Awareness raising and information campaigns on the risks of irregular migration in Pakistan

Background Report

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Contents

Executive Summary

Although migration information campaigns have become an increasingly popular policy tool for European policy-makers to address irregular migration flows, they have faced challenges in academia and in the public debate, including because of limited evidence of their effectiveness.

➢ Despite clear persisting limitations, some of the key assumptions behind migration information campaigns can be confirmed, at least for migration from Pakistan.

➢ Migration information campaigns can therefore be effective interventions, within the scope of certain caveats and provided they are built on a sound understanding of macro, meso and micro drivers of migration decision-making in the country context, as well as lessons learned from previous campaigns regarding trusted messengers, relevance of content, messaging (framing) and target group segmentation.

➢ The PARIM project seeks to provide information and raise awareness among potential migrants in Pakistan through a series of campaigns communicating balanced information about the dangers and consequences of irregular migration, options for legal migration, and the legal, social and economic realities of life in Europe.

➢ This background report – a first step in the research component building the evidence base of PARIM – analyses the key concepts and assumptions behind migration information campaigns and reviews it against relevant evidence on migration patterns from Pakistan.

Pakistan is among the most significant emigration countries worldwide. The majority of emigration from Pakistan is of regular (legal) character, almost exclusively to the Gulf, and mostly low-skilled and short-term.

Pakistani emigrants are on average young, male, educated, and not from the very poorest households. Those going to Europe are also more likely to be unmarried.

Information about the risks and dangers involved in irregular migration is lacking in Pakistan. Although potential migrants and their families have a general awareness that irregular migration is risky, potential migrants lack concrete information that would allow them to prepare. Available information is also inaccurate or incomplete, since smugglers, extended families and friends do not share the full information, be it intentionally or unintentionally. Evidence on whether new information (from a campaign) is trusted and whether it will affect knowledge, perceptions and/or attitudes, is still inconclusive. Nevertheless, the arguably most important assumption behind migration information campaigns, that new information will indeed affect behaviour, has been directly and indirectly confirmed by recent studies and impact evaluations of migration information campaigns (although not directly for the Pakistani context).

Economic drivers are predominant for migration from Pakistan. Irregular migration may be "worth it" financially, as costs can be recuperated within a few years, depending on current cost of smuggling and other illicit services. Seeking (better) **education opportunities** is the second most prevalent motive, and especially relevant for potential migrants toward Europe. Feeling under threat is also a motive for some, highlighting the need to also address protection needs through campaigns.

Smugglers are often perceived as sources of trusted information, but can be deceptive. The role of smugglers is ambivalent: They are facilitators of migration, but migrants are also – sometimes precariously – dependent on them. Smugglers actively recruit in some (rural) areas of Pakistan, thereby promoting irregular migration channels. Migrants (and their families) have been shown to put great care in the choice of smugglers, but they do so under difficult conditions, including information asymmetry and difficulty in confirming reputations.

Potential migrants lack concrete information about possible negative scenarios that would actually allow them to prepare, and can fall victim to fraud, exploitation, or human trafficking. Since potential migrants already have a high risk awareness, **increased awareness and knowledge of risks may have little influence on migration behaviour.** Moreover, studies have shown that

migrants will disregard information around (irregular) migration if they see **the underlying intention as preventing them from migrating altogether requiring careful messaging**.

(Irregular) migration can be attractive for young male Pakistanis, including because of the associated risks that need to be overcome. There is a "romantic appeal" to irregular migration, as it can be seen as a kind of risky adventure, again requiring careful calibration of campaign messages.

The decision to emigrate is often a household income strategy and migration is financed through household networks. Immediate household or family therefore play a significant role in making the actual decision to emigrate.

However, the role of families/households is not exclusively positive. There are also those migrants who have broken ties with their families or wish to escape from the household, rather than contribute to it, including because they may have protection needs.

Social networks (extended family and friends) play a significant role in Pakistan in providing information on migration, as well as facilitating migration in other ways. Migrants who are already abroad also contribute to information asymmetries because they may not share the truth about their more negative experiences.

Information available on the internet, and particularly social media, appears to be less relevant compared to social ties. Online interactions can be seen as an extension or facilitation of face-to-face interaction. Studies also point towards the social stratification (inequality) evident in access to internet/social media: not everyone has access, and those who are illiterate are excluded.

Although legal frameworks are in place that facilitate regular migration, they are hampered by very high costs for migrants, and different forms of exploitation throughout the process – negatively affecting the major alternative to irregular migration. The average cost for regular migration from Pakistan (to Saudi Arabia and UAE) is actually higher than the average costs for other major origin countries. Although (potential) migrants may expect that direct employment through friends or family should be more cost effective and lead to a better migration experience overall, ex-post studies show that migration through government-licensed agents lead to better outcomes for migrants.

Migration information campaigns, their content, messaging (framing) and target group design need to be tailored to the country context in order to be relevant for potential migrants. However, since previous campaigns have not published their results, there is limited available scientific evidence that can be relied upon for the specifics of campaign design. While the ultimate aim of information campaigns – wishing to influence target group behaviour – is clear in theory, there is still much debate around how this can be achieved in practice, and how the impact of a campaign can be measured.

Migration information campaigns cannot address the demand side of irregular migration. Considering that there is a lack of legal migration channels towards Europe, while there continues to be a demand for irregular (low-paid, low-skilled, exploitable) workers, including in (specific sectors in) Europe, migrants may follow the logic of available work opportunities rather than state regulations (when the two are in conflict).

1   Introduction

Pakistan is among the most significant emigration countries worldwide. The majority of emigration from Pakistan is of regular (legal) character, almost exclusively to the Gulf, and mostly low-skilled and short-term. Irregular migration plays less of a role for the main (Gulf) destination countries[1], but mixed migration flows are relevant for migration towards Europe and Oceania. Pakistanis are amongst the largest groups of smuggled persons detected in Europe.[2]

According to a 2009 baseline study, 38% of Pakistani irregular migrants emigrated with the support of smugglers[3]. Smugglers actively recruit in some (rural) areas of Pakistan, including through sub-agents who in many cases are themselves returned migrants.[4] Some smugglers pretend that they are offering regular migration channels to Europe, while others are open about the clandestine nature of their services. In some cases, aspiring migrants are simply defrauded for the fees and never taken abroad.[5] Some Pakistanis wishing to emigrate also fall victim to traffickers. Labour and sex trafficking occurs to the main destination countries in Europe and the Gulf states, and in countries along the route, including through false job offers through illegal middlemen and overcharging of fees, which then can lead to bonded labour.[6] At the same time and as will be shown in this report, potential migrants from Pakistan have demonstrably limited awareness and information about the risks involved in (irregular) migration, including because of information asymmetries between migrants and their facilitators.

Within this context, the project "Awareness raising and information campaigns on the risks of irregular migration in Pakistan (PARIM)" therefore seeks to provide information and raise awareness among potential migrants in Pakistan through a series of campaigns communicating balanced information about the dangers and consequences of irregular migration, options for legal migration, and the legal, social and economic realities of life in Europe. The campaigns will focus on potential and intending migrants (as well as their "key influencers") in (irregular) migration-prone areas in Pakistan through a mix of methods, including community awareness raising, media (including social media) campaigns, capacity building with civil society organisations (CSOs) and journalists, and by working with members of the diaspora. In these activities, PARIM can build on the work of ICMPD's Migrant Resources Centres (MRCs) in Islamabad and Lahore, which have engaged in awareness raising and counselling for potential migrants since 2016.

Migration information campaigns generally seek to protect migrants from harm and reduce the risks involved in irregular migration, including by deterring migrants from irregular migration. As one answer to irregular migration flows towards Europe, EU Members States and the European Commission itself have commissioned campaigns in trying to combat irregular migration. Yet the scientific evidence around migration information campaigns and their effectiveness is still limited. This report finds that although available evidence on the impact of migration information campaigns is overall still limited, sometimes contradictory on the finer points, and clearly requiring further inquiry, some of the key assumptions behind migration information campaigns can be confirmed, at least for migration from Pakistan.

In order to inform subsequent project activities (including a survey among potential Pakistani migrants and the design and implementation of campaign activities), this background report analyses the key concepts and assumptions behind migration information campaigns and reviews relevant evidence, including from the context of Pakistan. It seeks to answer the following questions:

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[1] Although recent evidence does demonstrate some smuggling routes by air from South Asia via Pakistan and Gulf Cooperation Countries, which then serve either as destination countries for irregular migrants or transit countries to Western Europe. See UNODC, "Global Study on Smuggling of Migrants" (Vienna, 2018) p. 116.
[2] Frontex, "Risk Analysis for 2020" (Warsaw, 2020); Frontex, "Risk Analysis for 2016" (Warsaw, 2016).
[3] ActionAid and BEFARe, "Baseline Study on Illegal Migration , Human Smuggling and Trafficking in Pakistan" (Peshawar, 2009).
[4] Damla B Aksel et al., "Study on Smuggling of Migrants: Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Case Study 3: Pakistan – Turkey – Greece," *European Migration Network Report*, 2016, 24.
[5] Aksel et al., 24.
[6] USDOS, "2020 Trafficking in Persons Report: Pakistan," 2020..

- What are the key assumptions behind migration information campaigns? What evidence is available demonstrating their effectiveness? What can be learned from previous campaigns in terms of factors improving their effectiveness?

- What are the drivers of (irregular) migration in the context of Pakistan that need to be taken into account by a migration information campaign, including macro-level (structural), meso-level (facilitating) and micro-level (individual) factors driving migration? What are potential migrants' information needs and gaps, their motivations and "key influencers" impacting their decision-making? What needs to be addressed through further research?

The report sets out by introducing key concepts relevant to the report and the project (Chapter 2). Raising awareness on irregular migration requires an in-depth understanding of firstly, migrant decision-making and secondly, the dynamics of irregular migration. A discussion of these two topics is followed by a short introduction to migration information campaigns. Chapter 3 delves into the migration context in Pakistan. It provides an overview of main migration trends and analyses available scientific literature on the drivers of migration from Pakistan, presenting the profile of Pakistani emigrants, structural drivers as well as challenges in the migration process, and summarises factors driving irregular migration in particular. It concludes by reviewing previous and ongoing migration information campaigns in Pakistan. Chapter 4 then digs into the aims, assumptions and evidence behind migration information campaigns, focusing on those campaigns with a similar target group of potential and intending migrants.[7] While the ultimate aim of information campaigns – influencing target group behaviour – is clear in theory, there is still much debate about how this can be achieved in practice, and how the impact of a campaign can be measured. Reviewing recent studies and campaigns that have put particular effort in making their outcomes available for scientific discussion, the Chapter focuses on the relevance of information provision for potential migrants and the link between information and behavioural change (i.e. not migrating irregularly) which is at the heart of any information campaign. The Chapter then concludes by summarising the (still limited) literature on how migration information campaigns can be improved, focusing on the role of trusted messengers and channels, the relevance of content, messaging and the role of risk perceptions, and finally target group segmentation – thus laying the groundwork for communication and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) strategies to be further elaborated throughout the PARIM project.

2 Key terms and definitions

2.1 Introduction

This section will introduce key concepts relevant for migration information campaigns. In order to understand how interventions can impact on potential migrants' decisions for or against irregular migration, it is necessary to understand firstly, factors influencing migrant decision-making, and secondly, the dynamics of irregular migration. A discussion of these two topics is followed by a short introduction to migration information campaigns (to be discussed in more detail in chapter 4). The key terms presented here, based on the current state-of-the-art in migration research, are seen as a "living document" which can be further refined as the project progresses. In addition, the last pages of the report include a glossary on the most important terms used in the report and in the PARIM project.

2.2 Migration aspirations, decision-making processes and drivers of migration

The process that leads a person from considering migration, to actually leaving, has long been in the interest of migration researchers. Since the majority of the world's population actually stay put, the question then is what brings other people to move. Within a given country context, there are usually many more people who (perhaps vaguely) aspire to migrate (also referred to as potential migrants, or those with migration aspirations), but much fewer who make concrete steps towards migration (referred to as intending migrants, those with migration

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[7] In line with the aims and target groups of the PARIM project, and following the approach taken by previous literature reviews in this area, the report mostly excludes review of anti-trafficking campaigns and campaigns seeking to improve the public image of migrants residing in Europe.

intentions or plans), and again fewer who actually migrate, according to global results from the Gallup World Poll between 2010 and 2015.[8]

This means that individual aspirations[9] and capabilities interact with what is termed the drivers of migration. One model that aims to provide a framework for these complex interactions was developed by Black et al. for the British Government Office for Science (see Figure 1 below).[10] Although developed in the context of understanding the influence of climate change, it is relevant to understanding migration dynamics overall. In the Black et al. model, individual aspiration and capability to emigrate interacts with macro (structural) factors, micro (individual) factors, and meso level factors that can form obstacles or facilitators. Structural factors include the political and economic situation in the origin country, as well as actual and perceived differences between origin and destination country (such as wage differentials). The micro (individual) factors are the characteristics of the household and the individual aspiring to emigrate, where decision-making happens at the individual level. They include the age, gender and education levels that are factors typical of migrants in a given context, and in some cases, such as income level, prerequisites for becoming a migrant. The meso level includes factors that can form obstacles or facilitators, such as the availability of frameworks for regular migration, the cost (affordability) of moving, the availability of supportive social networks, technology, recruitment agencies or smugglers in place.[11]

Figure 1: Black et al.'s framework for the drivers of migration at macro, meso and micro level
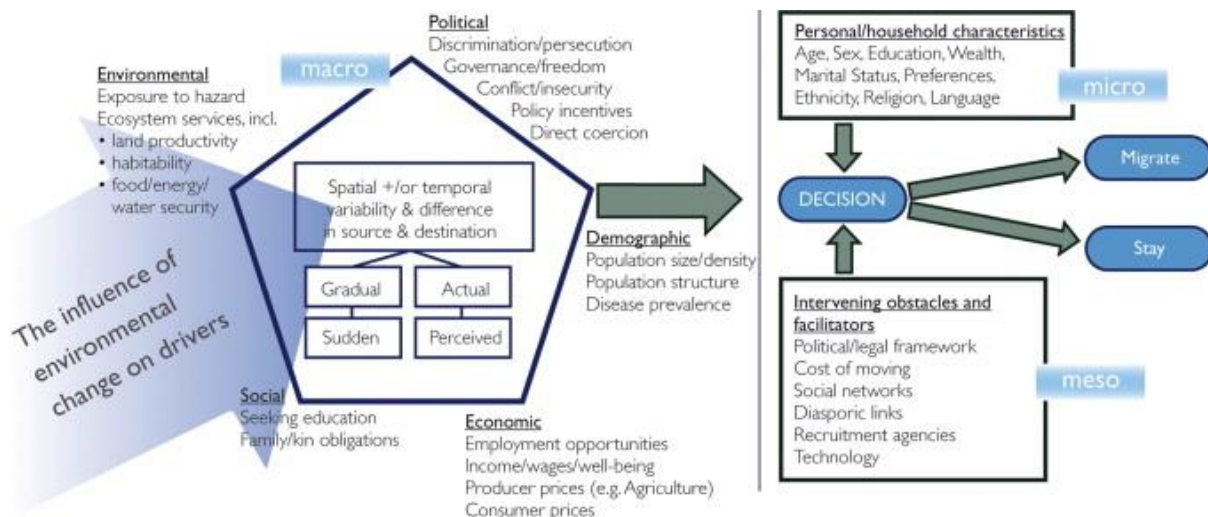
Source: Black et al. (2011), S5

Providing a useful addition to the Black et al. model, Carling's 2017 model[12] (see Figure 2) describes migration from the individual perspective. Rather than being made in one moment in time, migration decision-making at the individual level is best thought of as an ongoing process.[13] General conditions and prospects (the macro

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[8] Silva Migali and M Scipioni, "A Global Analysis of Intentions to Migrate," *JCR Technical Report*, 2018, 8–9. Rates of aspiring migrants are actually lower in Pakistan when compared to other countries in the region. See James Dennison, "Understanding and Explaining Attitudes to Migration in the Silk Routes and South Asian Countries" (Vienna: ICMPD, 2020), 21.

[9] The terms "aspiring migrant" "potential migrant", "prospective migrant" and "intending migrant" are often used interchangeably to vaguely refer to a person who is interested in emigration; also in the academic literature, there is so far no consensus on the terminology. When examining migration intentions more closely (see above), it makes sense to distinguish those who are merely interested in migration or have a desire or wish to emigrate – the often quite large number of *potential* migrants – from those who have made concrete migration intentions and have made plans and preparations, such as procuring a passport or applying for a visa – *intending* migrants.
In the context of the PARIM project, individuals who participate in activities may differ strongly between mere curiosity and a wish for information, and using the MRC to (further) intensify their preparations for emigration. Therefore, participants in project activities are referred to as "potential and intending migrants", as they can be either. "Prospective migrant" should be avoided in favour of "intending" migrant, since the latter refers more clearly to intentions.

[10] Richard Black et al., "The Effect of Environmental Change on Human Migration," *Global Environmental Change* 21 (2011): S3–11, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2011.10.001.

[11] Black et al., S5.

[12] Jørgen Carling, "How Does Migration Arise?," in *Ideas to Inform International Cooperation on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*, ed. M. McAuliffe and M. Klein Solomon (Geneva: IOM, 2017), 19–26.

[13] Jørgen Carling and Francis Collins, "Aspiration , Desire and Drivers of Migration," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44, no. 6 (2017): 6, https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1384134.

factors in the Black et al. model) can lead to a desire for change in a person's life, which can then lead to the formation of migration aspirations – although, as Carling points out, a desire for change could also generate other ideas for one's future, such as pursuing education, if they appear feasible.[14]

Figure 2: Carling's model of the mechanisms that produce migration
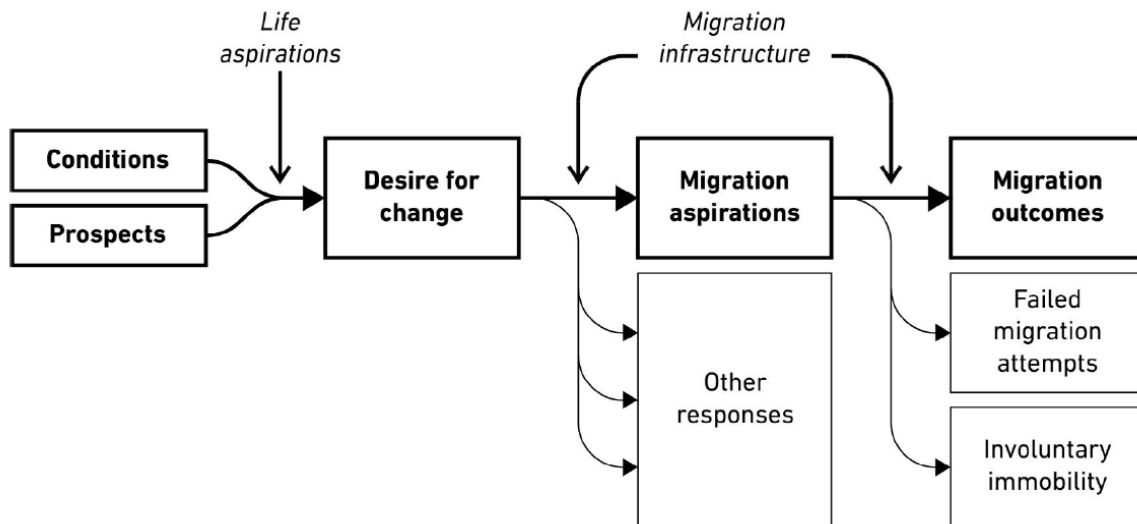
Source: Carling 2017

A common misconception of migration decision-making is the idea of a person making the rational choice of going wherever there is higher income.[15] This has been thoroughly rebuked by empirical research. Decisions are rather made within the context of the household, since resources often need to be pooled to enable migration, and households often use the migration of at least one member as a risk mitigating strategy. This strategy has been confirmed even if there is no income difference, contesting any simplistic understanding of economic drivers and motives.[16] However, the household should also not be over-emphasised or seen as a harmonious unit – certainly, there are also mixed motives or situations where for instance an individual may want to escape from their family, rather than contribute to it.[17] Conversely, where family/household members may be against migration, young members may decide to leave anyway.[18] Migration aspirations and intentions are also shaped by established migration networks or "cultures of migration" in which migration spreads as an idea, and becomes more feasible.[19] Studies on transnationalism have demonstrated how migrants maintain ties across borders and time in new ways, transforming the lives both of those who left and those who stayed.[20] Social networks play a crucial role to proceed from intention to actual migration, including social contacts with

[14] Carling, "How Does Migration Arise?," 21–23.

