as Johannesburg, Nairobi, or Lagos to the more modest scales of bus stations and shelters in smaller urban centres across the continent, which are, nevertheless, also a crucial part of the continent's infrastructure.

Not only within cities, but also over longer distances within or across the African sub-regions, do migrants face the inconvenience of dilapidated roads and vehicles as well as the economic burden of paying for medium- and long-distance transportation. Furthermore, they face the dangers of extortion and harassment by transport agents and state officials, or falling victim to the high frequency of accidents. In fact, Africa has the highest rate of road traffic deaths in relation to population (see figure XVII).

[2] While officially registered transportation companies generally are not able to cover the transportation needs in many African countries, alternative informal options have emerged throughout the continent since independence. They include minibuses, motorcycle taxis, or shared cabs – with different names in the different countries – and although many countries have developed options for their registration and formalisation, the majority keep operating informally.

Figure XVII. Rates of road traffic death per 100 000 population by region
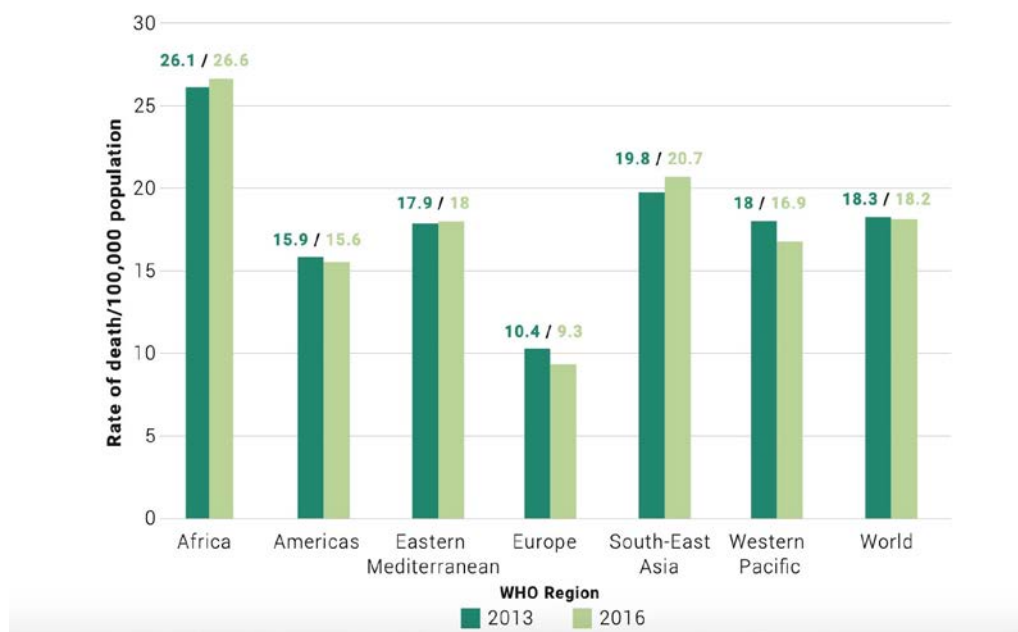
Source: WHO, 2018.

3.2.3 Livelihood migration and its social infrastructures

As outlined above, seasonal or long-term migration from the continent's poorest countries, such as Burkina Faso, Niger, Guinea and Mali in West Africa, or Malawi and Mozambique in Southern Africa, to more prosperous or productive urban and rural areas in their sub-region remains an important livelihood strategy. Migrants often rely on connections to relatives or people with whom they have a shared language, ethnicity, or origin to receive them at the destination and assist them in the initial phase of their resettlement with shelter, food, contacts to potential employers and so on. Rather than relying on state services or commercial labour recruitment agencies, in other words, migrants rely on a 'social infrastructure' (Xiang & Lindquist 2014) of personal contacts or extended social networks to facilitate their settlement and integration (see also Kleist & Bjarnesen, 2019). As recurrent abuse against perceived foreigners in South Africa has shown, though, these informal integration infrastructures are by no means a guarantee that migrants will be well received or successful in their endeavours (Hiropoulos, 2020; Ndlovu & Landau, 2020).

Although they are generally facilitated by personal and informal means, these forms of regional labour circulation are not just an important livelihood strategy for individuals and households. They also constitute the backbone of national economies, particularly in plantation agriculture and resource extraction. The world's largest cocoa producing economies, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, which provide approximately two-thirds of global production, or 40 % and 20 % respectively (Statista, 2020), continue to rely on household-based cocoa farmers, or smallholders, many of whom are migrants (Abbott, 2013).

The mobility of workers is not only essential in commercial agriculture. Alongside the large industrial mining companies that operate across the continent, small-scale informal, or artisanal, mining also attracts mobile workers. Artisanal miners follow new discoveries within and across regional as well as national borders and are ready to relocate from one mining camp to another when needed (Werthmann and Grätz, 2012; Udelsmann Rodrigues, 2014; Lanzano, 2018). Here again, labour mobility is facilitated by personal connections and informal arrangements. In addition to long-term migration and seasonal mobilities, cross-border trade is an important livelihood sector, seeing traders cross borders on a daily or weekly basis, or leading to borderland areas becoming vibrant zones of commerce and exchange (Ayimpam, 2015;

Flynn, 1997). These various forms of self-initiated mobilities, in other words, are a central component of labour recruitment processes in a broad range of work sectors (Bertrand, 2011).

Finally, combatants from armed conflicts in countries such as Angola, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, or Liberia have been known to circulate across national borders and between sides (Hoffman, 2011; Utas, 2003). These mobile fighters have been an important strategic card in many African conflicts over the past three decades, not least in the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire and the DRC (Human Rights Watch, 2005). Here, it is important to note that the motivations of many mobile fighters resemble those of civilian labour migrants, in that their aspirations generally centre on livelihood options and the quest for adventure, rather than ideological convictions or loyalties to any particular leader or cause (Bjarnesen, 2018; Hoffman, 2011). In such cases, military chains of command and recruitment networks become part of a wide-reaching migration infrastructure that facilitates the mobility of fighters.

It should also be noted that not all migrants move for reasons strictly related to livelihoods. This is not only true for involuntary forms of movement, but also relates to the migration of individuals within transnational family networks, which often extend well beyond the European notion of a nuclear family. Young adults, for example, rely on more or less distant relatives for accommodation and financial support while attending school or higher education away from their parents. Moreover, even young children may become migrants, as they are moved from one part of a 'trans-local' family to another (Hashim & Thorsen, 2011). Different mobilities also rely on specific local ideas of hospitality, solidarity and kinship (Bjarnesen & Utas, 2018).

3.2.4 Migration brokerage

In the many forms of migration and mobility considered so far, it is noteworthy that commercial migration agencies or intermediaries – in short, migration brokers – play a relatively small role in facilitating intra-African migration. These networks have become more complex over the years: 'the increasing professionalisation of smuggling services and the greater availability of information via online and social media also appear to facilitate migration' (Cummings et al., 2015, p. 6). However, there are important exceptions to this observation. Particularly in relation to irregular migration, but certainly in comparison to most other parts of the world, intra-African migration is remarkably informal and centred around the resources, connections and priorities of migrants themselves.

The demand for migration brokers is generally highest in contexts where migrants are unable to negotiate or assess the rules and requirements around their movement, which primarily occurs when crossing international borders characterised by restrictive immigration regimes. For example, migrants from Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique rely on migration brokers called 'hyenas' (Tshabalalah, 2019), when attempting to enter South Africa without proper papers. Such brokers specialise in analysing the requirements and loopholes at particular border crossings and rely on their negotiating skills as well as their personal connections to particular border officials.

Such brokering roles are most prominent in relation to interregional destinations, such as Libya and other North African countries, as well as off-continent migration – initially to the former colonial centres, but from the 1980s also to other European countries, North America, the Gulf States, China and Latin America. In such cases, migration brokers have played a central role in procuring and facilitating various travel documents, organising (parts of) the journeys and perhaps even initial accommodation along with employment (Alpes, 2017; Kleist, 2017; Lucht, 2011). Such services may or may not be legal and range from fabricating passports to obtaining authorised visas. In Togo, aspiring migrants may solicit the assistance of brokers specialised in navigating the complicated visa application procedures of European and other 'northern' embassies, as well as preparing their clients for the dreaded in-person interviews (Piot, 2020). Overall, these brokering services are of a smaller scale and less institutionalised than the criminal networks around human trafficking and smuggling, as is often presumed in European political and policy debates.

During the recent increase in irregular migration from sub-Saharan Africa towards Europe, which peaked in 2015-2016 during the European refugee crisis, the number of migration brokers also rose in response to the increased demand for access to Europe (Alpes, 2017).

Findings

This section has discussed the various components of intra-African migration infrastructures, ranging from the material infrastructures of roads and rails to the commercial infrastructures around transportation and economic activity. We have also considered the social and cultural infrastructures which inform the mobility and integration of African migrants. More specifically, our findings suggest that:

- African transportation infrastructures tend to revolve around urban centres, which function as transportation nodes for different levels and styles of mobility,

- Intra-African migration and mobility is remarkably informal and personalised, meaning that the social networks, aspirations and capabilities of migrants themselves are crucial to migration trajectories and outcomes.

4   Intra-African migration policy and practices: the AU and EU

Two broad perspectives on intra-African migration currently steer the design and implementation of migration policies. On the one hand, migration is seen as highly **positive** for African development. The UNCTAD *Economic Development in Africa Report 2018 Migration for Structural Transformation* emphasises the idea that migration benefits both origin and destination countries across Africa and that African migration can play a key role in the structural transformation of the continent's economies, with intra-African migration being an essential ingredient for deeper regional and continental integration. As emphasised by the report, 'intra-African migration is a catalyst for economic growth and structural transformation. It contributes to gross domestic product, employment, trade, poverty reduction and inclusive growth' (UNCTAD, 2018, back cover). For its part, the African Union's Council of Ministers previously called for the definition of an Africa framework for migration policy in 2001, envisaging increased free movement of people and strengthened intra- and interregional cooperation in migration matters (AUC, 2004).

> 'African countries and regions are discussing intra-African migration but more is needed. In the East African region, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) wants to collaborate with the East African Community (EAC), particularly in issues like the free-movement of people'.
> 'One of the key issues for increased free-movement in Africa is its consequences for trafficking. While it is expected to decrease the numbers of irregular migrants, it may open more possibilities for trafficking'.
> *Interview with Dr. Linda Adhiambo Oucho, September 2020*

> Highly skilled and well-educated youth represent a key opportunity and governments should encourage more exchanges, including through talent partnerships. Many African students are moving to countries with well-developed universities on the continent. Academic exchanges for young Africans, including outside the continent, are important and can facilitate skill development that can lead to youth employment and job creations.
> *Interview with Aissata Kane, September*

On the other hand, while the European Union has not discarded positive aspects of intra-African migration, the effects on Africa-Europe migration and the so-called migration crisis have been of major concern in directing policy and development work towards reducing or reversing migration. While debates about the definition of 'undocumented migration' continue, there is a broad consensus that this is problematic, not only for states that see it as a risk to sovereignty and security, but also for civil society organisations that fear the possibilities of human rights violations (Bakewell, 2020). However, this migration is both regular – in the sense of routine and unexceptional – and regulated by locally negotiated conventions rather than the

state, thereby playing a critical role in securing lives and livelihoods. Hence, controlling or eliminating such migration may act against development by disrupting valuable economic exchanges, reducing people's opportunities and increasing their costs (Bakewell, 2020).

While international organisations engage in large-scale production of knowledge about issues such as routes, migration related settlement, transportation or migration facilitators, few have developed a comprehensive integrated analysis of the various elements that explain and support intra-African migration. The aforementioned UNCTAD report (2018) refers only vaguely to specific measures targeting intra-African migration, briefly mentioning for instance: 'capacity-building for migrant associations and incentives for skills transfers, investments in productive sectors in origin countries and facilitation of circular migration' (p. 153). Also mentioned are experiments such as job-matching platforms or diaspora bonds. The current overall perception among policy makers, particularly in the global north, is that the Global Compact will be the primary policy platform to ensure safe, orderly and regular international migration, especially in relation to migrant workers. In this sense, the UNCTAD (2018) has largely formulated recommendations on intra-African migration, mostly focused on improving policies, the legal and regulatory frameworks, regional and continental mechanisms along with new and improved initiatives as well as partnerships.