[15] Stephen Castles et al., *Irregular Migration: Causes, Patterns, and Strategies*, 2012, 121, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-4110-2_9; Catia Batista and David McKenzie, "Testing Classic Theories of Migration in the Lab," Working Paper, 2018.

[16] Stephen Castles, Hein de Haas, and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, 5th ed. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 38–39.

[17] Michaela Maroufof and Hara Kouki, "Migrating from Pakistan to Greece: Re-Visiting Agency in Times of Crisis," *European Journal of Migration and Law* 19, no. 1 (2017): 77–100, https://doi.org/10.1163/15718166-12342116; Maria Bivand Erdal, "Who Is the Money for? Remittances within and beyond the Household in Pakistan," *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 21, no. 4 (2012): 437–57, https://doi.org/10.1177/011719681202100401; Castles, Haas, and Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*; Ali Nobil Ahmad, "The Romantic Appeal of Illegal Migration: Gender, Masculinity and Human Smuggling from Pakistan," in *Illegal Migration and Gender in a Global and Historical Perspective*, ed. Marlou Schrover et al. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), https://doi.org/10.5117/9789089640475.

[18] Maryam Aslany et al., "Systematic Review of Determinants of Migration Aspirations," *QuantMig Project Deliverable D2.2.* (Southampton, 2021), 8; Ahmad, "The Romantic Appeal of Illegal Migration: Gender, Masculinity and Human Smuggling from Pakistan."

[19] Black et al., "The Effect of Environmental Change on Human Migration"; Castles et al., *Irregular Migration: Causes, Patterns, and Strategies*, 121.

[20] Steven Vertovec, *Transnationalism* (2009: Routledge, n.d.).

migrants who have already "made it", or friends or family who have returned.[21] As Carling notes, "*few things predict migration as much as social networks with past migrants.*"[22]

Social networks further interact (and overlap) with what is sometimes called the "migration industry", people who have an interest in the continuation of migration. This includes employers abroad who are searching for migrants and intermediaries who interact between employers and potential migrants, including recruitment organisations, agents, and smugglers.[23] While social networks and recruiters/smugglers enable migration, research also shows that there are often significant information asymmetries between migrants and their facilitators[24]. Some smugglers pretend that they are offering regular migration channels to Europe, while others are open about the clandestine nature of their services. In some cases, aspiring migrants are simply defrauded for the fees and never taken abroad.[25] In addition, while some friends or relatives may be of genuine help, social networks have also been shown to be complicit in exploitation of (potential) migrants. Information shared by social networks may not be correct.[26] Migrants who are already abroad also contribute to information asymmetries because they very often feel that they have to "put on a brave face" and not share the truth about their sometimes dire circumstances with those at home.[27]

But what differentiates migrants from non-migrants? The personal characteristics connected to individual-level migration decision-making have only recently received more scholarly attention. What can be learned from general socio-demographics of migrants are their typical age, gender, education, marital status and income levels, amongst others factors (see the model of Black et al. above). Migrants are generally likely to be young and not from the poorest households;[28] other socio-demographic characteristics vary between origin contexts.

In a recent systematic literature review, Hagen-Zanker and Hennessey review evidence on the more "unobservable" characteristics of migrants, meaning traits that cannot be easily researched because they relate to dynamics inside (potential) migrants' minds. These include "psychological, cognitive, emotional, and behavioural factors, as well as individuals' personal and normative belief and value systems."[29] For instance, research on imagination has shown that the idea of migration as a feasible and desirable undertaking first needs to exist in people's minds before it happens. As a personal adventure, "*migration can be valued – and yearned for – in its own right.*"[30] People may imagine reinventing themselves in different ways through migration, for instance with regard to their lifestyle, social status or gender roles. Building on ideas of life elsewhere, and the appeal of consumerism spread by decades of intensified globalisation and the associated global flows of (media) images,[31] potential migrants also imagine their destinations and compare them against each other, and their current situation.[32]

Emotions and feelings have been shown to play a vital role in migration-decision making and interlink with economic motives, including emotions/feelings of shame, guilt, jealousy, fear, (lack of) hope, frustration, love,

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[21] IOM, "Migration Flows from Afghanistan and Pakistan towards Europe: Understanding Data Gaps and Recommendations," 2016, 55–56.

[22] Carling, "How Does Migration Arise?," 22; see also Maryam Aslany et al., "Systematic Review of Determinants of Migration Aspirations," *QuantMig Project Deliverable D2.2.* (Southampton, 2021), 47.

[23] Castles, Haas, and Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, 41; Optimity Advisors, ICMPD, and ECRE, "A Study on Smuggling of Migrants - Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Final Report." (Brussels, 2015), 29.

[24] In this context, facilitator is meant in the broad sense of anyone who helps potential migrants in their migration process, be it regular or irregular, including financial support, information, help with documents, transportation, housing etc.

[25] Aksel et al., "Study on Smuggling of Migrants: Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Case Study 3: Pakistan – Turkey – Greece," 24.

[26] Gabriella Sanchez et al., "A Study of the Communication Channels Used by Migrants and Asylum Seekers in Italy , with a Particular Focus on Online and Social Media," 2018.

[27] Jessica Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 2014, 32, www.securelivelihoods.org.

[28] See also Aslany et al., "Systematic Review of Determinants of Migration Aspirations"; Castles, Haas, and Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*.

[29] Jessica Hagen-Zanker and Gemma Hennessey, "What Do We Know about the Subjective and Intangible Factors That Shape Migration Decision-Making? A Review of the Literature from Low and Middle Income Countries" (Oslo, 2021), 7.

[30] Jørgen Carling and Kerilyn Schewel, "Revisiting Aspiration and Ability in International Migration," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44, no. 6 (April 26, 2018): 954, https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1384146. see also for Pakistan: Ahmad, "The Romantic Appeal of Illegal Migration: Gender, Masculinity and Human Smuggling from Pakistan."

[31] Carling, "How Does Migration Arise?," 21.; see Ahmad 2008, 137-139, for an ethnographic account from the Pakistani context.

[32] Hagen-Zanker and Hennessey, "What Do We Know about the Subjective and Intangible Factors That Shape Migration Decision-Making? A Review of the Literature from Low and Middle Income Countries," 10–12.

emotional attachment, intimacy and even sexual desire.[33] There is still a lack of research into how beliefs and values shape migration decisions.[34] Religious and spiritual beliefs may provide the hope needed to embark on the journey. They can also influence destination choice as different destinations are imagined to be a more or less "moral" or fitting religious environment.[35] Other studies find that religious beliefs are tied to fatalist beliefs. These mean that people are more likely to disregard risk and migrate irregularly.[36] Relatedly, confidence or the belief in ones' abilities is also positively related to migration.[37] Religiosity and attachment to traditional values can also be a motive for return migration (from Europe).[38]

There is also research into migrants' personality traits, following for instance the "Big Five" personality traits classification. There are studies demonstrating that migrants are more open to and curious about new experiences, that people who are more sociable/extroverted are more likely to migrate.[39] Furthermore, studies have found that migrants are more patient (a relevant trait since the migration process can often be lengthy), and some studies show that they may be more optimistic.[40]

Attitudes towards risk among migrants are an aspect particularly relevant to irregular migration. Indeed, studies have shown that (potential) migrants are more tolerant towards risk (i.e. more willing to engage in risky behaviour). Risk is often misunderstood in migration information campaigns, as migrants are sometimes assumed completely ignorant of the risks involved in irregular migration.[41] However, it is important to keep in mind that risk only implies the likelihood of an event occurring, while the outcome may be negative *or* positive – both are possible.[42] Individual characteristics interlink with subjective perceptions of risks, which are based on trusted information and which can also change based on new experiences. However, since migrants have a general awareness that migration is risky, they may receive new information in a filtered way and dismiss it easily.[43] Studies have shown that migrants will disregard information around (irregular) migration if they see the underlying intention as preventing them from migrating altogether.[44] They may discount reports of failed migration as not relevant for them, because they see it as individual bad luck or bad decision-making.[45] For instance, migrants may see long-term risks (such as unemployment) more problematic than the short-term risk to their life in irregular migration.[46] Perceived opportunities abroad may thus easily outweigh risks of the irregular journey. Migration information campaigns therefore need to carefully navigate such individual-level factors, as will be discussed in Chapter 4.

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[33] Hagen-Zanker and Hennessey, 17–24; for Pakistan, see also Ahmad 2008

[34] Hagen-Zanker and Hennessey, "What Do We Know about the Subjective and Intangible Factors That Shape Migration Decision-Making? A Review of the Literature from Low and Middle Income Countries," 25.

[35] Hagen-Zanker and Hennessey, 11–12.

[36] Hagen-Zanker and Hennessey, 25–26; Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe* (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2017); María Hernández-Carretero and Jørgen Carling, "Beyond 'Kamikaze Migrants': Risk Taking in West African Boat Migration to Europe," *Human Organization* 71, no. 4 (2012): 407–16.

[37] Hagen-Zanker and Hennessey, "What Do We Know about the Subjective and Intangible Factors That Shape Migration Decision-Making? A Review of the Literature from Low and Middle Income Countries," 31; Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*.

[38] Hagen-Zanker and Hennessey, "What Do We Know about the Subjective and Intangible Factors That Shape Migration Decision-Making? A Review of the Literature from Low and Middle Income Countries," 27–28.

[39] Hagen-Zanker and Hennessey, 13–14.

[40] Hagen-Zanker and Hennessey, 14.

[41] Seefar, "3E Impact. Ethical, Engaged & Effective. Running Communications on Irregular Migration from Kos to Kandahar," n.d., 15–18.

[42] Other studies do use a definition of risk as the likelihood of negative outcomes, for instance Hernandez and Carling (2012) in the context of journeys from West Africa including sea crossing via the Mediterranean. However, the more neutral definition seems appropriate to Pakistan since, while there are many risks associated with irregular migration, the risk of death is arguably lower as compared to boat journeys along the (Central) Mediterranean route (see also migrants deaths in the Mediterranean documented by IOM, https://missingmigrants.iom.int/, and description of route risks in UNODC 2018, p110). See Hagen-Zanker and Hennessey, "What Do We Know about the Subjective and Intangible Factors That Shape Migration Decision-Making? A Review of the Literature from Low and Middle Income Countries," 15.

[43] Hernández-Carretero and Carling, "Beyond 'Kamikaze Migrants': Risk Taking in West African Boat Migration to Europe"; D Schans and C Optekamp, "Raising Awareness, Changing Behavior? Combatting Irregular Migration through Information Campaigns," 2016, 17, www.wodc.nl.; Jessica Hagen-Zanker and Richard Mallett, "Journeys to Europe: The Role of Policy in Migrant Decision-Making," *ODI Insights*, ODI Insights (London, 2016), 26, https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.1640.4246.

[44] Hernández-Carretero and Carling, "Beyond 'Kamikaze Migrants': Risk Taking in West African Boat Migration to Europe"; Charles Heller, "Perception Management - Deterring Potential Migrants through Information Campaigns," *Global Media and Communication* 10, no. 3 (2014): 303–18, https://doi.org/10.1177/1742766514552355.

[45] Jacob Townsend and Christel Oomen, "Before the Boat: Understanding the Migrant Journey," 2015, 1–26; Hernández-Carretero and Carling, "Beyond 'Kamikaze Migrants': Risk Taking in West African Boat Migration to Europe."

[46] Townsend and Oomen, "Before the Boat: Understanding the Migrant Journey," 5.

2.3 Irregular migration

The EMN glossary defines irregular migration as the "*movement of persons to a new place of residence or transit that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries*." Irregular migration can firstly refer to the process of crossing borders irregularly (this can also include those who were smuggled or trafficked[47]), and secondly to those who entered a country in a regular manner, but then transition into irregular status, for instance through overstaying of (legal) visas, and rejected asylum seekers who continue to stay. The first form is more relevant to PARIM as the campaign aims to address irregular migration from the outset. Although putting irregular migration in numbers is notoriously difficult because of its hidden nature, previous estimates indicate that globally most migrants have a regular status, with 10-15% of the global migrant population living with irregular status.[48] Thus, although it is a major policy concern for EU Member States, its global prevalence should also not be exaggerated.

Factors driving irregular migration include the lack of regular migration channels the (perceived and actual) difficulty in accessing embassies and visas,[49] a demand for irregular workers in informal economies of destination countries (including in some sectors of Western and Southern Europe[50]), migrants' social networks (leading to chain migration), and the "migration industry", including smuggling networks (see above).[51] While irregular migration does not always require the use of smuggling networks, in the Pakistani case it is quite prevalent (see next chapter). Smuggling networks overlap with family/social networks and have similar facilitating roles.[52] Studies have shown that smugglers can become active recruiters, thereby promoting irregular migration channels.[53] When smuggling is analysed as a business, it becomes evident that they have an interest in its continuity. The role of smugglers can be understood as ambivalent: they are facilitators of migration, but migrants are also – sometimes precariously – dependent on them.[54]

A systematic review of existing studies on irregular migration conducted in 2015 showed that destination choice differs from regular migration in some crucial ways. It is influenced by economic factors (depending on what migrants can afford[55]), by smugglers (who can be highly influential in determining the destination),[56] by migrants' access to information and social networks, by what they experience in transit countries (including new information from other migrants), and by migration policies in transit and destination countries.[57] Research on smuggling has shown that migrants pay for their journey in separate stages, and may stay in transit countries (sometimes, longer than foreseen) before deciding to move on.[58] At the individual level, migrants who consider irregular migration may be more risk-tolerant and have higher confidence in their ability to overcome related obstacles (see above). While some may have a specific country in mind, for instance because of social networks there, others first consider "the Gulf" or "Europe" and then further refine their decision later on.[59] Irregular

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[47] Castles et al., *Irregular Migration: Causes, Patterns, and Strategies*, 123.

[48] Castles et al., 117.

[49] Optimity Advisors, ICMPD, and ECRE, "A Study on Smuggling of Migrants - Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Final Report.," 54–55.

[50] Anna Triandafyllidou and Laura Bartolini, "Irregular Migration and Irregular Work: A Chicken and Egg Dilemma," in *Migrants with Irregular Status in Europe: Evolving Conceptual and Policy Challenges*, ed. Sarah Spencer and Anna Triandafyllidou (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 139–63, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-34324-8_8.

[51] Castles et al., *Irregular Migration: Causes, Patterns, and Strategies*, 120.

[52] Optimity Advisors, ICMPD, and ECRE, "A Study on Smuggling of Migrants - Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Final Report.," 28.

[53] Veronika Bilger, Martin Hofmann, and Michael Jandl, "Human Smuggling as a Transnational Service Industry: Evidence from Austria," *International Migration* 4, no. 4 (2005): 59–93; Khalid Koser and Marie Mcauliffe, "Establishing an Evidence-Base for Future Policy Development on Irregular Migration to Australia," Irregular Migration Research Program Occasional Paper Series, 2013, 10; Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 15.

[54] Maroufof and Kouki, "Migrating from Pakistan to Greece: Re-Visiting Agency in Times of Crisis," 90; Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, "Journeys to Europe: The Role of Policy in Migrant Decision-Making," 22; Paolo Campana and Loraine Gelsthorpe, "Choosing a Smuggler: Decision-Making Amongst Migrants Smuggled to Europe," *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*, 2020, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10610-020-09459-y.

[55] See also Optimity Advisors, ICMPD, and ECRE, "A Study on Smuggling of Migrants - Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Final Report.," 36 and 43–47.

[56] Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, "Journeys to Europe: The Role of Policy in Migrant Decision-Making," 19.

[57] Katie Kuschminder, Julia De Bresser, and Melissa Siegel, "Irregular Migration Routes to Europe and Factors Influencing Migrants' Destination Choices" (Maastricht, 2015), 55.

[58] Aksel et al., "Study on Smuggling of Migrants: Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Case Study 3: Pakistan – Turkey – Greece"; Bilger, Hofmann, and Jandl, "Human Smuggling as a Transnational Service Industry: Evidence from Austria."

[59] Kuschminder, Bresser, and Siegel, "Irregular Migration Routes to Europe and Factors Influencing Migrants' Destination Choices," 14; Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 17; Sanchez et al., "A Study of the Communication Channels Used

migrants' routes are influenced by conflict en route, weather conditions, border policies (including pushbacks), and visa regime changes.[60]

In the context of migration information campaigns, the connection between irregular migration, smuggling and trafficking is particularly relevant, as campaigns usually aim to highlight these risks. At the same time, it needs to be kept in mind that migrants may see the role of smugglers as ambivalent, since they also enable migration (see Chapters 3 and 4 for more details on the Pakistani context).

2.4   Migration information campaigns

Information campaigns targeting irregular migration have become a popular migration policy instrument over the last decade or two. Particularly European states and the European Commission itself have commissioned campaigns with International Organisations and CSOs in trying to combat irregular migration.[61] As such, they are one example of public information campaigns that wish to change public attitudes or behaviour, for instance with regard to health or safety.[62]

Information campaigns can address both aspiring migrants, whose wishes to emigrate are still quite vague, and intending migrants, who have already made concrete steps towards emigration. Migrants rely on different sources of information and support about migration processes and outcomes, who may or may not be worthy of the trust migrants place in them.

Migration information campaigns can then be conceptualised as interventions among "key influencers": in social networks of friends and family, who are the main sources of information,[63] but do not always convey the full picture;[64] and in (business models of the) "migration industry",[65] consisting of actors who have a stake in the continuation of migration,[66] but not necessarily in the welfare of individuals: employers abroad who are searching for migrants, intermediaries who interact between employers and potential migrants, including recruitment organisations, agents, and smugglers. Migration information campaigns generally aim to provide a fuller picture of information regarding the risks and dangers along the journey and in destination countries, in order to deter migrants from embarking on irregular journeys and ultimately to prevent harm. Such campaigns, their aims, assumptions and effects, are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

3   Migration context in Pakistan and characteristics of target groups

3.1   Introduction

The content of migration information campaigns needs to be tailored to the country context in order to be of relevance to potential migrants. Messages will vary depending on the concrete availability of alternatives to irregular migration, including education opportunities and regular migration channels. Therefore, this chapter will first review the migration context in Pakistan, starting with the main emigration trends. As one of the largest emigration countries worldwide, the Government of Pakistan decades ago established regular migration channels and dedicated government infrastructure to the facilitation and regulation of regular migration, mainly to the Gulf. The second section will review the macro, meso and micro drivers behind migration patterns from Pakistan, based on the models outlined in Chapter 2, concluding with a summary on drivers of *irregular* migration in particular. Finally, as another aspect of the country context for the PARIM campaign and building the bridge

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by Migrants and Asylum Seekers in Italy , with a Particular Focus on Online and Social Media"; Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, "Journeys to Europe: The Role of Policy in Migrant Decision-Making," 17.

[60] Kuschminder, Bresser, and Siegel, "Irregular Migration Routes to Europe and Factors Influencing Migrants' Destination Choices," 51

[61] Over 100 migration information campaigns have been conducted since 2014 by Member States and 25 by European institutions, according to a mapping by the EMN Working Group on Information and Awareness-Raising Campaigns (Presentation of EMN INFO Working Group Co-Chair, Annual EMN Conference Vienna 2019)

[62] Schans and Optekamp, "Raising Awareness, Changing Behavior? Combatting Irregular Migration through Information Campaigns," 7.