4.1   AU migration-initiatives

There are currently eight **Regional Economic Communities (RECs)** in Africa, some countries belonging to more than one of these. This regional design is not easy to understand, making the whole set a 'confusing array of overlapping regional economic communities' (Lucas, 2015: 1475). In terms of managing regional

migration, ECOWAS, COMESA, SADC and the African Union are the most relevant regional bodies. They not only comprise most of the sub-Saharan countries, but also feature: the continent's most heavily populated countries; the major recipient, transit and sending migration countries; and the regions where migration is particularly dynamic (Adepoju, 2018: 97).

While the **potential** of intra-African migration for the economies and development has become more clearly appropriated in the policy programmes of the member states, migration-related **negative** issues have increasingly dominated regional preoccupations. The latter refers to a broad set of issues such as border problems that threaten peace and security, the problems related to

> 'Within Africa, the dominant school of thought perceives of migration as a developmental issue. That is why the African Union adopted the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right to Residence and Right to Establishment in 2018 with a view to promote regular, orderly and safe intra-African migration'.
> *Interview with Khabele Matlosa, September 2020*

refugees and trafficking, or the brain drain. Subsequently, the AU has led and/or supported the definition of systems and frameworks at continental and regional levels. The first AU Migration Policy Framework for Africa (MPFA) was adopted in 2006 and in 2016 evaluation of this document led to its revision and the formulation of an action plan for its implementation. The current [Migration Policy Framework for Africa and Plan of Action](#) (2018-2030) aims to guide member states and RECs in the management of migration, taking into account AU priorities, policies, [Agenda 2063](#), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) along with international migration management policies and standards. The European Union, by contrast, has set its focus on increased and more robust economic relations as well as partnerships with Africa, most importantly dealing

> 'Africa needs better state governance—most displacements of population and push factors are created by bad governance. If leaders govern states better and provide environment for citizens to meet their basic needs, few will choose to "seek greener pastures". This includes ending corruption of border managers who are incorporated in smuggling syndicates. And supporting the implementation of regional protocols on movement and establishment of people'.
> *Interview with Dr. Wafula Okumu, August 2020*

with migration towards Europe in the creation of jobs as a key priority. This is supported by a substantial allocation of resources to implement the programmes, mostly originating from the Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF).

Table IV. African Union key migration documents and reference to structures and infrastructures

	Document	Topic	Binding	Reference to structures and infrastructures
2004	Migration Policy Framework for Africa			
2004	AU Plan of Action on Employment Promotion and Poverty Alleviation			Fighting child labour and trafficking in humans
2006	African Common Position on Migration and Development	Migration general	No	Treatment of problems of the movement of persons Combat smuggling and trafficking Border management and control Data banks on the nature, scope and techniques of illegal migration Facilitated remittances
2009	AU Framework on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons (Kampala Convention)	IDPs	Yes	Provide IDPs humanitarian assistance and extend it to local and host communities
2009	Minimum Integration Programme	Labour migration	No	
2012	AU Plan of Action on Boosting Intra-African Trade Initiatives			Addressing infrastructural bottlenecks Improve trade information networks Enhancing trade in services to support trade in goods
2012	Labour Market Information System			Expanding understanding of the informal labour market
2014	Khartoum Declaration on AU-Horn of Africa Initiative on Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants	Trafficking	No	
2015	Labour Migration Governance for Development and Integration in Africa	Labour migration	No	Occupational safety and health for migrants Enhance capacity for labour inspection where migrants are working.
2018	Migration Policy Framework (MPFA 2018-2030) and Plan of Action			Improving the efficiency of remittance transfer and reducing costs Regulating the movement of people and goods across borders Awareness-raising, assistance and protection to trafficked persons, improving prosecution and investigation Management of rural-urban migration and of urbanisation

Source: authors' own elaboration; see also Urso and Hakami, 2018.

A summarising analysis of current AU policy shows a partial approach to the articulated set of structures and infrastructures that configure intra-African migration, whilst supporting its functioning and continuation. There is a marked concern with smuggling routes, along with reference to the need for cooperation between origin, transit and destination countries; a concern with reducing the cost of transferring remittances; and preoccupations with the need to enhance the self-sufficiency of refugees and IDPs residing in camps. While the concerns with specific aspects of migration in the continent dominate the topics of AU migration policies, most of them are non-binding and consequently it is hard to follow-up the developments at continental level.

4.2   EU Africa migration-related initiatives

In 2015, the EU established an Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF), as a result of which it has been proposed that in the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2021-2027) 10 % of the Neighbourhood and International Development Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) should be dedicated to migration-related activities. One of the focus areas is now identifying and addressing the root causes of instability, forced displacement and irregular migration to Europe together with the dynamics of displacement in Africa. Hence, the EU's focus on African countries' internal and regional factors is expected to help in pursuing these objectives: 'countries of origin and transit are stakeholders in the implementation of the European migration policy' (d'Humières, 2018, p.1).

> Policies at different levels (continental, regional, sub-regional and national levels) across the continent need to be harmonised. There is a need to look holistically at policies for them to be effective.
> *Interview with Aissata Kane, September 2020*

The European Commission's work programme for 2020 foresees the development of a new comprehensive strategy with Africa together with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. This strategy aims to boost economic relations, create jobs on both continents, deepen the Africa-Europe partnership and, in particular, sets the partnership on migration and mobility as one of the strategy's five key focus areas (Pichon, 2020). Within this partnership, the Proposed Action 9 – partner with Africa to ensure a balanced, coherent and comprehensive approach to migration and mobility – relies not only on the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, but also on other agreements such as the EU partnership framework on migration for bilateral relations with partner countries, the Joint Valletta action plan of 2015, the Khartoum and Rabat processes and the AU-EU-UN Trilateral Task Force on Migration. Negotiations for a new agreement, though, have brought to the fore EU

> 'Africa and Europe have historical relationship and structured multilateral partnership between the African Union and the European Union. The AU-EU partnership covers a plethora of issues of mutual interest to both continents, including migration'.
> *Interview with Khabele Matlosa, September 2020*

disagreements with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP). The EU seeks increased prevention of irregular migration and a binding legal obligation to readmit irregular migrants, while the ACP insists that return and readmission procedures should be decided by each individual country (Pichon, 2020: 5).

An analysis of the policy documentation as well as ongoing projects and activities addressing intra-African migration shows partial approaches to the articulated set of structures and infrastructures that configure intra-African migration, supporting its functioning and continuation. The central topics of the 108 approved Trust Fund projects in 2017 are employment and resilience (30 %), jobs in the Sahel (28 projects) together with resilience in the Horn of Africa and North Africa (29 projects) (Zanker, 2019).

Table V. EU-Africa policy: key documents addressing structures and infrastructures of intra-African migration

Policy document	Integrated approach	Structures	Infrastructures
EU-Africa policy documents			
The Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM) (2011)			Remittance services Information and support to protect the rights of migrants against brokers (identify and monitor *bona fide* recruiters) Extended Migration Profiles [3]
EU-Africa Declaration on Migration and Mobility (2014)	Inter and intra-continental migration and mobility		
Africa-EU Migration, Mobility and Employment (MME) partnership and action plan 2014-2017	Strengthening the links between education, training, science and innovation, and better manage mobility of people		Better organise intra and inter-regional labour mobility and that of business persons Boosting Intra-African Trade Reduction of transport costs
Support to the Africa-EU Migration and Mobility Dialogue (MMD) (2014)	Continental management Knowledge base of available data and research Facility for institutional capacity development (AUC and the RECs)		Diaspora networks
EU-Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative (Khartoum Process) (2015)	Trafficking in human beings Smuggling of migrants	Fight criminal networks of smugglers	Fight criminal networks of smugglers
Valletta Summit Action Plan (2015)	Analysis of the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement		Support resilience, sustainable livelihoods and self-reliance opportunities for displaced persons Legally-compliant and faster transfers of remittances

[3] Country profiles aiming at identifying and addressing data gaps and needs regarding current migration patterns, labour market trends, legislation and policy frameworks, information on remittance flows, diasporas and other development-related data.

			Pre-departure measures
	35		Visa facilitation
			Smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings: proactive and reactive investigation; institutional capacities
[Rabat Process](), Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development and Rabat Action Plan (2006). Multi-annual cooperation programme 2018-2020: [Marrakesh Action Plan]()	Better knowledge of the profiles of countries' diasporas Analyse the root causes of migration	Promote the integration of refugees and forcibly displaced (settlement) Protection of refugees and forcibly displaced persons at border regions	Facilitating remittances Visa facilitation Illegal smuggling: alternatives to this informal economy; awareness raising; capabilities of national authorities

EU-Africa multi-country policy and projects

Addressing mixed migration flows in Eastern Africa		Mixed migration flows Humane reception centres	Criminal networks Livelihood opportunities
Support to EU law enforcement cooperation along the Horn of Africa Migration Route			Trafficking in human beings Smuggling of migrants
Mobility Partnership with Cape Verde (2008)			Reducing the risks linked to trafficking in human beings
Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development with Western and Central African countries (2006) - The Rabat Process		55 countries of origin, transit and destination, of migration along the migratory route from West and Central Africa to Europe	
EU-Africa Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment (2007)			Better leverage financial flows and monitor the flows of labour and remittances Fight against trafficking in human beings
ACP-EU dialogue (2010)			Facilitating remittances Combatting human trafficking Combatting migrant smuggling

Mobility partnership with Morocco (2013)			Combat networks involved in the trafficking and smuggling of human beings
Mobility partnership with Tunisia (2014)		Management of existing migratory flows Border management	Prevent human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants

Source: Authors' own elaboration and summary.

Besides the diversity of themes addressed and the predominantly normative character of EU migration policy to Africa, there are also scattered and varied EU Mobility Partnerships (MPs) – a relatively recent form of multilateral migration governance involving the EU, signatory member states (MS) and a third country together with specific Common Agenda(s) on Migration and Mobility (CAMM), set between the EU and the relevant African country.

Most of the EU level migration policies related to the African continent are financed through the Trust Fund but several country level, bilateral or multi-country initiatives have also been developed over the years. However, there is no unified knowledge about member states' migration activities – policy, projects, or agreements – in Africa related to migration and even less specifically on intra-Africa migration. A recent analysis of 76 EU policy documents (2005-2016), identified two broad perspectives on migration which seem to be dominant: the need to regulate migration, envisaged as development; and the need to control irregular migration (Zanker, 2019).

4.3 Interactions between EU policies and member state programmes regarding projects in Africa

African migration has become a key policy priority for the EU and its individual member states since the 2015 European refugee crisis. Between 2005 and 2010, approximately 300 migration-related projects in non-EU countries were funded under various thematic and geographical European Commission financial instruments, amounting to EUR 800 million (European Commission, 2011, p. 10). Wide ranging programme and project support was made available to numerous stakeholders, including civil society, migrant associations and international organisations. Overall, these investments represented a more holistic and development-oriented approach to migration governance, with some emphasis on restricting irregular migration.
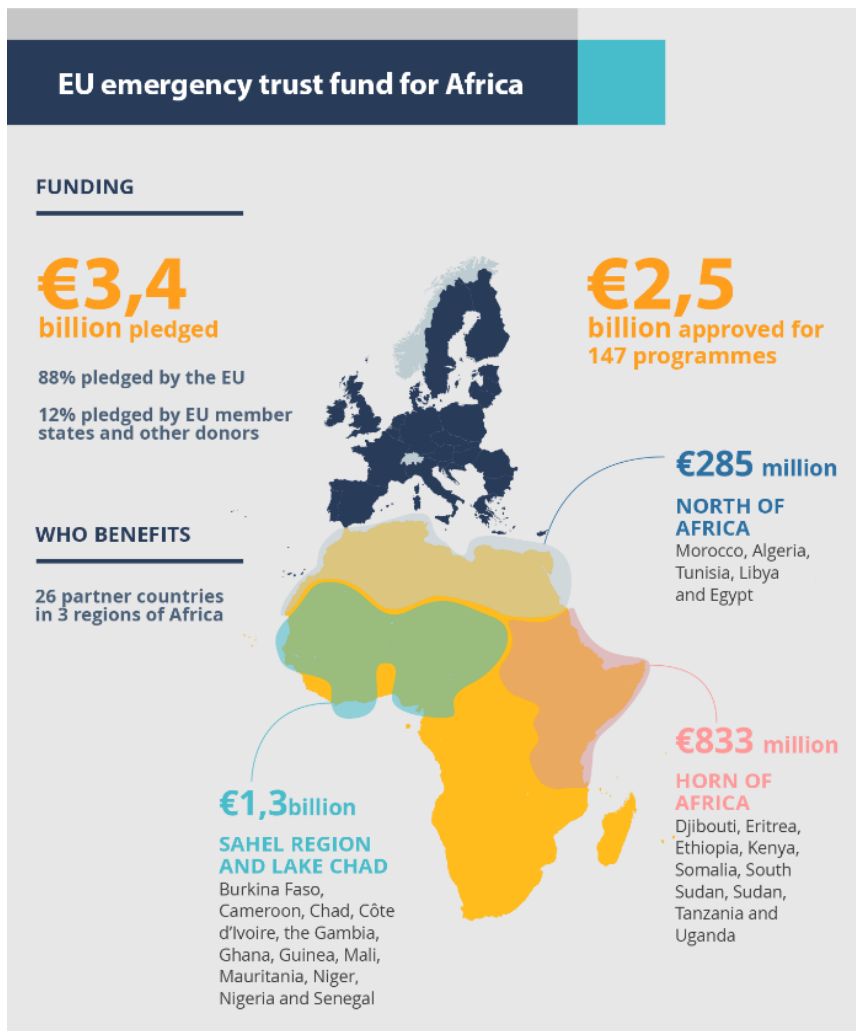
Table VI. Examples of EU funded projects and key areas related to structures and infrastructures