[63] IOM, "Migration Flows from Afghanistan and Pakistan towards Europe: Understanding Data Gaps and Recommendations," 55–56.

[64] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 32.

[65] Castles, Haas, and Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, 41; Optimity Advisors, ICMPD, and ECRE, "A Study on Smuggling of Migrants - Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Final Report.," 29.

[66] Castles, Haas, and Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, 41; Optimity Advisors, ICMPD, and ECRE, "A Study on Smuggling of Migrants - Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Final Report.," 29.

to the consecutive chapter on campaigns, the third section will present existing measures and campaigns on irregular migration awareness raising in Pakistan, including ICMPD's own work at the Migrant Resources Centres.

3.2   Main migration trends from Pakistan

Pakistan is among the most significant emigration countries worldwide: the UN currently estimates Pakistani emigrants at 6,303,286 globally.[67] As a developing country, strategies of the Government of Pakistan to combat unemployment and poverty in the country have long included the facilitation of emigration of some of its surplus young labour force, as well as engagement of those abroad, including through facilitation of remittance transfers.[68] Remittances sent back by those residing abroad contribute to the GDP (8% in 2019, according to World Bank estimates) and benefit the immediate recipients by alleviating poverty, in addition to supporting the country's economy in the reduction of account deficits.[69]

Today, emigration is managed by a dedicated Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (MOPHRD). Emigration is regulated by the Emigration Ordinance of 1979 and Emigration Rules of 1979 (updated 2012). Since 2013, the BEOE is under the roof of the MOPHRD. The Bureau also regulates the work of the Overseas Employment Promoters (OEPs, who are private recruitment agents licensed by the BEOE), the Protectorates of Emigrants (PoEs) who issue labour migrant permissions and Community Welfare Attaches, and Community Welfare Attaches (CWAs, who safeguard the interest of migrant workers in countries of destination) stationed in the major destination countries.

The Overseas Employment Corporation (OEC) is another (smaller) public authority facilitating emigration. It focuses on promoting emigration of specific (often highly or semi-skilled) occupations and often operates government-to-government through bilateral agreements or MoUs.[70]

The Overseas Pakistani Foundation (OPF) provides welfare services for Pakistanis abroad and their families/dependents living in Pakistan; amongst its large portfolio is the provision of emergency services to Pakistani citizens in case of crisis, operation of schools abroad and provision of vocational training. The Labour Departments (DoL) are responsible for labour migration at provincial level. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), under the Pakistan Ministry of Interior, is tasked with security-related aspects of migration, including the combatting of irregular migration and trafficking in human beings.

The majority of emigration from Pakistan is of regular (legal) character. Through various bilateral agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), Pakistan's Bureau of Emigrants and Overseas Employment (BEOE) – founded in 1971 – has facilitated the regular emigration of on average 500,000 migrant workers annually over the last decade, almost exclusively to the Gulf, and mostly low-skilled and short-term (as contracts are usually issued for two to three years). The almost exclusive reliance on the Gulf countries as destinations can also be seen as a risk to the national economy, as emigration is whenever the regional economy of the Gulf is negatively impacted; because of the low skills profile, Pakistani migrants can also easily be replaced by cheap labour from other countries.[71] Efforts to "nationalise" the work force in Gulf states have also had a certain impact. Most recently, the global COVID-pandemic and a halting of visa issuance for Pakistanis from the UAE have had a negative impact on Pakistani emigration. The Government of Pakistan has also concluded bilateral labour agreements or Memoranda of Understanding, including with Jordan (1978), Qatar (1987, revised in 2008), Kuwait (1995, revised in 2013), Malaysia (2003), the United Arab Emirates (2006, valid for four years[72]), the Republic of Korea (2006), Italy (2009), Libya (2009), and Bahrain (2014). Most of them are not publicly available

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[67] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division, "International Migrant Stock 2019 (United Nations Database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2019)," 2019.

[68] GIZ and ILO, "From Pakistan to the Gulf Region: An Analysis of Links between Labour Markets, Skills and the Migration Cycle" (Islamabad: GIZ and ILO, 2016); for most recent developments regarding facilitation of remittances, see also http://www.pri.gov.pk/imran-approves-incentives-for-overseas-pakistanis-in-bid-to-increase-remittances/

[69] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan" (Washington, D.C, 2018), https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/30272.Pakistan Migration Report 2020

[70] World Bank Group, 14; GIZ and ILO, "From Pakistan to the Gulf Region: An Analysis of Links between Labour Markets, Skills and the Migration Cycle," 20.

[71] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan"; GIZ and ILO, "From Pakistan to the Gulf Region: An Analysis of Links between Labour Markets, Skills and the Migration Cycle"; ILO, *The Cost of Migration: What Low-Skilled Migrant Workers from Pakistan Pay to Work in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates*, 2016, 7.

[72] GIZ and ILO, "From Pakistan to the Gulf Region: An Analysis of Links between Labour Markets, Skills and the Migration Cycle," 23.

and assessment of their impact is therefore challenging. For the MoU with Korea, numbers are publicly available and have been declining from 718 in 2008 to 400 in 2015.[73]

Historically, migration from Pakistan goes back to the founding of the country in 1947 after the partition from India, when mainly Sikhs and Hindus left the country for India (while many Muslims immigrated to Pakistan). The following decades saw emigration mainly to the UK, mostly driven by economic motives. During the oil boom of the 1970s, emigration from Pakistan to the Gulf countries intensified and established these countries as a destination for Pakistanis to this day. Migration for the purpose of education is also relevant for Pakistan: According to UNESCO, there are currently 58,821 Pakistani students abroad.[74] They are financed by their own families or through scholarships by the Higher Education Commission[75].

According to the most recent UN estimates of 2019, the ten countries with highest stocks of Pakistani emigrants today are Saudi Arabia, India, UAE, UK, the US, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Canada and Italy (see Figure 3).[76] These broadly reflect the development of migrant stocks of the last decades, with the exception of Italy, which only recently emerged among the top 10 destinations for Pakistan-born emigrants. EU countries are generally less relevant as destination countries for Pakistan-born migrants when compared globally.

Figure 3: Top 10 Global Destination Countries in 2019 (stocks of Pakistani emigrants)
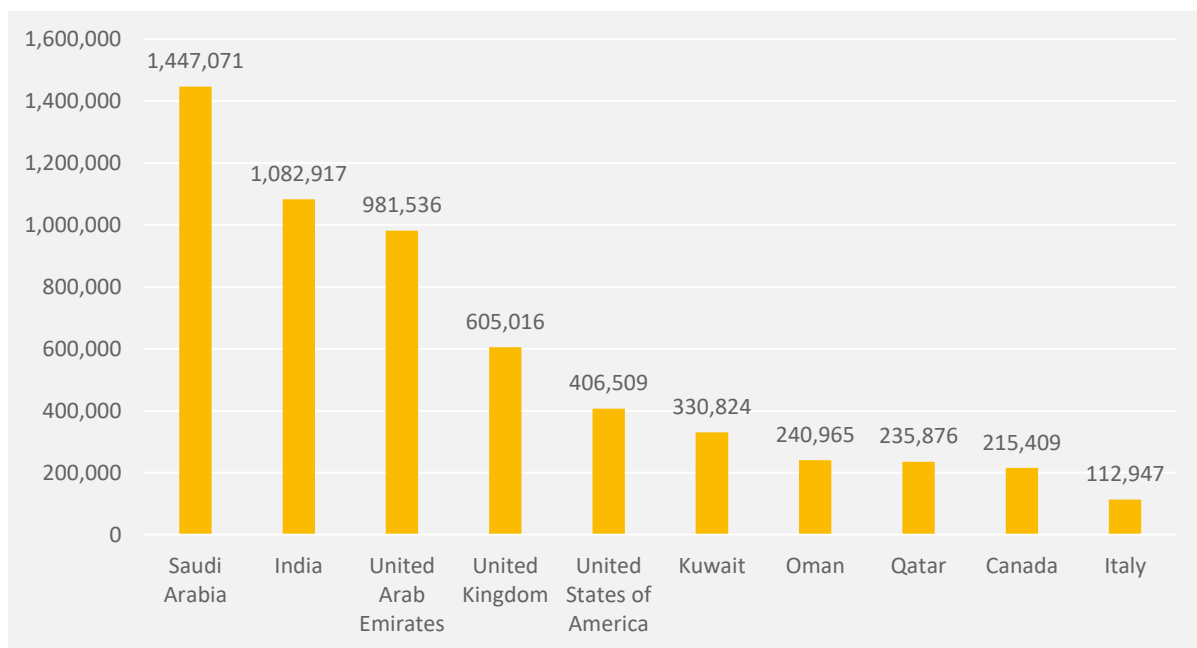
Source: UN DESA 2019

The BEOE monitors the number of labour migrants it facilitates each year. Annual total flows were in the 100,000s in the 1990s and early 2000s, then increased strongly to peak at 946,571 in 2015 and have declined since to 224,705 emigrants in 2020 (up to December), though with another spike in 2019 (625,203). Regarding the main destinations, from 2011-2020 (up to December), emigration to Saudi Arabia accounted for 47.8% of the total facilitated through BEOE, followed by UAE (39%) and Oman (6.9). Oil price decline, increase in competition from other origin countries to Saudi Arabia, and changing policies in Saudi Arabia that favoured national labour over immigration all contributed to the overall decline in recent years.[77] Recent developments in 2020 have meant a massive return migration trend, particularly from the Gulf, and both for Pakistan and South Asia as a whole. It remains to be seen the impact this will have on Pakistan itself and on future migration trends,

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[73] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 11–12.
[74] UNESCO, "Global Flow of Tertiary-Level Students," 2021, http://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-student-flow.
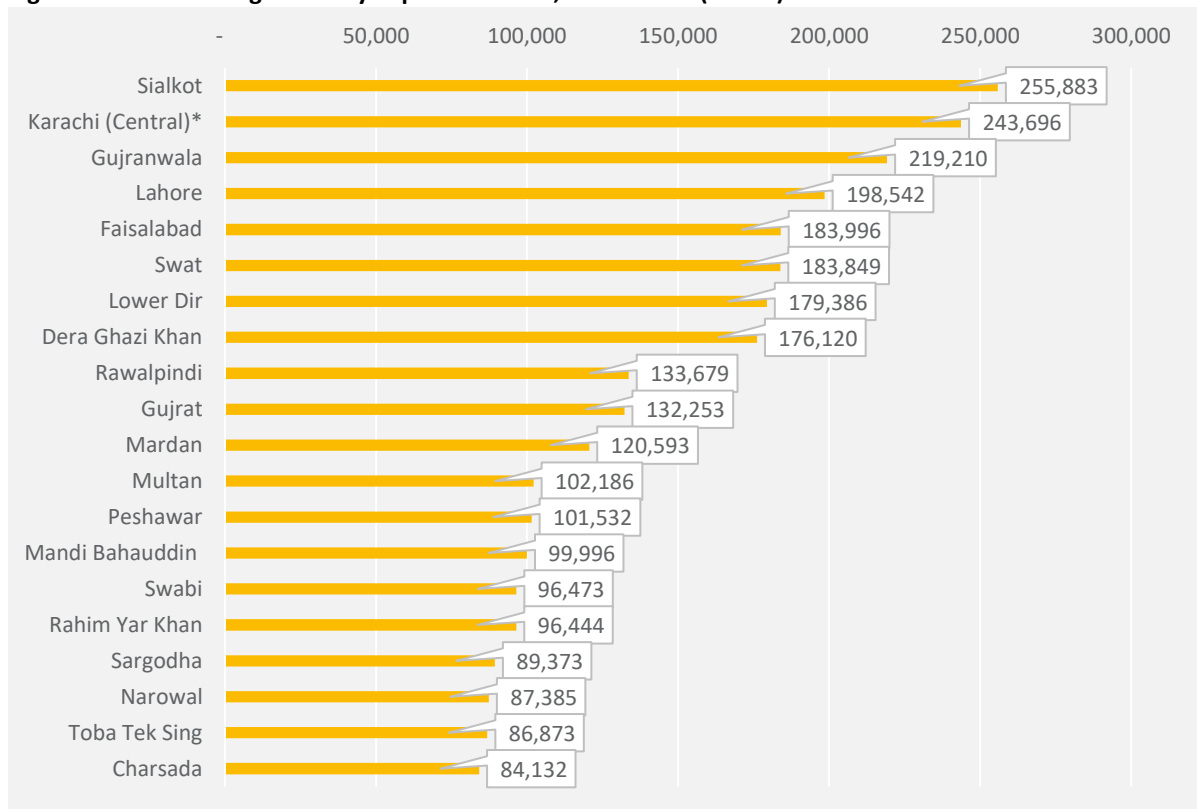[75] IOM, "Pakistan Migration Snapshot" (Bangkok, 2019).
[76] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division, "International Migrant Stock 2019 (United Nations Database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2019)."
[77] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 6.

given increased unemployment in the country, potentially reduced legal migration channels, and the impact return migrants may have in terms of information dissemination on migration opportunities (as discussed above).

Figure 4: Labour emigration by top 20 districts, 2011-2020 (totals)

District	Emigrants
Sialkot	255,883
Karachi (Central)*	243,696
Gujranwala	219,210
Lahore	198,542
Faisalabad	183,996
Swat	183,849
Lower Dir	179,386
Dera Ghazi Khan	176,120
Rawalpindi	133,679
Gujrat	132,253
Mardan	120,593
Multan	102,186
Peshawar	101,532
Mandi Bahauddin	99,996
Swabi	96,473
Rahim Yar Khan	96,444
Sargodha	89,373
Narowal	87,385
Toba Tek Sing	86,873
Charsada	84,132

Source: BEOE 2021. Workers Registered For Overseas Employment By Bureau Of Emigration & Overseas Employment During The Period 1981-2020 (Up to December), District Wise. Accessed on 28/01/2021. * From 2015, numbers for Karachi district were split up between multiple districts in BEOE statistics.

Among Pakistan's provinces and federally administered territories, Punjab has consistently been the main origin province of emigration (50% of total emigrants in 2019 and 53% in 2020), followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) (30% in both years) and Sindh provinces (9 and 8% respectively).[78] On a district level, 20 districts account for 50.1% of BEOE labour emigrants from 2011-2020 (mid-December).[79] The top emigration districts across this period are Sialkot, Karachi (Central)[80], Gujranwala, Lahore and Faisalabad. Since relevant to this project, Figures 4 and 5 show more detailed breakdowns of the top 20 emigration districts, which may be considered among the target districts for the PARIM campaign. . A 2011 UNODC situational analysis identified central and south Punjab and the frontier region as main sources of irregular migration from Pakistan, based on FIA analysis. Though treating this information with caution, UNODC cites the FIA seeing established irregular migration patterns for migrants from Mirpur, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Jhelum to the United Kingdom, (Hazara) migrants from Quetta to Australia, irregular migration to the Gulf region from KP, and migrants from Gujrat and Gujranwala to Schengen countries.[81] In a 2015 annual report co-authored by UNODC and the FIA, cases (enquiries) related to irregular migration (trafficking in human beings, smuggling of migrants) were registered more frequently in the Punjab region (more than twice as many as in Balochistan, which is the next highest). Punjab also has more local

[78] BEOE, "Workers Registered For Overseas Employment By Bureau Of Emigration & Overseas Employment During The Period 1981-2020 (Up to December), Province Wise" (Accessed on 28/01/2021, 2021).

[79] Calculated by authors based on BEOE, "Workers Registered For Overseas Employment By Bureau Of Emigration & Overseas Employment During The Period 1981-2020 (Up to December), District Wise" (Accessed on 28/01/2021, 2021).

[80] From 2015, numbers for Karachi district were split up between multiple districts in BEOE statistics.

[81] UNODC, "Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons: A Situational Analysis of Pakistan," 2011, 14.

FIA branches (Anti-Human Trafficking Circles), which may contribute to these numbers. In the report, the high number for Punjab is attributed to the prevalence of irregular migration in districts of Punjab (Muzaffargarh, Rahim Yar Khan, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Mandi Bahauddin, and Dera Ghazi Khan are referenced here).[82]

Figure 5: Labour emigration, all districts, 2011-2020 (percentage of totals)

Legend:
- Sialkot
- Karachi (Central)*
- Gujranwala
- Lahore
- Faisalabad
- Swat
- Lower Dir
- Dera Ghazi Khan
- Rawalpindi
- Gujrat
- Mardan
- Multan
- Peshawar
- Mandi Bahauddin
- Swabi
- Rahim Yar Khan
- Sargodha
- Narowal
- Toba Tek Sing
- Charsada

Source: BEOE 2021. Workers Registered For Overseas Employment By Bureau Of Emigration & Overseas Employment During The Period 1981-2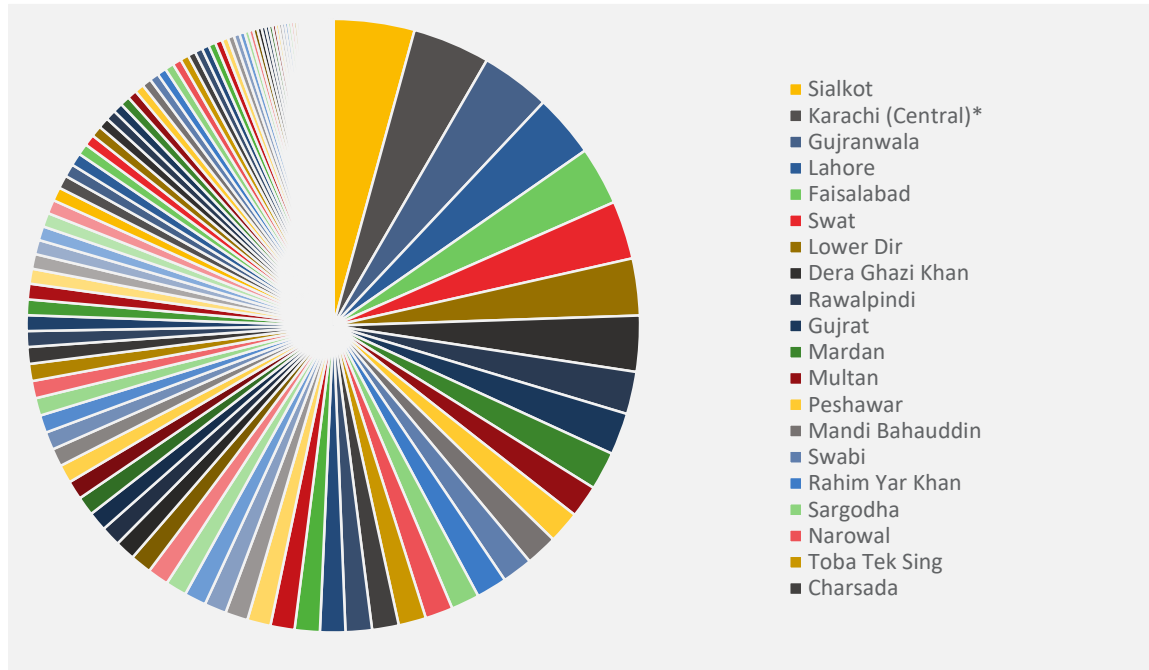020 (Up to December), District Wise. Accessed on 28/01/2021. *From 2015, numbers for Karachi district were split up between multiple districts in BEOE statistics.

Irregular migration plays less of a role for the main destination countries of Pakistanis, but is relevant for migration towards Europe and Oceania, where mixed (including asylum) flows play a major role. Pakistanis are amongst the largest groups of smuggled persons detected in Europe. The numbers of detected irregular border-crossings of Pakistanis strongly fluctuate: around 5,000 in 2012-14, they then peaked in 2015 (with 43,310 detections), and have since again declined to 3,799 in 2019.[83] Pakistani nationals detected in a situation of irregular stay have ranged between 10,000 and 20,000 annual detections since 2010 (19,206 in 2019).[84] Pakistan is also consistently amongst the top ten countries of origin of individuals who were voluntarily or forcibly returned from Europe (with 17,044 return decisions issued and 2,984 effective forced returns from Europe in 2019)[85].

Regarding asylum, first-time asylum applications of Pakistani citizens across EU-28 Member States recently peaked in 2015 (46,510) and 2016 (47,655) and have remained above 25,000 since. Italy has become the top EU destination country for Pakistani asylum seekers in the last decade, followed by Greece. Other main EU destinations for Pakistani asylum applicants include Germany, the UK (as a former EU MS), Hungary and France. Another country relevant to this project, Austria saw a peak in asylum applications in 2015 and 2016 (2,890 and 2,415 respectively), but numbers have strongly declined since (255 in 2019). Bulgaria experienced a spike in 2016 (1,775 applications) but low numbers otherwise (90 applications in 2019).[86] Due to close cultural and historical

[82] UNODC and FIA Pakistan, "Annual Report on Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling," 2015, 10–11, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315422770-2.
[83] Frontex, "Risk Analysis for 2020"; Frontex, "Risk Analysis for 2016."
[84] Frontex, "Risk Analysis for 2020"; Frontex, "Risk Analysis for 2014" (Warsaw, 2014).
[85] Frontex, "Risk Analysis for 2020."
[86] First time asylum applicants by citizenship, age and sex - annual aggregated data. Retrieved from Eurostat on 02/02/2021

ties particularly in the border regions, Afghanistan is the top destination country for Pakistani refugees under UNHCR's mandate, according to UNHCR, followed by destinations in Europe, Northern America and Oceania. [87]

While EU statistics on detection of irregular stay can provide some indication of Pakistani irregular migration, in general, there are no reliable statistics available on irregular migration and migrant smuggling from Pakistan. A major transit country for Afghan irregular migrants, Pakistan's borders are rather porous, as a major study on smuggling in 2015 confirmed.[88] According to a 2009 baseline study, 38% of Pakistani irregular migrants emigrated with the support of smugglers[89]. In 2012, UNODC estimated irregular migration from Pakistan at approximately 300,000 annually (all destinations),[90] whereas other analyses see the number much lower[91]. The route Balochistan-Iran-Turkey has been the most common route towards Europe,[92] with local smugglers interacting with larger transnational networks to complete legs of larger journeys.[93] According to statistics provided by the Government of Turkey, Pakistani nationals have been among the top three among detected irregular migrants (over 13,000 in 2019). [94] Recent evidence also points to smuggling routes by air form South Asia via Pakistan and Gulf Cooperation Countries, which then serve either as destination countries for irregular migrants or transit countries to Western Europe.[95] Smuggling dynamics are discussed further below.

Some Pakistanis wishing to emigrate also fall victim to traffickers. Labour and sex trafficking occurs to the main destination countries in Europe and the Gulf states, and in countries along the route, including through false job offers through illegal middlemen and overcharging of fees, which then can lead to bonded labour.[96] Since 2018, the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act and the Prevention of Smuggling of Migrants Act are in force, which are based on the UN model laws on Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants.[97] Pakistan is not signatory to the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, nor the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol.

Considering the relevance of mixed migration flows of Pakistani emigrants towards Europe, the BEOE data should not be taken to represent the entire picture when it comes to actual emigration of Pakistani nationals to Europe. The BEOE facilitates mainly labour migration to the Gulf, while BEOE numbers are low for European destination countries.[98]

3.3 Drivers of migration from Pakistan: Structural drivers, profile of Pakistani emigrants, and obstacles and facilitators

Individual aspiration and capability to emigrate (the micro level) interacts with macro (structural) factors, such as the political and economic situation in the origin country, as well as actual and perceived differences between origin and destination country (such as wage differentials), and with a meso level of factors that can form obstacles or facilitators, such as the availability of supportive social networks. This is the model of drivers of migration proposed by Black et al. (2011) and discussed in Chapter 2. This section will broadly outline some of these factors based on what is highlighted by existing research conducted in Pakistan. As far as possible, drivers for regular and irregular migration and between various destination countries will be differentiated. However, since migration to the Gulf countries is predominant, also the academic literature mostly focuses on this pattern, while there are fewer publications on migration patterns towards Europe.[99] In addition, although Black et al. do

[87] UNHCR, "Pakistani Refugee Stocks as of 2020 (Mid-Year)," accessed February 2, 2021, https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=sRC0aq.
[88] Aksel et al., "Study on Smuggling of Migrants: Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Case Study 3: Pakistan – Turkey – Greece."
[89] ActionAid and BEFARe, "Baseline Study on Illegal Migration , Human Smuggling and Trafficking in Pakistan."
[90] UNODC (2012) "Migrant Smuggling in Asia: A Thematic Review of Literature, Bangkok: UNODC.
[91] G M Arif and Tahira Ishaq, "Irregular Migration to the Gulf: An Analysis of the Status of Pakistani Migrant Workers," in *Skilful Survivals: Irregular Migration to the Gulf*, ed. Philippe Fargues and Nasra M. Shah (Jeddah/Geneva/Cambridge: Gulf Research Centre Cambridge, 2017), 309.
[92] Aksel et al., "Study on Smuggling of Migrants: Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Case Study 3: Pakistan – Turkey – Greece."
[93] UNODC, "Global Study on Smuggling of Migrants 2018. Asia" (Vienna, 2018), 109.
[94] DGMM, Distribution of Irregular Migrants by Citizenship by Year. Accessed 29/03/2021. https://en.goc.gov.tr/irregular-migration
[95] UNODC, "Global Study on Smuggling of Migrants 2018. Asia," 116.
[96] USDOS, "2020 Trafficking in Persons Report: Pakistan.".
[97] UNODC, "Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling Migrants Laws 2018," 2018, https://www.unodc.org/pakistan/en/trafficking-in-persons-and-smuggling-of-migrants-laws-2018.html.
[98] BEOE, "Workers Registered For Overseas Employment By Bureau Of Emigration & Overseas Employment During The Period 1981-2020 (Up to December), Country Wise" (Accessed on 28/01/2021, 2021).
[99] IOM, "Migration Flows from Afghanistan and Pakistan towards Europe: Understanding Data Gaps and Recommendations," 32; Kleopatra Yousef, "The Vicious Circle of Irregular Migration from Pakistan to Greece and Back to Pakistan," IRMA Background Report: Migratory System 3 (Pakistan) (Athens, 2013).

not differentiate regular and irregular migration, the chapter will conclude by summarising the factors behind irregular migration from Pakistan towards Europe. A detailed discussion of individual-level characteristics (personality traits), as reviewed under 2.2., is not possible since no studies have been found directly on this topic in the Pakistan context, with the exception of Ahmad (2008).

3.3.1 Structural drivers

The predominant driver behind migration from Pakistan is economic, considering the tense labour market situation interacting with demographic trends, as described at the outset of this chapter. In a 2020 survey conducted by the IOM among potential migrants[100] in 19 high-emigration districts of Pakistan, 39% of respondents indicated lack of jobs/livelihoods as their primary reason for migration, followed by financial problems/debts (indicated by 12%).[101] Relatedly, when asked what needed to change for them to stay, 65% of potential migrants indicated better job opportunities. 58% would stay in Pakistan if they had the opportunity to work.[102]

The actual material benefits for households of having a remittance-sending family member abroad are well established by existing research. Based on the KNOMAD international survey on migration costs, the average cost for migration from Pakistan (to Saudi Arabia and UAE) is actually highest when compared with other major origin countries, such as Ethiopia, India, Nepal, the Philippines and Vietnam.[103] Nevertheless, an ILO study based on the same KNOMAD survey data on the cost of migration indicates that despite high costs, Pakistani migrants working in Gulf can recover the costs within on average eight months, because of the significant wage differential.[104] Another confirmation of the benefits of migration comes from a study conducted in KP, showing that remittances were the primary income source for 34% of households in Swat and Lower Dir districts. 80% of remittance-receiving households reported that remittances "helped them quite a lot or a lot".[105] A mixed-method study on the role of migration for household resilience, conducted in two Punjab districts and one KP district, showed that migrant households have higher resilience levels, across a range of resilience dimensions that were examined. For example, households with a migrant abroad showed higher incomes, higher employment rates and stronger social networks.[106] Similar to international findings, multiple studies find that remittances are spent mainly on household consumption, in particular on (higher quality/more consistent) food.[107]

However, because of the significant cost involved, it is not the very poorest who can benefit from emigration – this is the same for Pakistan as it is around the globe.[108] For instance, the main origin regions of Pakistani migrants of KP, Punjab or Karachi are relatively better off than Sindh, Balochistan or Southern Punjab.[109] The household resilience study showed that most households surveyed wished for a family member to emigrate, but not all could afford to.[110] Also, sending someone abroad can create significant debt which needs to be paid off[111]; poorer households may take longer to pay off debt before benefitting fully from remittances. This means that there is a financial risk involved in case migration is not successful in financial terms[112], and this risk is greater for poorer households. Nevertheless, going beyond immediate financial benefits, studies found that households with a migrant abroad seem to have a higher social status, which can in turn lead to material benefits such as

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[100] Defined as those "who had taken concrete measures to migrate abroad, including: Finding a migration facilitator, Making payments for the journey to a migration facilitator, Booking travel tickets for (parts) of the migration journey, Obtaining a visa for travel to transit countries." (IOM 2020, 5)
[101] IOM, "Pakistan: Survey on Drivers of Migration" (Bangkok/Islamabad, 2020), 13.
[102] IOM, 23–24.
[103] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 29.
[104] ILO, *The Cost of Migration: What Low-Skilled Migrant Workers from Pakistan Pay to Work in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates*, 25.
[105] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 9.
[106] Kashif Majeed Salik et al., "Migration Futures in Asia and Africa: Economic Opportunities and Distributional Effects – the Case of Pakistan" (Islamabad, 2017).
[107] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 34; Salik et al., "Migration Futures in Asia and Africa: Economic Opportunities and Distributional Effects – the Case of Pakistan," 37; World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 33; Sarfraz Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan" (Islamabad: Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad, 2017).
[108] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 43.
[109] Arif and Ishaq, "Irregular Migration to the Gulf: An Analysis of the Status of Pakistani Migrant Workers," 301.
[110] Salik et al., "Migration Futures in Asia and Africa: Economic Opportunities and Distributional Effects – the Case of Pakistan," 39.
[111] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 37.
[112] Hagen-Zanker et al., 15.

being deemed credit-worthy. This means that there is a benefit to migration of a household member even if remittances do not flow (fully).[113]

Another macro driver for emigration from Pakistan is seeking education. In the 2020 IOM survey, dissatisfaction with the quality of education, and seeing no educational opportunities, come as primary reasons for migration after economic motives named above, and the motive of joining family/friends who are already residing abroad.[114] The survey also showed that education is particularly relevant for those who intend to migrate to the EU and Turkey, since the availability of an education scholarship is the main reason for choosing Europe or Turkey as destinations (30%) – while for the Gulf countries, job opportunities predominated as motives.[115]

Economic drivers also seem to be relevant towards Europe, though motives and migration outcomes are less well researched for European destinations[116] (including because destinations are not always differentiated when researching potential migrants and households). In the recent IOM survey, other reasons for choosing Europe/Turkey (after educational opportunities) were having relatives/friends there (21%), followed by jobs available (20%). A qualitative study among irregular migrants in Greece found that economic motives are predominant, but feeling under threat was also a motive for some respondents.[117] A study conducted in a (irregular) migration-prone village in Gujrat district highlights conflicts based on family feuds as another common motive behind emigration, aside from the predominant economic drivers.[118]

The Black et al. model of migration drivers also includes social drivers among the macro factors, such as expectations from families, established migration networks or "cultures of migration".[119] Indeed, a number of studies see strong interlinkages between economic motives and socio-cultural determinants of migration from Pakistan. In their study on KP, Hagen-Zanker et al. argue that economic needs are interlinked with socio-cultural ideas about how households can generate income: *"(M)igration is seen as a completely natural and obvious livelihood strategy"*[120]. A study conducted in a (irregular) migration-prone village in Gujrat district largely confirms these patterns.[121] Other studies have shown that (irregular) migration can be seen as a kind of coming-of-age ritual (rite of passage) for young male Pakistanis, who demonstrate their masculinity by overcoming the associated risks – again showing the interlinkage of socio-cultural motives with economic ones.[122] The Gujrat case study even concludes that male pupils have adverse education outcomes because they see (irregular) emigration as an attractive prospect not necessarily requiring education.[123]

3.3.2   Personal and household characteristics: the profile of Pakistani emigrants

Pakistani emigrants are on average young, male, educated, and not from the very poorest households. In the 2020 IOM survey of potential Pakistani migrants, respondents were on average 30.3 years old, with those going to Europe or Turkey being younger on average.[124] IOM flow monitoring data of Pakistani migrants in (Southern and Southeast) Europe from 2018[125] showed that the majority were 18-25 years old, followed by those 26-35 years old.[126] This pattern was also confirmed in a survey conducted for ICMPD in 2019.[127] Emigration from Pakistan is predominantly male, with female emigration rates exceptionally low also when comparing within the

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[113] Hagen-Zanker et al., 40–41; Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan," 79–80.

[114] IOM, "Pakistan: Survey on Drivers of Migration," 13.

[115] IOM, 11.

[116] IOM, "Migration Flows from Afghanistan and Pakistan towards Europe: Understanding Data Gaps and Recommendations," 54.

[117] Maroufof and Kouki, "Migrating from Pakistan to Greece: Re-Visiting Agency in Times of Crisis."

[118] Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan," 70.

[119] Black et al., "The Effect of Environmental Change on Human Migration."

[120] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 15.

[121] Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan."

[122] Ahmad, "The Romantic Appeal of Illegal Migration: Gender, Masculinity and Human Smuggling from Pakistan"; Maroufof and Kouki, "Migrating from Pakistan to Greece: Re-Visiting Agency in Times of Crisis"; IOM, "Migration Flows from Afghanistan and Pakistan towards Europe: Understanding Data Gaps and Recommendations," 10; see also Hernández-Carretero and Carling, "Beyond 'Kamikaze Migrants': Risk Taking in West African Boat Migration to Europe," 410.

[123] Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan."

[124] IOM, "Pakistan: Survey on Drivers of Migration," 7.

[125] The majority of interviews were conducted in in Italy, followed by North Macedonia and Montenegro.

[126] IOM, "Snapshot of 2018 Arrivals in Europe from Pakistan," 2018, 4.

[127] ICMPD and Dynamic Consulting Services, "Needs Assessment Study: Information Needs of Intending Migrants in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan (Forthcoming)" (Islamabad: ICMPD, n.d.).

region. In 2019, 4,079 women emigrated, according to the 2019 annual report of the BEOE.[128] A World Bank report notes that low rates of female emigration also mirror the low labour market participation rate of Pakistani women in general.[129] BEOE statistics show that female emigrants are higher skilled than the male average[130], and they are facilitated mainly through direct visa rather than OEPs, leading the BEOE report to conclude that OEPs should increase their efforts to facilitate female emigration.[131] Through its Migrant Resource Centres, ICMPD has also continuously aimed to reach out to women.[132] Regarding the reasons behind low female emigration rates, reports refer to sociocultural ideas around what is considered appropriate for women.[133] Some studies also found that women only emigrate when "sent for" by their husbands living abroad.[134] Aside from sociocultural values, migration legislation also restricts female emigration, as the Emigration Rules stipulate a minimum age of 35 years (with a possibility of lowering this threshold by five years on exception) for women who wish to work abroad in the domestic sector.[135]

Regarding marital status of Pakistani emigrants, almost half in the 2020 IOM survey were married and 14% engaged, with those going to the EU or Turkey showing a slightly lower share of marriages or engagements.[136] Among the IOM flow data on Pakistanis in (Southern and Southeast) Europe, the share of single respondents was much higher, with only 19% married.[137] Evidence is limited, but it can be assumed that lower marriage status is related to the on average younger age of migrants in Europe, and/or higher risks associated with emigration to Europe through irregular channels.

Regarding their education and skills level, within the IOM 2020 survey among potential migrants, 93% of respondents were educated, having a bachelor's degree (26%), high school degree (25%) or Master´s (20%).[138] Similar patterns are confirmed in a forthcoming ICMPD survey among potential migrants.[139] In a survey among return and potential migrants to/ from the Gulf, conducted for the ILO in 2009, respondents´ education levels were higher than the national average.[140] It is unclear whether the same holds true for those who emigrate to Europe, although seeking education, and having secured a scholarship, was already discussed above as an important driver of Pakistani migration to Europe. A study in KP also reported that those from "better-off" and upwardly mobile households, and therefore better-educated individuals, aspire to developed countries as destinations. However, the IOM flow data on Pakistanis in (Southern and Southeast) Europe showed lower education levels, with 49% having secondary education and 35% primary education.[141] On the one hand, this result may be due to the particular target group of IOM flow monitoring. On the other hand, the KP-based study mentions that increasingly also those who are less educated are choosing these destinations.[142] One study based on research in a village in Gujrat argues that male pupils are less motivated in their educational attainments because they see (irregular) migration as an attractive option not necessarily requiring education. While there was awareness that high education levels could lead to scholarships abroad, this avenue seemed unattainable in this rural context and particularly for the households of lower socioeconomic background.[143] The BEOE also

[128] Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment, "Annual Analysis of Manpower Export 2019," 2019; ILO, "Female Labour Migration from Pakistan: A Situation Analysis" (Geneva, 2020).

[129] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 23.

[130] Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment, "Annual Analysis of Manpower Export 2019," 18.

[131] Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment, 21.

[132] See ICMPD, Women and Migration in Pakistan, https://www.budapestprocess.org/index.php?option=com_attachments&task=download&id=431

[133] Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment, "Annual Analysis of Manpower Export 2019," 17; Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5"; World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan"; ILO, "Female Labour Migration from Pakistan: A Situation Analysis"; Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan."

[134] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 16; Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan," 77–78.

[135] GIZ and ILO, "From Pakistan to the Gulf Region: An Analysis of Links between Labour Markets, Skills and the Migration Cycle," 13.

[136] IOM, "Pakistan: Survey on Drivers of Migration," 7.

[137] IOM, "Snapshot of 2018 Arrivals in Europe from Pakistan," 4.

[138] IOM, "Pakistan: Survey on Drivers of Migration," 8.

[139] ICMPD and Dynamic Consulting Services, "Needs Assessment Study: Information Needs of Intending Migrants in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan (Forthcoming)."

[140] G M Arif, "Recruitment of Pakistani Workers for Overseas Employment: Mechanisms, Exploitation and Vulnerabilities" (Geneva, 2009), 16.

[141] IOM, "Snapshot of 2018 Arrivals in Europe from Pakistan," 4.

[142] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 8.

[143] Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan."

documents the skills profile of migrants (as discussed, mainly to the Gulf): this data also shows that Pakistani migrants have education and skills. Statistics and studies alike show that migrants then frequently experience de-skilling in the Gulf destination country, since the demand is mostly for low-skilled workers.[144] De-skilling is also a common trend for migrants to Europe.