Migration EU Expertise (MIEUX)	Strengthening capacities to manage migration and mobility in a better way
Global action to prevent and address trafficking in human beings and the smuggling of migrants	Assisting countries in counter-trafficking as well as smuggling responses and capacities
Support to Africa – EU Migration and Mobility Dialogue	Improving the governance of migration and mobility within Africa; enhancing the role of African diaspora as development actors
Supporting the third phase of the Rabat process: the Dakar Strategy	Implementing concrete actions agreed under the process
Regional Protection Programme Horn of Africa: Strengthening protection and assistance to refugees and asylum seekers, mainly displaced Somalis	Protecting and assisting Somali refugees
Support to Free Movement of Persons and Migration in West Africa	Implementing the ECOWAS Free Movement of Persons' Protocols and the ECOWAS Common Approach on Migration
European wide African diaspora platform for development (EADPD)	Promoting the diaspora's contribution as a development actor for Africa
Support the reintegration of returnees and to the management of labour migration in Ethiopia	Employing the reintegration system and assistance to Ethiopian returnees; raising awareness about migration
Addressing Mixed Migration Flows in Eastern Africa	Using migration offices for migrants/asylum seekers/refugees; fighting against criminal networks; providing livelihoods
Civil Society Action for Promoting the Rights of Migrants	Eradicating human trafficking in targeted countries, corridors and regions through civil society action
Migrants in Countries in Crisis: Supporting an evidence-based approach	Protecting migrants in crisis countries

Source: The European Union's cooperation with Africa on migration (2015); authors' compilation and summary.

Since 2015, under the *aegis* of frameworks and agreements outlined in the previous section, the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa has implemented a series of programmes and projects, aimed at addressing four broad development governance challenges: ensuring greater economic and employment opportunities; strengthening resilience of communities; improving migration management; together with enhancing governance and conflict prevention. Three main geographical regions are targeted for these interventions: the Sahel region and Lake Chad; the Horn of Africa; and North Africa (see Figure XVIII).

Figure XVIII EU emergency trust fund for Africa – funding by region

EU emergency trust fund for Africa

FUNDING

€3,4 billion **pledged**

88% pledged by the EU

12% pledged by EU member states and other donors

WHO BENEFITS

26 partner countries in 3 regions of Africa

€2,5 billion **approved for 147 programmes**

€285 million

NORTH OF AFRICA
Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt

€833 million

HORN OF AFRICA
Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda

€1,3 billion

SAHEL REGION AND LAKE CHAD
Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal

Source: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/africa-trust-fund/ .

A recent OXFAM analysis confirms the impression that priorities differ significantly by region, with North African countries receiving most support for 'migration governance', which includes the controversial funding for the Libyan Coast Guard. In the Horn of Africa, finance is primarily directed towards 'development cooperation' along with 'security and peacebuilding', while finance in the Sahel and Lake Chad bloc focusses more on 'development cooperation'. Critics have asserted that the Trust Fund operates on the basis of European interests in externalising a border control beyond its own territory (Lucht, 2017), as confirmed by the OXFAM report, which concludes that '[…] spending of Official Development Assistance (ODA) is increasingly being tied to the EU's desire to stop irregular migration and reach agreements with African countries on the return of their nationals' (Oxfam, 2020, p. 3)

Key financial investments through the Trust Fund have targeted the Sahel and Lake Chad regions, where the majority of irregular migrants since the 2015 European refugee crisis originate, with Niger, Nigeria and Mali topping the list of collaborations in this region. However, looking at individual states, Libya has been seen as a key strategic partner, given the continuing persistence of the Central Mediterranean route from Libya as a departure point for irregular migration towards Europe.

Since 2014, the European Union has mobilised EUR 286 million on migration-related projects in **Libya,** split into EUR 266 million under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa and EUR 20 million as bilateral assistance. These funds are distributed towards: 'protection and assistance to those in need' (EUR 127.7 million), which includes humanitarian assistance to migrants as well as repatriation and reintegration packages; 'stabilisation of Libyan municipalities' (EUR 92 million), focussed on migration management and support to host communities in Libya; and 'integrated border management' (EUR 46.3 million), which includes the controversial financial support to the Libyan Coast Guard as well as capacity building of the border control functions at Libya's southern frontier (European Commission, 2018). All such projects are implemented by international partners on the ground, such as UN agencies or EU Member States.

> 'Given the importance of livelihoods for migration within, to and from the African continent, there is an active role to be played for governments, RECs and the AU to shape outcomes of labour migration. The facilitation of bilateral labour agreements (BLAs) within the continent are key for oriented and coordinated labour migration and mobility management that is more agile and allow coordinated management of low skilled and skilled migration. It is important that these include social protection arrangements'.
> *Interview with Aissata Kane, September 2020*

In **Niger**, the EU has supported the drafting of a National Migration Strategy, including an Action Plan. Through the Trust Fund, support has been allocated to enhance state capacities in the sectors of security, so as to counter smuggling and address the issue of human trafficking; along with more development-oriented projects to support livelihoods and build alternatives to trafficking. Niger has also received support within the framework of Assisted Voluntary Returns (AVRs), as sub-Saharan African migrants have increasingly become stranded in Niger on their way to the North African coast due to increased border control and anti-trafficking measures. Finally, Niger remains a key strategic partner within multilateral support to the G5 Sahel initiative for combatting jihadist violence in the region, which also includes border control components to stem the mobilities of such groups and their collaborators.