Indeed, the skills composition of BEOE-facilitated emigrants has changed only in small ways over the last decades.[145] Independently of actual education levels, they end up mostly in the unskilled category[146] (around 40% over the last decade), followed by skilled migrants (also around 40% during this period). Since 2011, a gradual increase in the semi-skilled category is also evident (from consistently below 5% before 2011, to 15-18% from 2011-2018, 10% in 2019 and 8% in 2020).[147] A 2016 GIZ/ILO report notes that OEPs are criticised by some stakeholders as neglecting the facilitation of higher skilled emigrants, because it is seen as more cumbersome due to certification required.[148] KNOMAD survey results show that only 8% of Pakistani workers in Gulf destinations hold a skills certificate, compared to 36% of workers from India or 39% of those from the Philippines. [149] Particularly in Punjab and Sindh, TVET authorities have taken steps in improving the potential placement of their graduates in jobs abroad.[150]

The individual level also involves the household unit, since the decision to emigrate is often a household income strategy and financed through household networks. Immediate household or family play a significant role in making the actual decision to emigrate, also given their prominent role in financing.[151] In a 2020 IOM survey of potential migrants in Pakistan, respondents were asked to name life events that triggered their migration. Among the top five answers, three were related to family and friends: as the number one reason, 22% answered that their family wanted them to migrate; 18% said that family/friends abroad encouraged them to join them abroad, and 12% were told by family/friends abroad that life there was good.[152] A study focusing on resilience conducted in Punjab and KP, and a case study on a village in Gujrat with high emigration rates similarly emphasised the relevance of social networks and advice from family and friends for migration decision making. [153]

As mentioned already, more "intangible" individual-level motives are still under-researched (see section 2.2).[154] Based on an ethnographic approach, Ahmad (2008) provides some indications of the psychological and emotional dimensions involved in irregular migration. In his account, economic motives are closely interlinked with emotional ones, such as jealousy of other people's wealth, frustration with the current situation, risk-tolerance coupled with desire for adventure, and sexual desire. He argues that the "*forbidden nature*" of irregular migration forms itself a strong appeal. The proliferation of the smuggling industry "*has effectively transformed migration itself into a commodity that can and must be purchased at any cost*" and "*(f)or certain constellations of young Pakistani men who now live above subsistence, migration is itself the ultimate product*

[144] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5"; Arif, "Recruitment of Pakistani Workers for Overseas Employment: Mechanisms, Exploitation and Vulnerabilities"; GIZ and ILO, "From Pakistan to the Gulf Region: An Analysis of Links between Labour Markets, Skills and the Migration Cycle," 12.

[145] Arif, "Recruitment of Pakistani Workers for Overseas Employment: Mechanisms, Exploitation and Vulnerabilities," 15; ILO, "Labour Migration from Pakistan: 2015 Status Report," 2016, 16.

[146] A 2016 ILO report explains the BEOE skills categories as follows: "*The BEOE classification of workers by skill level is based on the qualification and skill requirements of a particular job. The "highly qualified" category includes professionals with high levels of education, such as doctors and engineers. The "highly skilled" category includes those occupations that require specialized skills, such as technicians and nurses, but their qualifications are lower than those under the highly qualified category. The jobs that require some training, formal or informal, are included in the "skilled" category. Skilled workers commonly take such jobs as drivers, masons and carpenters*." ILO, *The Cost of Migration: What Low-Skilled Migrant Workers from Pakistan Pay to Work in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates*, 2016, 5-6

[147] BEOE 2021. Workers Registered For Overseas Employment By Bureau Of Emigration & Overseas Employment During The Period 1981-2020 (Up to December), Occupational Group-Wise. Accessed on 28/01/2021.

[148] GIZ and ILO, "From Pakistan to the Gulf Region: An Analysis of Links between Labour Markets, Skills and the Migration Cycle," 11.

[149] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 28.

[150] GIZ and ILO, "From Pakistan to the Gulf Region: An Analysis of Links between Labour Markets, Skills and the Migration Cycle," 27; World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan."

[151] Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan," 69.

[152] IOM, "Pakistan: Survey on Drivers of Migration," 14.

[153] Salik et al., "Migration Futures in Asia and Africa: Economic Opportunities and Distributional Effects – the Case of Pakistan"; Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan."

[154] See also Dennison, "Understanding and Explaining Attitudes to Migration in the Silk Routes and South Asian Countries."

and status symbol", Ahmad argues.[155] This dynamic is also confirmed by a case study conducted in a migration-prone village in Gujrat which highlights the "dream of Europe" many young men in the village aspire to based on the "*success stories of their elders, close relatives and friends who had achieved social status through money earned due to migration*".[156] However, contrary to results of this and other studies, Ahmad strongly rebukes claims that migration decisions are made only within the household, pointing to individual motives such as wishing to gain autonomy and escape from "*the oppressive regime of conservative religious, social and moral control of individual behaviour in Pakistan*".[157] As noted for other country contexts,[158] (returned) migrants also compete with non-migrants for "access to women", since being able to marry (upwardly) is dependent on having income.[159] In this way, individual and emotional motives interact with economic needs. The relevance of Ahmad's findings (based on research conducted in the 2000s and among multiple generations of Pakistani emigrants) for PARIM would have to be substantiated through further research.

3.3.3   Obstacles and facilitators in migration from Pakistan

Together with structural (macro) factors and personal (micro) factors, whether an individual can actually migrate is also down to certain intervening obstacles and facilitators (meso factors). In their model of migration drivers, Black et al. (2011) list relevant legal frameworks, the cost of moving, social networks and diasporic links, recruitment agencies and technology. In Pakistan existing legal frameworks and recruitment agencies (OEPs) mostly mostly facilitate legal migration to the Gulf, as has been shown already, while legal channels towards Europe are less prevalent. Nevertheless, the cost of moving – also to the Gulf, the main alternative to irregular migration – is considerable, mostly due to (fraudulent/clandestine) fees charged by intermediaries.[160] Social networks and diasporic links are an important source of information and sometimes support for Pakistani (potential) migrants. Adding to the Black et al. model, this section will also review sources of information for (potential) migrants (subsuming technology) based on available literature, since a dedicated analysis of this topic is needed for the purposes of the PARIM project.

3.3.3.1   Regulatory frameworks for emigration from Pakistan and related challenges

Decades ago, Pakistan put in place regulatory frameworks to facilitate legal labour migration. As they are mainly relevant for emigration to the Gulf, they shall only be summarised here. In a nutshell, the regulatory system is a combination of state (BEOE) oversight, with private Overseas Employment Promoters (OEPs) being licensed by the BEOE to recruit individuals wishing to migrate, based on documented demand in destination countries (which is also procured by OEPs). In case of misconduct, OEP licenses can be revoked or not re-issued. There are currently 2,111 OEPs with valid licenses.[161] Another mode of emigration is through direct employment, meaning arranged through migrants' own efforts, or through their social networks.[162] The proportion of each mode has fluctuated over the years; for instance, in 2018, 39% went through OEPs and 61% through direct mode, while it was the reverse trend in 2019 (60% OEP and 40% direct).[163] The cost related to the migration process is also defined by law. In 2016, they ranged between PKR 21,125 – PKR 31,524 ($201 - $301) for going through OEPs and PKR 45,575 - PKR48,524 ($435 - $463) for direct employment.[164] This includes charges such as the visa fee, and the service fee paid to the OEP.

The OEC – as discussed, another government institution facilitating migration, though of smaller size – recruits migrants directly (no agents involved, since the OEC is the only government agency that can directly process foreign demand). Less than 1% of emigrants have proceeded abroad through the OEC in recent years,[165] including because of the specific profile of emigrants it engages.

[155] Ahmad, "The Romantic Appeal of Illegal Migration: Gender, Masculinity and Human Smuggling from Pakistan," 140.
[156] Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan," 71.
[157] Ahmad, "The Romantic Appeal of Illegal Migration: Gender, Masculinity and Human Smuggling from Pakistan," 144.
[158] Hernández-Carretero and Carling, "Beyond 'Kamikaze Migrants': Risk Taking in West African Boat Migration to Europe."
[159] Ahmad, "The Romantic Appeal of Illegal Migration: Gender, Masculinity and Human Smuggling from Pakistan," 145.
[160] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 29.
[161] https://beoe.gov.pk/reports-and-statistics, retrieved 24/02/2021
[162] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 24.
[163] Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment, "Annual Analysis of Manpower Export 2019."
[164] ILO, *The Cost of Migration: What Low-Skilled Migrant Workers from Pakistan Pay to Work in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates*, 11.
[165] ILO, 8.

The BEOE has nine regional offices, the Protector of Emigrants (POEs) Offices, in Lahore, Rawalpindi, Sialkot, Dera Ghazi Khan and Multan (Punjab province), Karachi (Sindh province), Peshawar and Malakand (KP province) and Quetta (Balochistan province).[166] They process employment demands procured by OEPs and monitor and supervise their work.[167] Under the Emigration Rules, they are also required to provide pre-departure orientation sessions to departing emigrants, although there are reports that these are of varying quality and not always enforced, including because of a high workload in some regions.[168] ICMPD supports pre-departure orientation sessions at the PoE Rawalpindi and in Lahore (starting March 2021).

Before going abroad, potential migrants need to complete the following procedures: "*complete a medical test, obtain a computerized national identity card, obtain a passport, submit the contract or foreign service agreement, submit the foreign employment "demand letter", apply for the work visa, purchase air tickets, pay the government fees, including the medical insurance premium, and attend a pre-departure briefing at a Protector of Emigrants Office.*"[169] All migrants, whether going through OEPs or directly, need to register with the BEOE.

Although there are these regulatory frameworks in place, they suffer from a lack of enforcement,[170] including because of a lack of staff.[171] Numerous challenges and exploitative practices throughout all stages of the legal migratory process from Pakistan are well documented through studies – from the decision-making phase, through recruitment, contracting, while working in the Gulf and after return. Among the most severe grievances are:

- Actual migration costs are significantly higher than official costs stipulated, mainly due to illicit overcharging by OEPs or friends/family who arrange direct employment[172], and a "*highly segmented and exploitive market*" for trading of visas.[173]

- Illicit sub-agents are installed by OEPs to recruit especially rural migrants who are more difficult to reach, although this practice is prohibited as per Emigration Rules. This is also a driver of costs.[174] This means that a majority of migrants interact mainly with illicit sub-agents, although they are going through a regular migration process. This leads another report to conclude that "*the state is essentially absent from people's experience of migration*" in Pakistan.[175]

- Upon arrival, migrants are often forced to re-sign contracts under worse conditions (contract substitution); salaries are withheld, particularly among the unskilled; wages are unfairly deducted.[176] Working conditions in the Gulf are generally poor, with many working up to 70 hours per week.[177]

Highlighting these challenges, a forthcoming ICMPD study based on a survey among potential migrants in Punjab and KP, key informant interviews and focus group discussions, concludes that there is a need to engage migrants in the decision-making phase in order to prevent exploitation.[178] For PARIM, this means that the main alternative to irregular migration is negatively impacted, potentially making it less attractive as an option.

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[166] https://beoe.gov.pk/protectorate-of-emigrant-offices, retrieved 24/02/2021

[167] Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment, "Annual Analysis of Manpower Export 2019," 5.

[168] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 29.

[169] ILO, *The Cost of Migration: What Low-Skilled Migrant Workers from Pakistan Pay to Work in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates*, 9.

[170] Arif, "Recruitment of Pakistani Workers for Overseas Employment: Mechanisms, Exploitation and Vulnerabilities"; Arif and Ishaq, "Irregular Migration to the Gulf: An Analysis of the Status of Pakistani Migrant Workers"; ILO, *The Cost of Migration: What Low-Skilled Migrant Workers from Pakistan Pay to Work in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates*; World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 6.

[171] GIZ and ILO, "From Pakistan to the Gulf Region: An Analysis of Links between Labour Markets, Skills and the Migration Cycle," 17.

[172] Arif, "Recruitment of Pakistani Workers for Overseas Employment: Mechanisms, Exploitation and Vulnerabilities," 13.

[173] ILO, *The Cost of Migration: What Low-Skilled Migrant Workers from Pakistan Pay to Work in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates*, 18 and 21; ILO, "Labour Migration from Pakistan: 2015 Status Report," 31.

[174] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 10 and 16; Arif, "Recruitment of Pakistani Workers for Overseas Employment: Mechanisms, Exploitation and Vulnerabilities," 22.

[175] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 24.

[176] Arif, "Recruitment of Pakistani Workers for Overseas Employment: Mechanisms, Exploitation and Vulnerabilities"; Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 31; World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 30–31; ILO, *The Cost of Migration: What Low-Skilled Migrant Workers from Pakistan Pay to Work in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates*, 39–40.

[177] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 30–31.

[178] Results of the needs assessment will be integrated into further project publications. ICMPD and Dynamic Consulting Services, "Needs Assessment Study: Information Needs of Intending Migrants in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan (Forthcoming)."

3.3.3.2 Cost of migration

The average cost for regular migration from Pakistan (to Saudi Arabia and UAE) is actually higher than the average costs for other major origin countries, mainly due to illicit overcharging by OEPs or friends/family who arrange direct employment[179], and a "*highly segmented and exploitive market*" for trading of visas,[180] as discussed.[181] Various factors have an influence: For those who had previously worked abroad, the cost of emigration to Saudi Arabia or UAE was lowest, according to results of the KNOMAD survey analysed by the ILO,[182] presumably because they have better access to information. Older, more experienced low-skilled migrants also had lower costs compared to those younger.[183] Although (potential) migrants may expect that direct employment through friends or family should be more cost effective, ex-post studies show that this is not the case. Comparing between the three channels OEPs, illicit sub-agents/brokers and family/friends, OEPs emerged as the cheapest channel to emigrate,[184] possibly because of the government regulation they are subject to, while the potentially easier-access family/friends are more expensive, and sub-agents slightly more expensive than family/friends.[185] A 2009 ILO study also found that those going to the Gulf through OEPs were more likely to benefit from free accommodation and medical care provided by the employer, resulting in higher savings.[186]

The cost of migration then emerges as a key issue for legal migration from Pakistan. This also needs to be kept in mind when comparing with the cost of irregular migration towards Europe. According to the KNOMAD survey results (conducted in 2015), actual costs of legal migration to Saudi Arabia are on average USD 4,300, and on average USD 3,500 to the UAE.[187] There are no comparable sources on the costs of irregular migration to Europe. The cost of smuggling through overland routes has ranged between 3,000 and 11,000 USD,[188] with destinations in Northern Europe being more expensive[189] and air routes up to triple the cost, at USD 12,000-18,000.[190] A case study in a migration-prone village in Gujrat, based on fieldwork in 2011-12, indicates that irregular migration was perceived as cheaper than regular migration (to the Gulf or through education).[191] A 2004 survey conducted among households with a migrant in Europe who had travelled through smuggling networks showed that although an enormous financial cost, households could regain it within on average two years.[192] This confirms that similar to migration to the Gulf, irregular migration to Europe could often be "worth it" financially – depending on current prices for smuggling to Europe, which have fluctuated greatly over the years.[193]

3.3.3.3 The role of social networks and smuggling networks

The crucial role of social networks in facilitating emigration has been extensively studied in migration research, as discussed in Chapter 2. Established migration patterns often perpetuate migration from certain origin areas – from regions to districts and sometimes even villages – to specific destination countries, resulting in what is called chain migration or migration channels.[194] The Gulf countries have predominated as destinations for many regions in Pakistan. Since new migrants often rely on information and support from previous ones, and the government-vetted OEPs base their work on their own established networks in this region, this consolidates the

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[179] Arif, "Recruitment of Pakistani Workers for Overseas Employment: Mechanisms, Exploitation and Vulnerabilities," 13.

[180] ILO, *The Cost of Migration: What Low-Skilled Migrant Workers from Pakistan Pay to Work in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates*, 18 and 21; ILO, "Labour Migration from Pakistan: 2015 Status Report," 31.

[182] ILO, *The Cost of Migration: What Low-Skilled Migrant Workers from Pakistan Pay to Work in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates*, 24.

[183] ILO, 29.

[184] ILO, 21.

[185] ILO, 21–22.

[186] Arif, "Recruitment of Pakistani Workers for Overseas Employment: Mechanisms, Exploitation and Vulnerabilities," 31–32.

[187] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 26.

[188] Maroufof and Kouki, "Migrating from Pakistan to Greece: Re-Visiting Agency in Times of Crisis."

[189] Raghavan, R. and Jayasuriya, D., *People smuggling field insights report – Pakistan*, Red Elephant Research, 2016. Quoted in: UNODC, "Global Study on Smuggling of Migrants 2018. Asia," 113.

[190] UNODC, 113.

[191] Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan," 68–73.

[192] Khalid Koser, "Why Take the Risk? Explaining Migrant Smuggling," in *Global Migration, Ethnicity and Britishness*, ed. T Modood, Salt, and J., Palgrave P (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 76, https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230307155_4.

[193] Seefar, "People Smuggling in Afghanistan and Pakistan," in *People Smugglers Globally, 2017*, 2017; IOM, "Pakistan Migration Snapshot."

[194] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan"; Black et al., "The Effect of Environmental Change on Human Migration"; Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan."

dominance of Gulf countries as destination. For instance, a study conducted in 2017 found that most of Riyadh's taxi drivers come from KP, as a result of such chain migration.[195] Similar patterns – though at a different scale and hampered by the fact that regular migration is not easily available – seem to exist for European destinations..[196] The 2020 IOM survey showed that 66% of migrants wishing to go to Europe or Turkey already have family or friends there.[197] 21% also indicated that the reason behind their European destination preference was that they had relatives or friends there (the third most prevalent reason, after educational scholarships and available jobs).[198] Another IOM survey among returnees from Europe showed that 73% per cent had family/relatives in Europe (mainly Greece, UK and Italy) before going.[199] A case study in a migration-prone village in Gujrat also highlights the key role of extended family and friends in facilitating migration.[200] These results confirm the key role of social networks also for migration towards Europe.

Regarding the concrete support that social networks provide in facilitating migration, the IOM 2020 survey is again insightful. Already discussed above under individual factors is the significant role (extended) family and friends play for concrete migration decision-making. Furthermore, among those who had family/friends in Europe/Turkey, 38% said they had received support with documents, 25% in finding accommodation, 23% in finding employment, and 17% in finding someone to help them migrate[201] (this could mean a smuggler, or other). 87% of those who need a loan to emigrate borrow from friends or family, as results from the KNOMAD survey on migration cost showed.[202] Financing through social networks may be more relevant with regard to social networks *within* Pakistan, and less for those in the country of destination: the IOM survey among returnees from Europe showed that only 21% had received financial support through their European family/friends networks.[203] In the 2020 IOM survey, 28% received financial support through their networks in Europe/Turkey.[204]

However, the role of social networks for (potential) migrants is not exclusively positive. Hagen-Zanker et al. point out that "community-centred financing" can create problems since creditors still take significant interest rates, and if migration is unsuccessful, informal intermediaries can take advantage.[205] In a 2009 ILO study, approximately 16% of migrants from rural areas said they had experienced deception from friends or family, with other migrants reporting no such experience.[206] Migrants who went to the Gulf through family or friends have higher costs, as already discussed. As quoted above, Ahmad (2008) emphasises that migrants may leave despite their families, and not for or because of them.