Nigeria remains the main country of origin for irregular arrivals to Europe, which makes it another key partner within the Trust Fund priorities. Nigerian authorities have been forthcoming in their cooperation with the International Organisation for Migration to facilitate the Assisted Voluntary Return of Nigerian nationals from Niger and Libya with support from the Trust Fund, the IOM joint initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration and other donors. Support is also directed towards anti-trafficking measures, since Nigeria remains the main non-EU country of origin for victims of trafficking, predominantly women and girls being used for the purpose of sexual exploitation in the EU (Plambech, 2017).

Senegal is seen not only as a departure country for irregular migrants, but also a hub for migrant smuggling networks. Accordingly, European collaboration prioritises local development and sensitisation projects, together with more strategic cooperation around regional smuggling, for example through establishment of an Africa Frontex Intelligence Community Risk Analysis Cell in collaboration with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (European Commission 2018). Senegal has also been included in Assisted Voluntary Returns programmes, receiving back its nationals primarily repatriated from Niger and Libya. According to the European Commission's Fifth Progress Report on the Partnership Framework with third countries under the European Agenda on Migration from 2017, 'out of the EUR 161.8 million allocated to Senegal in projects under the EU Trust Fund for Africa, EUR 104.3 million (64 %) has been contracted. This includes concrete actions to prevent irregular migration, in particular in the field of employment creation' (European Commission 2018:5).

Mali, similarly to Niger, Mali has been seen as a key partner in combined efforts to stem irregular migration towards Europe and combat regional terrorism, the latter primarily through the G5 Sahel Joint Force under the Common Security and Defence Policy. The European Union Capacity Building Mission in Mali, or EUCAP

Sahel Mali, was established in 2015 to support Malian law enforcement authorities and related Ministries in the areas of border security along with border management, for example in redrafting key legislation around border security, such as the National Policy on Borders and its Action Plan. EUCAP Sahel Mali is also supporting reorganisation of the Malian Border Police and works in close coordination with the EU Delegation to provide strategic advice for implementing projects under the EU Trust Fund for Africa.

EU migration policies have taken centre stage in the interactions with African counterparts since 2015, which has led to a dramatic increase in funding (re)directed towards migration-related interventions – from a total of approximately EUR 800 million over five years between 2005-2010 to EUR 2.5 billion between 2015-2020 from the EU Trust Fund alone. Furthermore, this shift marks an increasingly narrowing set of European interests, which approaches most migration-related interventions from the vantage point of EU border security (Mixed Migration Centre 2019). Following this approach, the 'bigger picture' on intra-African migration is given far less attention and consequently, sustained calls by African stakeholders are ignored. They are calling for more sincere European commitment on investing in legal pathways and regularised migration structures, but receive no response unless there is an explicit link to considerations of European border control, or to negotiations around repatriation agreements.

4.4   Effects and impacts of the AU/EU work on structures and infrastructures of migration

While some suggest that EU projects should not set any requirement to have a direct effect on migratory flows (Kervyn & Shilhav, 2017, p. 6), a **concern with migration management** is in practical terms prevalent within the policy and orientation of both the EU and the AU. At policy level, 'interstate cooperation, whether at the bilateral, multilateral, and regional levels, is essential for effective and mutually beneficial management of international migration' (Adepoju, 2018, p. 95). However, more effort is made to identify and address the negative aspects of migration – trafficking of goods and people, illegal migration and irregular migration – than to understand how these are interrelated and dependent on a series of other, sometimes positive dynamics. The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa specifically targets migration routes and the countries they pass through in its application of different programmes. According to a 2017 study, 'most projects are designed to restrict and discourage irregular migration through: migration containment and control (55 % of the budget allocated to migration management); raising awareness about the dangers of irregular migration (4 %) and implementing policy reforms for returns (25 %); and improving the identification of countries' nationals (13 %). Only a meagre 3 % of the budget is allocated to developing safe and regular routes' (Kervyn & Shilhav, 2017, p. 4). As mentioned in the previous sections, irregular or more specifically undocumented migration plays a critical role in securing some people's lives and livelihoods; hence, control or elimination is likely to have negative effects on people (Bakewell, 2020).

On the other hand, most AU activity has also been on the **normative** side. The UNCTAD 2018 report on migration lists the significant ratifications and implementation of protocols on the free movement of people in regional economic communities, labour related joint policy and dispositions on human trafficking. However, much of the current AU framework's focus is still concentrated on legal as well as regulatory arrangements and policies for migration governance, labour migration and education, diaspora engagement, border governance, forced displacement, internal migration, migration and trade, along with the efficiency of schemes such as remittance transfer mechanisms. The effects of already improved and implemented legal and normative systems (together with dispositions for intra-African migration) have as expected produced better conditions for migration and a decrease in negative aspects. But while EU approaches in the Horn of Africa tend to support free movement, the EU's focus in the ECOWAS region on preventing irregular migration is undermining progress on free movement (Castillejo et al, 2019). Intra-African regional migration dynamics have been put to the test by the European focus on securitisation, with significant impacts for instance in the Agadez region in Niger (Tardis, 2019). Nevertheless, according to UNCTAD (2018), intra-African migration is expected to increase with the deepening of regional and

continental integration as well as the facilitated movement of people. Despite efforts to regulate migration within the continent, the overlaying and complex character of regional bodies together with the often arbitrary, discriminatory and contradictory citizenship laws that exist from state to state in Africa (Manby, 2016), make integration projects a real challenge.

Overall, it seems clear that the EU policy agenda on African migration retains a strong focus on irregular migration, even when addressing specific issues of intra-African migration efforts such as job creation. The AU defines eight key pillars in its current migration policy framework, which include a more holistic outlook on intra-African migration. In 2015, at the 25th AU Summit in Johannesburg, concrete proposals in this regard were reiterated, such as: implementation of a continent-wide visa-free regime, the African Passport project; mechanisms for the recognition of labour credentials; together with the operationalisation of existing action plans to combat human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants (Adepoju, 2018). The main areas where a wider structural approach is present are within the current policy framework on irregular migration and migrant smuggling. Here, the AU's view goes beyond strengthening policy and legal frameworks by expanding legal migration pathways and raising awareness about the dangers of smuggling; identifying migrant smuggling cases; along with implementing the investigation and prosecution of migrant smugglers.