As previously explained (see section 2.3), smuggling networks overlap with and work in similar ways as social networks. Smuggling networks are an important factor in facilitating the journey to Europe; as mentioned previously, 38% of Pakistani irregular migrants were estimated to emigrate with the support of smugglers in 2009.[207] The route Balochistan-Iran-Turkey has been the most common route towards Europe,[208] with local smugglers interacting with larger transnational networks to complete legs of larger journeys.[209] Recent evidence also points to smuggling routes by air form South Asia via Pakistan and Gulf Cooperation Countries, which then serve either as destination countries for irregular migrants or transit countries to Western Europe.[210] Risks along the route are mainly violence and exploitation, though some fatalities related to harshness of weather and

[195] Hélène Thiollet, "Immigrants, Markets, Brokers, and States: The Politics of Illiberal Migration Governance in the Arab Gulf," IMI Working Papers Series, 2019, 13.
[196] Yousef, "The Vicious Circle of Irregular Migration from Pakistan to Greece and Back to Pakistan," 12; Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan."
[197] IOM, "Pakistan: Survey on Drivers of Migration," 21.
[198] IOM, 11.
[199] IOM, "Comprehensive Profile of Pakistani Returnees 2016," 2016, 4.
[200] Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan."
[201] IOM, "Pakistan: Survey on Drivers of Migration," 21.
[202] ILO, *The Cost of Migration: What Low-Skilled Migrant Workers from Pakistan Pay to Work in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates*, 19.
[203] IOM, "Comprehensive Profile of Pakistani Returnees 2016," 4.
[204] IOM, "Pakistan: Survey on Drivers of Migration," 21.
[205] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 21 and 35.
[206] Arif, "Recruitment of Pakistani Workers for Overseas Employment: Mechanisms, Exploitation and Vulnerabilities," 37.
[207] Aksel et al., "Study on Smuggling of Migrants: Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Case Study 3: Pakistan – Turkey – Greece."
[208] Aksel et al.
[209] UNODC, "Global Study on Smuggling of Migrants 2018. Asia," 109.
[210] UNODC, 116.

terrain are also reported.[211] Studies have shown that smugglers can become active recruiters, therefore promoting irregular migration channels[212], including through sub-agents who in many cases are themselves returned Pakistani migrants.[213] This profile of smugglers is typical of the region, as it is usually locally embedded co-nationals ("travel agents") involved in smuggling networks. [214]

Migrants have been shown to put great care in the choice of smugglers, but they do so under difficult conditions, including information asymmetry and difficulty in confirming reputation.[215] One of the studies on irregular Pakistani migrants in Greece found that smugglers can take on a similar role as sources of trusted information and advice, even influencing the decision to migrate in the first place:[216]

> *Throughout the interviews, the smuggler appears as highly influential in the decision-making process with a multi-faceted role. By facilitating individuals to overcome obstacles that result directly from restrictive asylum or immigration measures, the smuggler's role is complementary to and intertwined with state control policies; migrants remain dependent economically and in terms of information and networking on the smuggler. Some of our interviewees were recruited directly by smugglers who convinced them that there would be a good work opportunities waiting for them in the destination country — a reassurance that in all cases turned out to be largely untrue. In many cases, however, the interviewees appear to have developed relations of trust with the smuggler that resemble those examined above concerning kinship or social networks.*

Some smugglers pretend that they are offering regular migration channels to Europe, while others are open about the clandestine nature of their services. In some cases, aspiring migrants are simply defrauded for the fees and never taken abroad.[217]

3.3.3.4   Sources of information

Accurate information about migration processes and what life abroad looks like is crucial for any aspiring migrant. In Pakistan, forthcoming research among potential migrants indicates that more information is needed particularly during the decision-making phase of emigration.[218] Studies on migration to the Gulf have shown that specific sources of information can lead to certain trajectories for emigration (e.g., direct employment/OEPs).[219] The major role of social networks for potential migrants from Pakistan was just discussed, and this includes information provision. KNOMAD survey results on information sources show that in the case of Pakistan, the reliance on relatives and friends is quite high (56%) also when compared against other major emigration countries under study.[220] The 2020 IOM[221] survey among potential migrants in Pakistan, as well as an IOM survey among returnees from Europe[222] both highlight family and friends in Pakistan and abroad (including former migrants) as their main sources of information, with other sources (university/school contacts, migration facilitator, internet, village elder, family in neighbouring country) significantly less reported, confirming again various social ties as main information sources. The KNOMAD/ ILO survey on migration cost, conducted among

[211] UNODC, 109.

[212] Bilger, Hofmann, and Jandl, "Human Smuggling as a Transnational Service Industry: Evidence from Austria"; Koser and Mcauliffe, "Establishing an Evidence-Base for Future Policy Development on Irregular Migration to Australia," 10.

[213] Aksel et al., "Study on Smuggling of Migrants: Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Case Study 3: Pakistan – Turkey – Greece," 24.

[214] UNODC, "Global Study on Smuggling of Migrants 2018. Asia," 109 and 112; Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan."

[215] Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, "Journeys to Europe: The Role of Policy in Migrant Decision-Making"; Campana and Gelsthorpe, "Choosing a Smuggler: Decision-Making Amongst Migrants Smuggled to Europe"; Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan," 68.

[216] Maroufof and Kouki, "Migrating from Pakistan to Greece: Re-Visiting Agency in Times of Crisis," 90.

[217] Aksel et al., "Study on Smuggling of Migrants: Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Case Study 3: Pakistan – Turkey – Greece," 24.

[218] ICMPD and Dynamic Consulting Services, "Needs Assessment Study: Information Needs of Intending Migrants in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan (Forthcoming)."

[219] ILO, *The Cost of Migration: What Low-Skilled Migrant Workers from Pakistan Pay to Work in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates*, 21; World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 24.

[220] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 21–22.

[221] IOM, "Pakistan: Survey on Drivers of Migration," 12.

[222] IOM, "Comprehensive Profile of Pakistani Returnees 2016."

those with Saudi Arabia and UAE as destinations, similarly had relatives/friends (56.6%) as the most prevalent source of information, followed by illicit sub-agents (37%) and OEPs (4.5%).

Again, the role of (extended) family and friends is not exclusively positive. Emigration from Pakistan is plagued by strong information asymmetries, especially for first-time migrants, resulting in high cost and risk of exploitation, as shown above.[223] A study conducted in KP concluded that potential migrants are not "completely naïve", they do have some knowledge about the risks involved in migration. A case study on a (irregular) migration-prone village in Gujrat comes to similar conclusions.[224] However, migrants often lack concrete information about possible negative scenarios that would actually allow them to prepare.[225]

While friends or relatives may be of genuine help, social networks have also been shown to be complicit in deception of (potential) migrants.[226] Information shared by social networks may not be correct.[227] Migrants who are already abroad also contribute to information asymmetries because they very often feel that they have to "put on a brave face" and not share the truth about their sometimes dire circumstances with those at home.[228] Returnees, depending on their individual situation, may also play a problematic role as (implicit) sources of information. Ahmad (2008) even argues returnees (or visiting migrants) can play a role in enticing irregular migration:[229]

> *"(…)(M)ost returnees understand (…) the elevated status (migration) brings them over men who have not been abroad. They swagger around town, basking in the glory it brings them. Several migrants I met confessed to putting on their 'whitest' clothes and deriving satisfaction from splashing money around in front of the immobile, deliberately giving the impression that their disposable income is greater than it in fact is. The rumours they disseminate inspire men of all sorts of ages and social backgrounds to find a way 'to see' for themselves what all the fuss was about."*

A case study based on research in a (irregular) migration-prone village in Gujrat similarly highlights these dynamics.[230]

Information available on the internet (reported by only 7% as information source in the 2020 IOM survey), including social media, seems less relevant compared to social ties. Without doubt, the increased availability of information and communications technology has in general transformed the way migrants can organise their journeys and get informed, as well as stay in touch with the origin country.[231] A positive link between internet use and access and migration in general has been demonstrated through studies.[232] The relevance of smartphone technology has been documented for irregular migration during the journey (and in transit countries), when migrants may seek new information and new contacts, including smugglers/facilitators (mostly through bilateral messenger conversations).[233] It can also serve to make irregular migration safer, as it reduces the exclusive reliance on the smuggler and can be used to document safe arrival (and to organise split payments).[234] However, for migration decision-making more particularly, the limited role of technology compared to face-to-face interaction is well documented across multiple origin countries, as it is more of a

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[223] ILO, *The Cost of Migration: What Low-Skilled Migrant Workers from Pakistan Pay to Work in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates*, 24.

[224] Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan."

[225] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 28.

[226] Arif, "Recruitment of Pakistani Workers for Overseas Employment: Mechanisms, Exploitation and Vulnerabilities," 37.

[227] Sanchez et al., "A Study of the Communication Channels Used by Migrants and Asylum Seekers in Italy , with a Particular Focus on Online and Social Media."

[228] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 32.

[229] Ahmad, "The Romantic Appeal of Illegal Migration: Gender, Masculinity and Human Smuggling from Pakistan," 145.

[230] Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan," 71, 79, 126.

[231] IOM, "World Migration Report 2020" (Geneva, 2019), 8–9.

[232] Aslany et al., "Systematic Review of Determinants of Migration Aspirations," 37.

[233] IOM, "World Migration Report 2020," 8–9; Sanchez et al., "A Study of the Communication Channels Used by Migrants and Asylum Seekers in Italy , with a Particular Focus on Online and Social Media," 7; Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 11; E Haarmann, Jasper Tjaden, and G Lopez, *Assessing the Effectiveness of Online Facebook Campaigns Targeting Potential Irregular Migrants : A Pilot Study in Three West African Countries*, 2020, 13.

[234] Optimity Advisors, ICMPD, and ECRE, "A Study on Smuggling of Migrants - Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Final Report.," 54–56; Bilger, Hofmann, and Jandl, "Human Smuggling as a Transnational Service Industry: Evidence from Austria"; Campana and Gelsthorpe, "Choosing a Smuggler: Decision-Making Amongst Migrants Smuggled to Europe"; Khan, "Impact of Migration on Education and Health. A Case Study of Karrianwala Village, District Gujrat, Pakistan."

means to eventual face-to-face interaction.[235] Studies also point towards the social stratification (i.e. inequality) evident in access to internet/social media: not everyone has access, and those who are illiterate are excluded.[236] The forthcoming ICMPD study among potential migrants also points towards differences between age groups, as younger groups welcome online engagement, while older segments prefer offline/face-to-face outreach.[237] For Pakistan, in addition to the IOM survey above, a policy paper on people smuggling from Pakistan assesses that "*Afghans and Pakistanis discuss issues related to migrant smuggling, destinations, routes and costs on social media, similarly to the way they discuss other common and important personal decisions. Numerous facilitators and travel agents solicit customers via social media, but few Afghans and Pakistanis will enter into negotiations remotely; they prefer to meet in person and highly value recommendations from their personal networks.*"[238] A literature review (on Afghan as well as Pakistani emigration) similarly concluded that the role of social media and IT should not be exaggerated.[239]

3.3.4   Factors driving irregular migration towards Europe

While there are by now numerous studies on the facilitation of Pakistani migration to the Gulf, there is less research about the migration process for (irregular) migrants on their way to Europe, reflecting also the main migration patterns towards the Gulf. In 2012, UNODC estimated irregular migration from Pakistan at approximately 300,000 annually (all destinations)[240], whereas other analyses see the number much lower[241]. Based on available literature just reviewed, the main factors driving irregular migration (to Europe) seem to be the following:

Firstly, at the structural level, existing migration patterns and networks appear to play a major role – Pakistani irregular migrants in Europe come from certain regions[242] and studies have shown that potential migrants rely on previous successful migrants to plan and facilitate their journey. Finally, a lack of regular pathways towards Europe is routinely described as a major factor for irregular migration, since there is a lack of other options.[243] In the forthcoming ICMPD study among potential migrants in 2019, a majority of those who consider irregular migration indicated that they see this as the only way to get to their desired destination.[244]

Secondly, at the personal and household level, income level is as relevant for irregular migration to Europe as for other forms of migration – the poorest households cannot afford to emigrate. On the other end of the spectrum, higher income levels can afford more expensive modes offered, e.g. using forged documents and air routes. With regard to economic outcomes, it is clear that (both regular and irregular) migration is often "worth it" despite the high cost;[245] in some cases, the cost of regular and irregular migration may even be comparable, but there are no reliable and recent estimates to make this a firm conclusion. Male gender and not being married also seems to be relevant characteristics at the personal level.[246] Households are also crucial in making the decision to emigrate. A qualitative study among families of irregular migrants found that in almost all cases, the decision to go irregularly to Europe was made by the family, since it also organised the financing of the

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[235] Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 7 and 30; Rianne Dekker et al., "Smart Refugees : How Syrian Asylum Migrants Use Social Media Information in Migration Decision-Making," *Social Media + Society* 4, no. 1 (2018): 1–11, https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305118764439; Haarmann, Tjaden, and Lopez, *Assessing the Effectiveness of Online Facebook Campaigns Targeting Potential Irregular Migrants : A Pilot Study in Three West African Countries*; Marie Gillespie, Souad Osseiran, and Margie Cheesman, "Syrian Refugees and the Digital Passage to Europe : Smartphone Infrastructures and Affordances," *Social Media + Society* 4, no. 1 (2018): 1–11, https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305118764440; Martin Emmer, Marlene Kunst, and Carola Richter, "Information Seeking and Communication during Forced Migration : An Empirical Analysis of Refugees ' Digital Media Use and Its Effects on Their Perceptions of Germany as Their Target Country," 2020, https://doi.org/10.1177/1742766520921905.

[236] Dekker et al., "Smart Refugees : How Syrian Asylum Migrants Use Social Media Information in Migration Decision-Making"; Emmer, Kunst, and Richter, "Information Seeking and Communication during Forced Migration : An Empirical Analysis of Refugees ' Digital Media Use and Its Effects on Their Perceptions of Germany as Their Target Country."

[237] ICMPD and Dynamic Consulting Services, "Needs Assessment Study: Information Needs of Intending Migrants in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan (Forthcoming)."

[238] Seefar, "People Smuggling in Afghanistan and Pakistan," 29.

[239] IOM, "Migration Flows from Afghanistan and Pakistan towards Europe: Understanding Data Gaps and Recommendations," 62.

[240] UNODC (2012) "Migrant Smuggling in Asia: A Thematic Review of Literature, Bangkok: UNODC.

[241] Arif and Ishaq, "Irregular Migration to the Gulf: An Analysis of the Status of Pakistani Migrant Workers," 309.

[242] Maroufof and Kouki, "Migrating from Pakistan to Greece: Re-Visiting Agency in Times of Crisis."

[243] Koser, "Why Take the Risk? Explaining Migrant Smuggling."

[244] ICMPD and Dynamic Consulting Services, "Needs Assessment Study: Information Needs of Intending Migrants in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan (Forthcoming)."

[245] Koser, "Why Take the Risk? Explaining Migrant Smuggling," 76.

[246] IOM, "Snapshot of 2018 Arrivals in Europe from Pakistan," 4.

journey.[247] Nevertheless, the influence of the household should not be overestimated, as migrants still have their own will and even might decide to migrate against the wishes of their families.[248] Irregular migration has also been investigated as a typical "rite of passage" for young male Pakistanis, highlighting the importance to keep in mind socio-cultural ideas behind irregular migration, and more "intangible" factors including individual desire for adventure or autonomy.[249]

Thirdly, at the meso level of facilitating factors, social networks linking aspiring migrants to the destination country play a crucial role. The 2020 IOM survey showed that 66% of migrants intending to go to Europe or Turkey already have family or friends there.[250] KNOMAD survey results on information sources show that in the case of Pakistan, the reliance on relatives and friends is quite high (56%) also when compared against other major emigration countries under study.[251] In a qualitative study among Pakistani irregular migrants in Greece, almost all respondents indicated that they had made the choice to go to Greece because of existing social networks who provided information.[252] Another study on irregular Pakistani migrants in Greece showed similar results.[253]

Smuggling networks overlap with and work in similar ways as social networks. Migrants have been shown to put great care in the choice of smugglers, but they do so under difficult conditions, including information asymmetry and difficulty in confirming reputation.[254] Studies have shown that smugglers can become active recruiters, therefore promoting irregular migration channels[255], including through sub-agents who in many cases are themselves returned Pakistani migrants.[256] Some smugglers pretend that they are offering regular migration channels to Europe, while others are open about the clandestine nature of their services. In some cases, aspiring migrants are simply defrauded for the fees and never taken abroad.[257]

Another factor playing into the meso level seems to be confusion or conflation between registered and illicit migration agents. As discussed above, OEPs often employ illicit sub-agents in order to reach rural potential migrants; smugglers do the same. Even those migrants who go through a regular migration process may still mainly interact with illicit sub-agents.[258] The 2015 smuggling study on Pakistan confirmed that aspiring migrants who wish to work in the EU are essentially on their own (unless they have social networks who can help them, or manage to get a visa), since OEPs do not advertise jobs in the EU. When aspiring migrants get in touch with illicit agents, they can rely on little other than the persons' reputation; thus, they can easily fall victim to fraud, exploitation, or human trafficking.[259]

3.4   Migration Information Campaigns in Pakistan

As another aspect of the country context for the PARIM campaign and building the bridge to the consecutive chapter on campaigns, this section will briefly present existing measures and campaigns on irregular migration awareness raising in Pakistan, including ICMPD's own work at the Migrant Resources Centres. While this section will focus on existing measures in Pakistan (upon which the PARIM campaign can build), the next chapter

[247] Koser, "Why Take the Risk? Explaining Migrant Smuggling."
[248] Ahmad, "The Romantic Appeal of Illegal Migration: Gender, Masculinity and Human Smuggling from Pakistan," 136–37.
[249] Ahmad, "The Romantic Appeal of Illegal Migration: Gender, Masculinity and Human Smuggling from Pakistan"; Maroufof and Kouki, "Migrating from Pakistan to Greece: Re-Visiting Agency in Times of Crisis"; IOM, "Migration Flows from Afghanistan and Pakistan towards Europe: Understanding Data Gaps and Recommendations," 10; see also Hernández-Carretero and Carling, "Beyond 'Kamikaze Migrants': Risk Taking in West African Boat Migration to Europe," 410.
[250] IOM, "Pakistan: Survey on Drivers of Migration," 21.
[251] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 21–22.
[252] Maroufof and Kouki, "Migrating from Pakistan to Greece: Re-Visiting Agency in Times of Crisis," 90.
[253] Yousef, "The Vicious Circle of Irregular Migration from Pakistan to Greece and Back to Pakistan," 13.
[254] Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, "Journeys to Europe: The Role of Policy in Migrant Decision-Making"; Campana and Gelsthorpe, "Choosing a Smuggler: Decision-Making Amongst Migrants Smuggled to Europe."
[255] Bilger, Hofmann, and Jandl, "Human Smuggling as a Transnational Service Industry: Evidence from Austria"; Koser and Mcauliffe, "Establishing an Evidence-Base for Future Policy Development on Irregular Migration to Australia," 10.
[256] Aksel et al., "Study on Smuggling of Migrants: Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Case Study 3: Pakistan – Turkey – Greece," 24.
[257] Aksel et al., 24.
[258] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 24.
[259] Aksel et al., "Study on Smuggling of Migrants: Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Case Study 3: Pakistan – Turkey – Greece," 26.

integrates the Pakistan country context with the literature on the aim and efficiency of information campaigns in general (the lessons of which the PARIM campaign should take into account).

3.4.1   ICMPD's Migrant Resource Centres[260]

Since 2016, ICMPD operates a Migrant Resource Centre in Islamabad in cooperation with the MOPHRD, with the goal of raising potential migrants' awareness on the benefits of safe and regular migration and the dangers and consequences of irregular migration. A second MRC was established in Lahore in cooperation with the Department of Labour Punjab.[261]

MRCs work with multiple target groups and a range of different communication channels. The main target groups are aspiring or intending migrants. As of March 2021, the MRCs reached over 321,629 potential migrants through counselling, outreach sessions and pre- departure briefings since their inception. According to a 2019 independent evaluation of the MRCS, based on a client survey, MRCs mainly reach a young, highly educated audience, who are interested in migrating to Europe, Australia, the US and Canada.[262]Through a team of counsellors, the MRCs provide one-on-one counselling, pre-departure orientation (including in cooperation with MOPHRD and BEOE), community education on migration, and conduct information campaigns. The work is implemented both through physical walk-in offices, through various workshop formats (presentations with Q+A, theatre performances, documentary screenings), but, especially since 2020, also online (through Facebook, Twitter, the MRC website, Instagram and YouTube, which also includes white board animation videos), via phone (SMS campaigns, toll-free hotline providing both pre-recorded messages and counselling, counselling through Viber, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Skype, text responses and emails), and via offline channels including rickshaws, TV and radio. Content topics include overseas employment, rights and protection of migrants, general career counselling, access to education systems in other countries, skills development and vocational training programmes in Pakistan, psycho-social support, communication skills, and financial literacy for migrants and their families. Workshop formats have often targeted potential migrants in education institutions (including TVET institutions and universities). Returnees are referred to relevant government institutions and organisations that provide support.[263]

Secondly, the MRCs provide capacity building for various stakeholders (government, academia, civil society, OEPs, etc.), collaborate with academic institutions on research or conferences, and collaborate with CSOs. MRC counsellors also provide pre-departure orientation sessions at the Protectorate of Emigration Office (PoE) Rawalpindi and in Lahore (starting March 2021). The MRCs have previously worked with journalists on migration reporting and are currently working with media houses to collaboratively develop migration media guidelines capacity building for staff on migration reporting.

So far, MRC work has had no impact evaluation which could provide scientific evidence on the most effective channels and messaging (in terms of measured changes in knowledge, perceptions, intentions or behaviour).[264] An independent evaluation[265], mainly based on an MRC client survey, was conducted in 2019. A needs assessment based on a survey among potential migrants in Punjab and KP, key informant interviews and focus group discussions is currently in its final stages.[266] Project documentation, ongoing data collection for internal monitoring purposes (including pre- and post-testing piloted in 2020), and social media analysis, also provides some descriptive insights.[267]

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[260] This section is largely based on ICMPD internal (donor) reporting, including project reporting and annual reports.
[261] The centres are supported by the EU funded projects "Support to the Silk Routes Partnership for Migration" (2015 – July 2017) and "Improving Migration Management in the Silk Routes Countries" (Aug 2017- Jul 2021). In 2019-2020, outreach activities were furthermore supported by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the project "Awareness raising on migration in Iraq and Pakistan" (MARIP).
[262] Dynamic Consulting Services, "Third Party Evaluation of MRCs in Islamabad and Lahore, Pakistan" (Islamabad, 2019).
[263] https://www.mrc.org.pk/en/about/migrant-resource-centre
[264] Chapter 4.3. provides a discussion on the difference (and missing link) between impact evaluation and descriptive statistics/metrics for online campaigns.
[265] Dynamic Consulting Services, "Third Party Evaluation of MRCs in Islamabad and Lahore, Pakistan."
[266] Final results of the needs assessment will be integrated into further project publications. ICMPD and Dynamic Consulting Services, "Needs Assessment Study: Information Needs of Intending Migrants in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan (Forthcoming)."
[267] Further analysis of data collected by the MRCs will be integrated into PARIM project outputs.

- Facebook is the most important online channel for MRCs, with currently over 62,000 followers. A targeted social media campaign in 2020 resulted in an increase of over 50,000 followers. The content shared has generated engagement of 781,600 people to date (likes, comments, re-shares). The campaign showcasing a five videos of both regular and irregular Pakistani migrants' testimonies of their journeys from Pakistan to Turkey or via Turkey to Europe generated 230,100 impressions, 974,500 reach and above 820,300 views. Among the video content created for the campaign (, those with a more negative message (highlighting the risk of the irregular journey, losing money to an agent) received less engagement than those with more positive messages (personal success stories). An analysis of Facebook metrics shows that the audience who viewed and reacted to videos is in line with the profile of Pakistani potential migrants, as it consists overwhelmingly of men (95%), is young (42% are 25-34 years old, 33% are 18-24 and 14% 35-44), and mainly from Punjab, Sindh and KP.

- YouTube and Instagram are currently the online channels receiving the least audience interest. WhatsApp was introduced as an additional channel in 2020 and has been well received. Twitter was started in 2020 and has been used for targeted campaigns on International Migrants Day, Human Trafficking day, etc. #MRC Pakistan trended second in Pakistan on International Migrants Day, 18 December 2020. In 2020-2021 (to date), #MRC Pakistan received 4,319,709 impressions.

- SMS campaigns promoting the hotline had a significant (short-term) effect in terms of generated follow-up on other channels in 2019 (over 10,000 calls within a month, with a sharp decline afterwards), but not in 2020 (380,000 SMS led to approx. 800 immediate calls).

- A 2019-2020 rickshaw campaign with each 300 rickshaws showing posters with migration-related messages (a popular and cost-effective ad in rural areas), conducted in Gujranwala and Faisalabad, had a high impact compared to cost (797 calls and increased walk-in clients). In December 2020, a new campaign with 1200 rickshaws in four cities (Gujranwala, Gujrat, Faisalabad and Lahore) also generated a high response, with 1,935 clients contacted MRC through hotline and WhatsApp after seeing rickshaw ads.

- TV and radio, while high in budget, were found to be less effective. In 2020, three public service messages on safe and regular migration, dangers of irregular migration and MRC services were aired on four TV channels, 14 radio channels and nine cable networksfor a duration of two and a half months, reaching out to an audience/viewers of above 55 million. In 2016-2017, MRC initiated the development of a TV drama implemented independently by the TV channel Hum TV under the title "DalDal", reached several hundred thousands of Pakistani families and was rated second most viewed TV show of 2017 in Pakistan. A five-episode migration talk show was also aired on national and one local TV channel reaching out to over 30 million viewers. Considering to the magnitude of the reach, these initiatives were not found to have an equivalent response.

- Nine theatre performances in three districts of Punjab in 2019, attended by 2,040 people, had a more mixed audience, as women were deliberately targeted as potential key influencers of migrants. The performances had a noticeable effect on hotline follow-up, as it received 750 calls from the targeted districts within the same two weeks.

- In 2020, MRCs collaborated with a local community partner in six migration-prone cities in Gujrat, Gujranwala, Mandi Bahauddin, Jhelum, Sialkot, Mardan and Muzaffarabad to conduct 70 virtual and on-ground community outreach sessions on safe and regular migration and the dangers of irregular migration, reaching out to 9,562 intending migrants and their families. Pre- and post-intervention tests show that knowledge and awareness among the audience had significantly increased. During pre-test, 57% of the audience were not fully informed about the regular migration process, while this increased to 100% during post-test. 36% of attendees knew and understood the terms migrant smuggling and irregular migration, while 95% showed knowledge of term during post-test.

- Migration documentaries screened (followed by Q+A sessions) in five districts of Punjab in 2019, with overall 19 screenings and a total attendance of 1,010 people. While screenings were conducted, the MRC hotline receive 3,000 calls from target districts.

Regardless of channel used, a lesson learned noted throughout is the need for continuous and repeated campaigning in order to achieve long-term effects.

The independent evaluation[268] conducted in 2019 showed high satisfaction with MRC services. 98% were fully or moderately satisfied, with content and skill level of counsellors similarly highly evaluated. 92% would recommend the MRCs to others. The evaluation also highlighted a need to reach remote areas better (beyond locations in Islamabad and Lahore).The study noted that MRCs have mostly reached their clients (48%) through online engagements, followed by family and friends (28%) and posters/print advertisement (17%). Only one percent had learned about MRCs through radio or TV shows. Stakeholders interviewed for the evaluation reflected positively on the Centres' work but recommended that outreach would need to be further expanded to be effective, including to rural areas – as foreseen for the PARIM project. Following the evaluation and also due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the MRCs have focused more intensely on virtual channels since 2020, including joint "live" sessions with CSO partners on social media, and a radio session.

3.4.2   Other migration-related campaigns in Pakistan

Although it can be assumed that numerous migration-related campaigns have been conducted in Pakistan, there is little public information available, an issue that is plaguing the evidence-building around migration information campaigns in general (see Chapter 4 below). For instance, a 2016 EMN Ad-Hoc Query notes that both Finland and Hungary financed campaigns in Pakistan in 2015-2017, but no further information is available.[269] There are currently two other migration-related campaigns ongoing in Pakistan:

Firstly, the "Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants" (GloAct) aims at assisting selected countries in developing and implementing comprehensive national counter-trafficking and counter-smuggling responses and focusing on prevention and protection, implemented by UNODC, IOM and UNICEF. GloAct also launched awareness raising actions on human trafficking and migrants smuggling in Pakistan. An independent evaluation of GloAct in 2019[270] was reserved about its immediate effect and long-term impact, noting that both design and implementation encountered various challenges leading to limited effects of the campaign. The main focus and effect of the campaign was in its work with stakeholders, rather than awareness raising and behaviour change (which would be more relevant for PARIM). There are therefore no clear lessons to be drawn for the PARIM project.

Secondly, Pakistan has been selected as one of the target countries within one of the corridors under the Global Action to Improve the Recruitment Framework of Labour Migration: RE-FRAME implemented by ILO. The Action aims at reducing abusive practices and violations of human and labour rights of migrants during the recruitment process and maximize the protection of migrant workers in the recruitment process and their contribution to development. Reframe has built the capacity of over 32 Community Based Change Makers. ICMPD has supported the capacity building of these community volunteers through the MRCs and continues to engage with the Community Based Change Makers through the MRCs. The project has also produced various research reports, the results of which have been integrated into this report (see sections above). The conducting of a final independent evaluation was foreseen for 2020 but is so far not publicly available.

[268] Dynamic Consulting Services, "Third Party Evaluation of MRCs in Islamabad and Lahore, Pakistan."
[269] EMN, "EMN Ad-Hoc Query on Migration Information and Awareness Raising Campaigns in Countries of Origin and Transit," 2016.
[270] UNODC, "Final Independent In-Depth Evaluation Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (GLO.ACT)" (Vienna, 2019).

4 Information campaigns addressing irregular migration

4.1 Introduction

Information campaigns targeting irregular migration have become a popular migration policy instrument over the last decade or two. European states and the European Commission itself have commissioned campaigns with International Organisations and CSOs in trying to combat irregular migration. Over 100 migration information campaigns have been conducted since 2014 by Member States and 25 by European institutions, according to a mapping by the EMN Working Group on Information and Awareness-Raising Campaigns.[271] As such, they are one example of public information campaigns that wish to change public attitudes or behaviour, for instance with regard to health or safety.[272]

Information campaigns can address both aspiring migrants, whose wishes to emigrate are still quite vague, and intending migrants, who have already made concrete steps towards emigration. As was described under Chapter 2 and specifically for Pakistan under 3.2, to move through these decision-making phases, migrants rely on different sources of information and support about migration processes and outcomes, who may or may not be worthy of the trust migrants place in them.

Migration information campaigns can then be conceptualised as an intervention among "key influencers": in social networks of friends and family, who are the main sources of information, [273] but do not always convey the full picture;[274] and in (business models of the) "migration industry", [275] consisting of actors who have a stake in the continuation of migration, [276] but not necessarily in the welfare of individuals: employers abroad who are searching for migrants, intermediaries who interact between employers and potential migrants, including recruitment organisations, agents, and smugglers. Migration information campaigns can then aim to provide a fuller picture of information regarding the risks and dangers along the journey and in destination countries, in order to prevent harm.

Past migration information campaigns have had various focuses. According to a literature review on the topic, the majority of campaigns wish to warn migrants about the risks and dangers of the journey, including the risk of exploitation by smugglers and falling victim to human trafficking, or to warn about precarious living circumstances for irregular migrants in destination countries.[277] In a systematic literature review in 2018, Tjaden et al. aimed to identify scientifically robust and evaluated migration information campaigns. They concluded that the majority of campaigns target human trafficking, followed by irregular migration, smuggling and risks of the journey. A smaller number focus on alternatives to migration, and a minority on policy restrictions at the destination.[278]

Despite their popularity among European policy makers, migration information campaigns have been strongly questioned with regard to their effectiveness, since the scientific evidence is still quite limited.[279] Indeed, in their 2018 review, Tjaden et al. identified hundreds of campaigns, yet only 60 had been evaluated, with only 30 evaluations publicly available and two published in peer-reviewed publications. Most evaluations were limited

[271] Over 100 migration information campaigns have been conducted since 2014 by Member States and 25 by European institutions, according to a mapping by the EMN Working Group on Information and Awareness-Raising Campaigns (Presentation of EMN INFO Working Group Co-Chair, Annual EMN Conference Vienna 2019)

[272] Schans and Optekamp, "Raising Awareness, Changing Behavior? Combatting Irregular Migration through Information Campaigns," 7.

[273] IOM, "Migration Flows from Afghanistan and Pakistan towards Europe: Understanding Data Gaps and Recommendations," 55–56.

[274] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 32.

[275] Castles, Haas, and Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, 41; Optimity Advisors, ICMPD, and ECRE, "A Study on Smuggling of Migrants - Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Final Report.," 29.

[276] Castles, Haas, and Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, 41; Optimity Advisors, ICMPD, and ECRE, "A Study on Smuggling of Migrants - Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Final Report.," 29.

[277] Schans and Optekamp, "Raising Awareness, Changing Behavior? Combatting Irregular Migration through Information Campaigns," 5 and 11.

[278] Jasper Tjaden, Sandra Morgenstern, and Frank Laczko, "Evaluating the Impact of Information Campaigns in the Field of Migration: A Systematic Review of the Evidence, and Practical Guidance," Central Mediterranean Route Thematic Report Series (Geneva, 2018), 23–24.

[279] Evie Browne, "Impact of Communication Campaigns to Deter Irregular Migration (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1248)" (Birmingham, 2015); Tijan L Bah and Catia Batista, "Understanding Willingness to Migrate Illegally : Evidence from a Lab in the Field Experiment," NOVAFRICA Working Paper Series, 2019, www.novafrica.org; Tjaden, Morgenstern, and Laczko, "Evaluating the Impact of Information Campaigns in the Field of Migration: A Systematic Review of the Evidence, and Practical Guidance"; Schans and Optekamp, "Raising Awareness, Changing Behavior? Combatting Irregular Migration through Information Campaigns"; Bernd Beber and Alexandra Scacco, "Can the Provision of Information or Economic Benefits Prevent Irregular Migration? Preliminary Design for a Field Experiment in Nigeria," 2018, 6.

in their design and deemed not rigorous by the authors, including because they presented limited actual evidence to demonstrate their effectiveness, were based on a small number of participants (therefore lacking representativeness), lacked definitions of target groups, and had no clear objectives.[280] Since their review, further studies have emerged with the explicit goal of adding to this evidence gap, warranting another close look at available evidence.

Migration information campaigns can be seen as an urgent humanitarian intervention particularly vis-à-vis the dangers of the Central Mediterranean route,[281] such as starvation in the desert, abduction and slavery in Libya, and deaths in the Mediterranean Sea. More critical voices have however posited that the true intention is to increase control[282] or to deter and stop migrants (or migration) altogether, since alternatives to irregular migration are often not readily available, particularly while reducing the flow of irregular migration is high on the political agenda in many European countries.[283] From another perspective, the messages of some past migration information campaigns may be analysed as targeting more the European national audience than actually informing potential migrants.[284]

One debate around migration information campaigns has therefore been to discuss ethically sound goals and messages. The legitimacy of fear-based deterrence messages not conveying truthful or balanced information has been strongly questioned, especially if targeting countries of origin with high positive asylum rates (because of ongoing conflict).[285] Moreover, (successful) migration demonstrably has positive effects for migrants and their families (see above). In the perception of potential migrants, as well as in actual outcomes of the many whose (irregular) migration is still successful, benefits may outweigh (intangible) risks and hardships.[286] Migration information campaigns also cannot address the demand side of irregular migration. Considering that there is a demand for irregular (low-paid, low-skilled, exploitable) workers, including in (specific sectors in) Europe[287], migrants may follow the logic of available work opportunities rather than state regulations (when the two are conflicting). Thus, one can conclude that campaigns should be based on truthful information,[288] and strike a balance between messages focusing on fears and deterrence (as will inevitably be the case when discussing the risks of the journey) and those focusing on more neutral or positive information delivery. If the goal is truly humanitarian and wishing to prevent harm, the need to provide information could be seen as independent of the impact on migration behaviour; this could also imply that migrants are provided information that could help them avoid exploitation by smugglers, even if this could also facilitate irregular migration.[289] When aiming for deterrence, feasible alternatives to (irregular) migration should be considered and discussed.[290] This is in line with the general approach taken by ICMPD MRCs in Pakistan so far, and envisioned by the PARIM project.

The following chapter will first discuss available evidence on the impact of migration information campaigns, taking into consideration evidence from Pakistan reviewed above, and – following the approach taken by

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[280] Tjaden, Morgenstern, and Laczko, "Evaluating the Impact of Information Campaigns in the Field of Migration: A Systematic Review of the Evidence, and Practical Guidance," 28.

[281] William Walters, "Imagined Migration World: The European Union's Anti-Illegal Immigration Discourse," in *The Politics of International Migration Management*, ed. Martin Geiger and Antoine Pecoud (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2010), 73–95, https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230294882_4; Schans and Optekamp, "Raising Awareness, Changing Behavior? Combatting Irregular Migration through Information Campaigns," 15.

[282] Jørgen Carling and María Hernández-Carretero, "Protecting Europe and Protecting Migrants? Strategies for Managing Unauthorised Migration from Africa," *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 13, no. 1 (2011): 45, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-856X.2010.00438.x.

[283] Schans and Optekamp, "Raising Awareness, Changing Behavior? Combatting Irregular Migration through Information Campaigns," 15; Heller, "Perception Management - Deterring Potential Migrants through Information Campaigns"; Ceri Oeppen, "'Leaving Afghanistan! Are You Sure?' European Efforts to Deter Potential Migrants through Information Campaigns," *Human Geography* 9, no. 2 (2016): 57–68, https://doi.org/10.1177/194277861600900206.

[284] This was also strongly discussed at the EMN Annual Conference 2019 on the topic. See also EMN INFO Working Group, ""Don't Come" or 'Be Prepared before You Come'? An Introduction to Information and Awareness-Raising Campaigns," in *Annual EMN Conference* (Vienna, 2019); Seefar, "3E Impact. Ethical, Engaged & Effective. Running Communications on Irregular Migration from Kos to Kandahar."

[285] EMN INFO Working Group, ""Don't Come" or 'Be Prepared before You Come'? An Introduction to Information and Awareness-Raising Campaigns"; UNHCR, "Chapter 10: Information Strategy," *Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration: The 10- Point Plan in Action*, 2011, 264, http://www.unhcr.org/50a4c2289.pdf.

[286] For instance, Shrestha (2019) argues that migrants should be better informed in order *not* to be deterred from (regular) migration, since migration outcomes are beneficial to migrants and their families.

[287] Triandafyllidou and Bartolini, "Irregular Migration and Irregular Work: A Chicken and Egg Dilemma."

[288] Methodologically, this still means significant room for interpretation. For instance, to create an experimental setting, Shresta (2019) provided information on actual migrant mortality rates to potential migrants – one from a year with low rates, and one from a year with high rates (*Last year, x individuals from (district), one of Nepal's 75 districts, died in (destination)*).

[289] Jasper Tjaden, "Assessing the Impact of Awareness- Raising Campaigns on Potential Migrants – What We Have Learned so Far," in *Migration in West and North Africa and across the Mediterranean*, ed. F. Fargues and M. Rango (Geneva: IOM, 2020), 426–34.

[290] Schans and Optekamp, "Raising Awareness, Changing Behavior? Combatting Irregular Migration through Information Campaigns," 20.

previous literature reviews in this area – focusing on campaigns addressing irregular migration in origin countries, while excluding for instance review of anti-trafficking campaigns and campaigns seeking to improve the public image of migrants residing in Europe.[291] Although evidence is overall still limited, sometimes contradictory on the finer points and clearly requiring further inquiry, there are now studies that do confirm some of the key assumptions behind migration information campaigns. Since the main target audience of the PARIM project are potential and intending migrants (as well as their "key influencers"), the chapter will focus on evidence relevant for these target groups.

Secondly, keeping in mind that the full PARIM communication and campaign strategy will be developed elsewhere, the chapter will summarise points from the (still limited) literature on how migration information campaigns can be improved, focusing on the role of trusted messengers and channels, the relevance of content, messaging and the role of risk perceptions, and finally target group segmentation.