> Mobility patterns are constantly changing, which means that policies to address them also need to evolve. It is crucial that opportunities for safe and regular migration within the African continent are widened by easing visa regimes and removing unnecessary barriers to mobility. A key policy priority is therefore to support the FMPP, the AfCFTA and various protocols of the RECs on the free movement of persons, while also addressing underlying challenges, including those related to legal identity and documentation.
>
> *Interview with Aissata Kane, September 2020*

5   Conclusions

Following the 1960s independence era, African migration has reshaped routes as well as regional and international interconnections, with relations being newly established or recovered from the past. Labour mobility, which historically was the main reason for intra-African migration, has continued to dominate the motivation for moving. However, from research studies within the growing literature on African migration, issues of conflict-related displacements together with other factors have come to the fore. Accordingly, it seems that economic motivations and poverty are no longer sufficient to explain what leads people to migrate. Most recently, climate-related displacement has been acknowledged as a central driver of migration, which at least within Africa is expected to be impacted still further by the COVID-19 pandemic for the immediate years ahead. Migrants in Africa, mainly young men, are no longer seen exclusively as poor searching for better economic opportunities.

This study has emphasised the roles of structures and infrastructures that support, configure and are reconfigured by intra-African migration. The description of primary routes, their interconnections and reasons for their existence is inherently and inevitably incomplete due to their constantly shifting contexts. Labour markets and economic opportunities, conflicts and climate are continually changing. Urban emergence, growth and consolidation are dynamic features of settlement throughout the continent. Hence, there is a pressing requirement for deeper and more systematic knowledge. Established routes and settlement patterns are fundamental structures for continued migration and movement, but are continually transformed by these contextual factors. Interrelations and interconnections between the existing structures and infrastructures that shape and maintain them are part of intra-African migration's 'big picture' and its links to extra-continental dynamics.

The main conclusions of this study are drawn primarily from a more holistic understanding of intra-African migration. Established routes and settlement patterns, with their associated migration infrastructures that

range from the material systems of roads and rails to the commercial networks around transportation and economic activity, as well as the social and cultural infrastructures all combine to form the 'big picture' of intra-African migration. For instance, African transportation infrastructures tend to be centred around urban centres, which function as transportation nodes for various levels of mobility and are part of specific routes used by migrants. The intra-African 'big picture' and its links to extra-continental dynamics are crucial for addressing both the general issues – for example, the routes of irregular migration – and the specific issues, such as the types of trafficking taking place in the different routes. It not only permits a more detailed identification of the blind spots, but also clarifies what works for people and hence is worthy of being maintained as well as improved.

The underlying focus of this study has been on how the trends and patterns of intra-African migration are reflected and understood in migration management policies. The analysis confirms an oft-asserted divide between European and African perspectives, both of which are primarily informed by selective and normative agendas. From the European side, there are major preoccupations with irregular migration towards Europe, while for Africa issues of continental free-trade and free circulation are central.

6   Recommendations

'The big picture'	Sustainable development	Address polarisation
⬇	⬇	⬇
Knowledge-based tailored policy and action	Integrated approaches to conducive migration governance	Diplomacy and monitoring

The overarching recommendation of this brief is firstly for decision makers within both the EU and the AU to address and understand the 'big picture' in relation to intra-African migration in all its **various forms**, whilst approaching African migration towards Europe as an extension of intra-African migration. This comprehensive approach will enable **knowledge-based tailored policy and action.**

Secondly, a better understanding of the broader context and continual reconfigurations of migrant routes, settlement and aspirations is crucial in addressing the management of intra-African migration, from the perspective of existing and potential links between migration and **sustainable development**. Migration policy and practice could benefit from investment in conducive migration structures and infrastructures at subnational, national and regional levels, in order to decriminalise irregular migration and bolster the positive aspects such as livelihood options for aspiring migrants. This investment would imply assisting African states by: improving the safety of circulation at various levels; bringing about changes ranging from improvements of material infrastructures to enabling a more pragmatic management of private and public transportation; and promoting free circulation within and across regions as well as encouraging migration brokerage to take more regularised forms. EU funding for African migration should be channelled into these infrastructural areas, on the basis of an informed dialogue with key African member states about the effects not only on safer and regular migration, but also on increased intra-African free movement. This approach would also rely on a more contextual understanding of 'irregularity', since most African labour sectors are predominantly 'irregular' or informal, including those sectors relating to or relying on human mobility.

Thirdly, there are recommendations which focus on the specific political and policy orientations of the EU and the AU. Most importantly, a research-based approach to the migration-development nexus will allow decision makers to **address polarisation regarding migration** through a frank and informed dialogue between both sides. Moving beyond 'one-size-fits-all' approaches to migration governance implies an

acknowledgement that the global migration governance agenda remains dominated by domestic security concerns in the global North. Whilst this approach may appease voters, it has generally failed to address the needs and expectations of active and aspiring migrants across the African continent. This line of thinking also implies a more whole-hearted dialogue with the African Union around its migration governance agenda.

Finally, more comprehensive and nuanced **knowledge production** around African migration should be encouraged and applied in policy making. Regional and national specificities and requirements should be taken into consideration, as well as enabling more substantial monitoring of trends and transformations in intra-African migration together with cross-continental comparisons.

Recommendation 1: Embrace and communicate 'the big picture' on intra-African migration

Rather than a narrow approach, focussed on smuggling, trafficking and displacement, migration policy should be linked and inspired by other topics, most notably in relation to livelihoods, youth empowerment, gender mainstreaming and urbanisation. The ILO and UN-Habitat should be obvious intermediaries between migration, labour and urban policy, at subnational, national, regional and continental levels.

Aspects related to the long-term historical configuration of circulation routes; urban growth related to circulation within the continent; the expansion of the informal transportation sector; the regional consolidation and complexification of migration; or the 'professionalisation' of migration facilitators, are themes that explain migration in the continent much better than the regulatory approach implied by policies addressing the 'root causes' of African migration. As an example, efforts to regulate passport and visa regimes may not be so relevant when tackling 'undocumented' migration in contexts where frequent bypassing of systems is the norm.

EU policy makers, in particular, can learn from their predecessors prior to the 2015 European refugee crisis, since their approach was anchored more in a 'big picture' approach to sustainable migration governance. Rather than the current reframing of development assistance to education, poverty reduction, livelihoods and skills training as addressing the 'root causes' of migration, migration-related earmarked funding such as the Trust Fund should be dedicated to dealing with ensuring safe, orderly and regular migration within Africa.

Furthermore, promoting the 'big picture' on African migration should be embraced by the EU as a **communication and dissemination strategy**, which will contribute to increased awareness of the multiplicity and complexity of issues involved in intra-African migration. European policy reform relies to a significant level on public opinion. Promoting a more realistic understanding of the scale and scope of African migration through targeted advocacy, the dissemination of publications together with the promotion of websites and databases can inform public opinion. By extension, this builds political will to commit to better policy and practice.

Recommendation 2: Reframe migration management from a security to a development-focussed approach

Moving beyond 'one-size-fits-all' approaches to migration governance implies an acknowledgement that the global migration governance agenda remains dominated by domestic security concerns in the global North. Whilst this approach may appease voters, it has generally failed to address the needs and expectations of active and aspiring migrants across the African continent. For instance, EU investments in urban and transportation infrastructure in Africa may benefit the security of female or underage migrants. Intra-African regularisation may also reduce incentives for criminal trafficking activities. This line of thinking implies a more whole-hearted **dialogue with the African Union** around its migration governance agenda. The EU and AU increasingly need to reframe migration policies from security to development focussed, in line with the Global Compact for Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration. Adherence to the UN compact should come alongside the development approach as well as to the SDGs, namely SDG9 on sustainable

infrastructure. The EU has already committed to a genuine partnership with Africa, which includes migration policy. Credibility and coherence of the EU position on migration governance can be enhanced by promoting more regularity in intra- and extra-African migration and the implementation of the AfCTA. It is vital for this partnership that European member states and their representatives at EU level honour their commitments regarding migration governance, which would imply a fundamental shift towards the African agenda for investing in migration as a development resource. In more practical terms, this implies the inclusion of a different set of actors in the framing and implementation of migration policies at national, sub-regional, continental and global levels, for example national and multinational organisations and associations involved with workers' rights as well as urban and rural livelihoods. The EU can help fill the gaps in infrastructure and capacity building for regularisation.

Recommendation 3: Invest in intra-African migration-conducive regulation and infrastructures

Migration policy and practice could benefit from higher investments in **conducive intra-African migration infrastructures** at subnational, national and regional levels, in order to decriminalise irregular migration and bolster livelihood options for aspiring migrants. This investment would imply assisting African states in: making circulation at various levels more safe, orderly and regular; bringing about improvements to material infrastructures, primarily larger regional and inter-urban roads, and enabling a more pragmatic management of private and public transportation; promoting free circulation within and across regions, improving capacity in cross-border cooperation and management as well as encouraging migration brokerage to take more regularised forms. EU funding for African migration could be channelled for these infrastructural areas, within an informed dialogue with key African member states about the effects on safer and more regular migration and on increased intra-African free movement. These measures should include support to improved passport and visa information exchange, streamlining procedures for, and decreasing prices of, visas and labour permits and measures against brain drain. By investing in intra- and extra-African migration as a development resource – through the overall principle of the free circulation of labour and targeted interventions to recruit migrant labour to under-staffed sectors of both African and European economies – the EU has a key role to play in regularising African migration through development-related incentives rather than security-related restrictions. This approach would also rely on a more contextual understanding of 'irregularity', since most African labour sectors are predominantly 'irregular' or informal, including those sectors relating to or relying on human mobility. Both the synergies of supporting intra-African migration – such as youth employment, women's empowerment – and the trade-offs like increasing inequalities, potentially higher urban-rural divides, increased pressure on the environment, pressure on social protection in hosting countries or xenophobia need to be carefully assessed when designing policy and action. Coherence also needs to be assured, for instance regarding other partnerships such as the African Peace Facility or the results of the ACP-EU Migration Action.

Recommendation 4: Link migration governance to urban development

Migration flows produce new settlement spaces and continually change those that already exist; the physical structures of migration support the movements and are simultaneously shaped by them. In that regard, urban centres are key nodes in intra-African migration infrastructures. As a central field of intersection, research and policy design relating to urbanisation and rural-urban mobilities is vital to engage with the step-wise nature of intra-African migration, which implies that trans-continental migrants have generally moved on from their initial destinations in their immediate sub-regions. This observation brings migration governance into close conversation with urban development policy and improved urban planning; a relationship that should be actively pursued and elaborated at EU level as well as in terms of partnerships with international and national partners.

Recommendation 5: Address the polarisation in African and European perspectives on African migration

Addressing intra-African migration in the current context of EU and AU policy is centred on concerns about migration management. There is a common perception in the continent and the EU that irregular migration and all the negative aspects it entails need to be 'regularised'. However, for Europe, the concern associated with this is extra-African migration to Europe and for the AU the objectives of continental free-circulation are more important. The EU mostly sees migration from Africa as a trend that needs to be controlled, especially since the migrant crisis, and its links to intra-African migration are increasingly clearer. The African Union in turn clearly assumes that with implementation of the AfCFTA, free movement of labour and trade throughout Africa will contribute to Africa's development. As a starting point, an EU-Africa dialogue should explicitly **address the current polarisation** in African and European perspectives on African migration.

Within this dialogue, there should be support for the **monitoring** of current developments in freer intra-African migration, which is central to the African agenda, and increased appropriation and leadership of migration issues by African decision makers at national, regional, and continental levels. An informed understanding of the outcomes of free movement policies in the continent can help in redefining EU-Africa relations regarding migration policy over the coming decades.

Recommendation 6: Comprehensively identify and map the structures and infrastructures of intra-African migration in their variety

The European Parliament should encourage **knowledge production and dissemination** that account for the scale, scope, context and variability of intra-African migration, both as a valuable resource in its own right and as a tool to inform decision and policy making regarding migration. Both academics and policy stakeholders need to develop comprehensive studies about intra-African migration that identify and describe the relations and interconnections between the circulation routes, the spaces integrated in these circulations and the social, economic and material infrastructures that support migration. Research conducted within programmes such as the Horizon Europe research framework 2021-2027 or by the European Commission's DG International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) can contribute to this end. The European Union's and the African Union's continental policy bodies need to lead efforts in financing and making available a wealth of information and analysis that can inform all levels of governance. Support to European stakeholders as well as African stakeholders in conducting such studies can be mobilised from varied sources, but the EU Emergency Trust Fund is undoubtedly key in this sense. This work should be developed from existing platforms – for instance, the Migration Data Portal is already geared towards providing 'the bigger picture' of migration and could be further improved to include data about flows, routes, settlement and infrastructure.

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Annexes

1. List of interviews

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