4.2   Aims, assumptions and evidence of migration information campaigns

While the ultimate aim of information campaigns – wishing to influence target group behaviour – is clear in theory, there is still much debate on how this can be achieved in practice, and how such "success" – the impact of a campaign – can be measured.[292] Can awareness raising actually translate into a change of behaviour among migrants? Demonstrating such a causal link is a challenge plaguing public information campaigns in general.[293] For migration information campaigns, it is likewise notoriously difficult, since the real-world impact would be reduced irregular migration, but this is impossible to measure, since the extent of actual irregular migration is not known.[294]

Thus, various approximations are put in place to measure what is ultimately assumed to result in impact. Usually these proxies are changes in knowledge (awareness and information retention), perceptions, attitudes and intentions, which stand for *intended* changes in behaviour (sometimes changes in behaviour can also be directly measured), which again are assumed to translate into larger impact.[295] In the case of migration information campaigns, this means that:

- "*First, it is assumed that potential migrants lack information;*
- *second, that available information (i.e. prior to an information campaign) is inaccurate;*
- *third, that new information (i.e. from the campaign) is trusted and believed;*
- *fourth, that the new information will affect knowledge, perceptions and/or attitudes;*
- *and, fifth, that a change in knowledge, perceptions and/or attitudes will translate into a change in behaviour.*"[296]

Measuring these proxies in a scientifically robust way involves significant investment in terms of cost and time – which is among the reasons that robust evaluations are lacking.[297] The diversity of migration information campaigns with regard to their goals, leading to a lack of comparability, adds to the lack of evidence.[298] Another methodological challenge lies in working with irregular migrants (and their families) in general, who, aware of the clandestine nature of irregular migration, may misrepresent their true assumptions and intentions.[299] As has

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[291] A systematic analysis including evidence and lessons learned from (in particular) anti-trafficking campaigns can therefore be seen as a fruitful approach for further research.

[292] This topic will be addressed in more detail in the PARIM project communication and MEL strategies.

[293] James Dennison, "How to Perform Impact Assessments: Key Steps for Assessing Communication Interventions" (Malta, 2020), 8; Schans and Optekamp, "Raising Awareness, Changing Behavior? Combatting Irregular Migration through Information Campaigns," 7; Felipe Alexander Dunsch, Jasper Tjaden, and William Quiviger, "Migrants as Messengers: The Impact of Peer-to-Peer Communication on Potential Migrants in Senegal. Impact Evaluation Report." (Geneva, 2019), 11.

[294] Heller, "Perception Management - Deterring Potential Migrants through Information Campaigns."

[295] Browne, "Impact of Communication Campaigns to Deter Irregular Migration (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1248)," 3; Heller, "Perception Management - Deterring Potential Migrants through Information Campaigns."

[296] Tjaden, Morgenstern, and Laczko, "Evaluating the Impact of Information Campaigns in the Field of Migration: A Systematic Review of the Evidence, and Practical Guidance," 13. (bullet points added)

[297] Dennison, "How to Perform Impact Assessments: Key Steps for Assessing Communication Interventions," 8.

[298] Schans and Optekamp, "Raising Awareness, Changing Behavior? Combatting Irregular Migration through Information Campaigns"; Tjaden, "Assessing the Impact of Awareness- Raising Campaigns on Potential Migrants – What We Have Learned so Far," 13; Carling and Hernández-Carretero, "Protecting Europe and Protecting Migrants? Strategies for Managing Unauthorised Migration from Africa."

[299] Browne, "Impact of Communication Campaigns to Deter Irregular Migration (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1248)," 3; Koser and Mcauliffe, "Establishing an Evidence-Base for Future Policy Development on Irregular Migration to Australia."

been noted, the lack of evidence around migration information campaigns calls into question the validity of their assumptions,[300] and ultimately their legitimacy.[301] We will therefore review these five assumptions against the Pakistani case.

4.2.1   The relevance of information

The first two assumptions regarding lack of information just listed above can be concretely reviewed against available evidence in the Pakistan context. The first question is whether information about the risks and dangers involved in irregular migration is indeed lacking. Some researchers critical of information campaigns have stated that migrants are already aware of the potential risks and yet leave anyway.[302] Indeed, one of the qualitative case studies reviewed in Chapter 3 showed that Pakistani migrants should not be assumed to be "completely naïve" as they do have some awareness about the risks involved in migration. Other studies even speak of the "romantic appeal" of irregular migration for young Pakistani men, including because of the (envisioned) danger.[303] However, potential migrants often lack concrete information about negative scenarios[304] that would actually allow them to prepare for what might happen. For the Pakistan context, significant information asymmetries have been demonstrated between migrants and their facilitators, refuting any summary claims that (irregular) migrants have all the information they need.

Similarly, there are indications that the second assumption – that available information, independently of information campaigns, is inaccurate or incomplete – is correct for the Pakistan context. To summarise again Chapter 3: in the context of labour migration to the Gulf, there are numerous studies demonstrating how migrants, especially first-time migrants, have only partial information and are unaware of the risks they face, as discussed above. Indeed, the observable difference in risks faced and costs incurred between first-time emigrants and ones that are experienced already indicates that there is an information gap: if all had the same access to information, there should be no difference between these groups. Friends and family, who could be assumed more trustworthy, also do not always convey the full picture, including because they feel a need to "put on a brave face".[305] With regard to irregular migration, smuggling networks overlap with and work in similar ways as social networks. As discussed above, smugglers, although often seen by migrants and their families as sources of trusted information and advice,[306] can significantly contribute to information asymmetries.[307] When aspiring migrants get in touch with illicit agents/smugglers, they can rely on little other than the persons' reputation; thus, they can easily fall victim to fraud, exploitation, or human trafficking.[308] Moreover, together with a lack of regular migration channels to the EU, there seems to be confusion or conflation between registered and illicit migration agents, since OEPs often employ illicit sub-agents in order to reach rural potential migrants; smugglers do the same. Aspiring migrants who wish to work in the EU are essentially on their own, since OEPs do not advertise jobs in the EU.[309] The relevance of providing accurate and complete information therefore seems to be evident in the case of Pakistan.

Evidence on the third and fourth assumption, that new information (from a campaign) is trusted and that it will affect knowledge, perceptions and/or attitudes, is still inconclusive. There is no immediate evidence from Pakistan available. A recent IOM peer-to-peer campaign in West Africa aimed to achieve behavioural change through emotional identification with the content and returnee messengers. In the evaluation, there was little or no effect on potential migrants' factual knowledge on irregular migration, perceptions of the chances of arriving and staying in Europe, based on what was provided by the campaign. But post-campaign migration

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[300] Tjaden, "Assessing the Impact of Awareness- Raising Campaigns on Potential Migrants – What We Have Learned so Far," 427.

[301] Oeppen, "'Leaving Afghanistan! Are You Sure?' European Efforts to Deter Potential Migrants through Information Campaigns."

[302] Tjaden, "Assessing the Impact of Awareness- Raising Campaigns on Potential Migrants – What We Have Learned so Far," 427; Schans and Optekamp, "Raising Awareness, Changing Behavior? Combatting Irregular Migration through Information Campaigns," 17.

[303] Ahmad, "The Romantic Appeal of Illegal Migration: Gender, Masculinity and Human Smuggling from Pakistan."

[304] Hagen-Zanker et al., "Migration from the Margins: Mobility, Vulnerability and Inevitability in Mid-Western Nepal and North-Western Pakistan Report 5," 28.

[305] Hagen-Zanker et al., 32.

[306] Maroufof and Kouki, "Migrating from Pakistan to Greece: Re-Visiting Agency in Times of Crisis," 90.

[307] Aksel et al., "Study on Smuggling of Migrants: Characteristics, Responses and Cooperation with Third Countries. Case Study 3: Pakistan – Turkey – Greece," 24.

[308] Aksel et al., 26.

[309] Aksel et al., 26.

intentions, as reported by participating potential migrants, had nevertheless significantly decreased[310] - a contradictory result. In a review of recent IOM campaigns, Tjaden offers the interpretation that participating migrants may not have changed their intentions because of changed knowledge or perceptions, but because of the emotional dimension conveyed.[311] These inconclusive results may therefore be connected to how (potential) migrants can filter information about risk as not relevant for them (see section 2.2.) and other biases demonstrated by behavioural science as affecting human decision-making in general[312] (see also section 4.3).

4.2.2 The link between information and behaviour change

Despite mixed evidence regarding the uptake of information, the fifth and arguably most important assumption, that new information will indeed affect behaviour, has been directly and indirectly confirmed by recent studies. Since measuring actual migration behaviour would imply follow up after a campaign has ended, most campaigns are not able to do this. Instead, they measure migration intentions before and at the end of the campaign as a proxy. Although there is obviously a difference between migration intentions and actual behaviour, a strong correlation between the two – meaning that a significant portion of those with intentions do migrate – has been demonstrated.[313] In practice, such an indirect impact has been confirmed for recent IOM information campaigns in Senegal and Guinea: "*In Senegal, we found that potential migrants who participated in awareness-raising events in Dakar were 20 per cent less likely to report high irregular migration intentions compared with potential migrants who did not participate in the campaign. In Guinea, we found that, on average, 1 in 10 potential migrants change their intentions to migrate without a visa.*" [314] Measuring direct impact through follow-up one year later, a recent econometric study on irregular migration intentions and decision-making in the West African context was similarly able to demonstrate the relevance of information for migration behaviour.[315] Another recent study conducted in Nepal was able to demonstrate the direct impact of information on the number of migrant deaths on emigration flows: it showed that there is less subsequent emigration from districts where there was a previous increased level of reported migrant deaths in the Gulf, providing evidence that increased relevant information indeed impacts migration behaviour.[316] In another study in Nepal, the same author provided information on mortality rates (based on actual rates in previous years – some years had lower rates, some were higher) and (actual) wages to intending Nepali migrants (as they were applying for a visa). The study was able to demonstrate an effect in changing their behaviour, particularly among first-time migrants: "*Three months after the interventions, the inexperienced potential migrants provided with "low" death information were 7 percentage points more likely to have migrated, and those provided with wage information were 5 to 6 percentage points less likely to have migrated. (…) This finding has the clear policy implication that a simple and well-targeted information intervention can change the perceptions as well as the actual migration decisions of potential migrants.*"[317]

Thus, although evidence is overall still limited, sometimes contradictory on the finer points and clearly requiring further inquiry, some of the key assumptions behind migration information campaigns can be confirmed, at least in the context of Pakistan. This means that migration information campaigns can be meaningful and impactful

[310] Dunsch, Tjaden, and Quiviger, "Migrants as Messengers: The Impact of Peer-to-Peer Communication on Potential Migrants in Senegal. Impact Evaluation Report."

[311] Tjaden, "Assessing the Impact of Awareness- Raising Campaigns on Potential Migrants – What We Have Learned so Far."

[312] E. Kolbert, *Why Facts Don't Change Our Minds*, *The New Yorker*, 2017; Hernández-Carretero and Carling, "Beyond 'Kamikaze Migrants': Risk Taking in West African Boat Migration to Europe"; Hagen-Zanker and Hennessey, "What Do We Know about the Subjective and Intangible Factors That Shape Migration Decision-Making? A Review of the Literature from Low and Middle Income Countries."

[313] Frédéric Docquier, Giovanni Peri, and Ilse Ruyssen, "The Cross-Country Determinants of Potential and Actual Migration," *International Migration Review* 48, no. 1_suppl (September 19, 2014): 37–99, https://doi.org/10.1111/imre.12137; Jasper Tjaden, Daniel Auer, and Frank Laczko, "Linking Migration Intentions with Flows: Evidence and Potential Use," *International Migration* 57, no. 1 (February 1, 2019): 36–57, https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.12502.

[314] Tjaden, "Assessing the Impact of Awareness- Raising Campaigns on Potential Migrants – What We Have Learned so Far," 429–30; for more details, see Dunsch, Tjaden, and Quiviger, "Migrants as Messengers: The Impact of Peer-to-Peer Communication on Potential Migrants in Senegal. Impact Evaluation Report."; M. Bia-Zafinikamia, J. Tjaden, and H. Gninafon, *The Impact of Mobile Cinema Events on Potential Migrants in Guinea. Impact Evaluation Report* (Geneva: IOM, 2020).

[315] Bah and Batista, "Understanding Willingness to Migrate Illegally : Evidence from a Lab in the Field Experiment."

[316] Maheshwor Shrestha, "Death Scares: How Potential Work-Migrants Infer Mortality Rates from Migrant Deaths," *Journal of Development Economics* 141, no. May (2019): 1, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2019.07.001.

[317] Maheshwor Shrestha, "Get Rich or Die Tryin': Perceived Earnings, Perceived Mortality Rates, and Migration Decisions of Potential Work Migrants from Nepal," *The World Bank Economic Review* 34, no. 1 (2020): 3, https://doi.org/10.1093/wber/lhz023.

interventions, within the scope of certain important caveats[318] and provided they are building on the experience and good practice established by previous campaigns. The next section will therefore review relevant literature on how migration information campaigns can be improved in terms of their effectiveness, focusing on the role of trusted messengers and channels, the relevance of content, messaging and the role of risk perceptions, and finally target group segmentation (keeping in mind that the full development of the PARIM communication and campaign strategy goes beyond the scope of this report).

4.3 Factors and strategies that can improve outcomes of migration information campaigns

Guidelines[319] from the migration field and from the behavioural science context on how to conduct effective information campaigns have suggested the following aspects as crucial:

- Working with credible messengers in order to ensure that information will be trusted[320]; setting up partnerships with CSOs, diaspora and returnees, including in order to identify such messengers;[321]

- In designing messaging, paying attention to the relevance of the message for the target audience, "framing" the message in the right way and being mindful of human behavioural biases including around risk perceptions;[322]

- Researching the target groups and segmenting the messages according to target groups, as relevant.[323]

Furthermore, it has been noted that campaigns should be sustainable, rather than one-off initiatives.[324] Campaigns should also link up with migration policies in the context, and point out regular migration channels.[325] Some of these points have already been addressed in the work of ICMPD and the Migrant Resource Centres in Pakistan, to which the present project is complementary, for instance repeated messages (as MRCs have been established since 2016), setting up partnerships (envisaged in the present project and done through previous MRC work) and integration into broader policies, which forms part of ICMPD's work in Pakistan.

4.3.1 Trusted messengers and channels

One key factor influencing the effectiveness of information campaigns is to deliver them through trusted sources. [326] Friends and family are consistently cited as key influencers of potential migrants,[327] and their relevance regarding information, decision-making and financing in the Pakistani context has been documented above. Therefore, they should also be addressed as an important (secondary) target group of campaigns.[328] However, there is disagreement on how to go about this. In a guideline on mixed migration campaigns, UNHCR posits that information campaigns "*are most effective when they target the entire community rather than only potential migrants, since decisions to leave a home country are generally based on, and supported by, a family or community.*"[329] In contrast (and more recently), Tjaden argues that only those potential migrants should be

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[318] Remaining caveats are: the relative importance of campaigns compared to drivers of migration (including conflict); the demand side of irregular migration, which cannot be addressed through campaigns in origin countries; the long-term sustainability of campaigns, since most are evaluated within the time frame of the intervention, a few exceptions evaluate months or a year after, but there are no long-term studies; the relevance of migration information campaigns compared to other interventions such as immediate improvement of livelihoods in origin countries has also not been studied. See also Tjaden, "Assessing the Impact of Awareness- Raising Campaigns on Potential Migrants – What We Have Learned so Far," 431–32.

[319] In these types of sources, it often remains unclear whether they are based on informal lessons learned drawn by practitioners, or on scientific evidence.

[320] Dennison, "How to Perform Impact Assessments: Key Steps for Assessing Communication Interventions," 19; Browne, "Impact of Communication Campaigns to Deter Irregular Migration (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1248)," 2; Institute For Government, "Influencing Behaviour through Public Policy," 2009.

[321] Dennison, "How to Perform Impact Assessments: Key Steps for Assessing Communication Interventions," 19; Browne, "Impact of Communication Campaigns to Deter Irregular Migration (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1248)," 2.

[322]Dennison, "How to Perform Impact Assessments: Key Steps for Assessing Communication Interventions," 19; Browne, "Impact of Communication Campaigns to Deter Irregular Migration (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1248)," 2; Institute For Government, "Influencing Behaviour through Public Policy."

[323] Dennison, "How to Perform Impact Assessments: Key Steps for Assessing Communication Interventions," 19; Browne, "Impact of Communication Campaigns to Deter Irregular Migration (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1248)," 2.

[324] Browne, "Impact of Communication Campaigns to Deter Irregular Migration (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1248)," 2.

[325] Browne, "Impact of Communication Campaigns to Deter Irregular Migration (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1248)"; UNHCR, "Chapter 10: Information Strategy."

[326] Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 7; Institute For Government, "Influencing Behaviour through Public Policy," 19.

[327] Seefar, "3E Impact. Ethical, Engaged & Effective. Running Communications on Irregular Migration from Kos to Kandahar," 28; Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*.

[328] Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 47–48.

[329] Browne, "Impact of Communication Campaigns to Deter Irregular Migration (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1248)," 3.

targeted that actually require information, "*rather than targeting whole regions and villages, just because overall emigration rates appear to be high*".[330] However, there has been overall more critique on the exclusion of social networks from campaigns (faulty thinking of migrants as "islands" devoid of social context) than the reverse.[331] Optimity Advisors/Seefar also recommend targeting (male) family members (as female members were found to be less influential).[332] They note that reaching families may imply more offline engagement, depending on the communication habits of families in the local context.[333]

However, it is important to remember that the role of social networks for (potential) migrants is not exclusively positive, and that there are also those migrants who have broken ties with their families or wish to escape from the household, rather than contribute to it (see section 2.2).

Returnees can be trusted messengers as long as they are not perceived as having "failed" at migration[334] (see below for examples of messaging).

Engaging the diaspora in the context of migration information campaigns follows the rationale that migrants in destination countries are engaged in order to warn others of the risks of irregular migration, based on the assumption that potential migrants will view them as trusted sources of information.[335] This is indeed in line with research showing that the diaspora often plays a major role as information source for potential migrants. However, there are several challenges in engaging diaspora members in this way. Firstly, research shows that the diaspora acts more often as facilitator of migration; it may be challenging to find migrants abroad who wish to discourage rather than enable further migration. Secondly, the diaspora is not homogenous, and neither are potential migrants, and this stratification may work to the disadvantage of campaigns. For instance, if diaspora members in the campaign are more upper class while speaking to lower class potential migrants, the latter may dismiss the message. The same may happen if diaspora members' migration is perceived as "too long ago". Migrants in dire circumstances may not wish to display this openly for people "back home" (indeed they may even keep this secret from their own family or networks) and would therefore be difficult to engage. For these reasons, a guideline document by Seefar actually concludes that implementing diaspora engagement as part of a campaign may not be worth the effort.[336] A recent West African campaign conducted by Optimity Advisors/Seefar concludes that diaspora may be engaged in order to provide authentic information sources for migrants (rather than, for instance, playing a video), with the goal of helping migrants differentiate between correct and fake information online.[337] Another study notes that migrants often share erroneous or outdated information and recommends engaging diaspora to disseminate better-quality information.[338]

Regarding channels, there is no generalizable evidence since the use of various media channels can vary across countries, target groups and cultural contexts.[339] For Pakistan, a World Bank report concluded that radio and TV are under-used for migration-related information in Pakistan and this could still expanded; a similar assessment is made for cooperation with CSOs.[340] Both have been part of ICMPD MRC Pakistan strategies in the last years.

Social media, and particularly Facebook, have become very attractive for migration information campaigns, because they involve low costs, promise large outreach, easy implementation and the possibility of differentiating specific target groups.[341] In the work of ICMPD's MRCs, messaging services (including WhatsApp

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[330] Tjaden, "Assessing the Impact of Awareness- Raising Campaigns on Potential Migrants – What We Have Learned so Far," 429.
[331] See for instance Schans and Optekamp, "Raising Awareness, Changing Behavior? Combatting Irregular Migration through Information Campaigns."
[332] Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 12.
[333] Optimity Advisors and Seefar, 46–47.
[334] Seefar, "3E Impact. Ethical, Engaged & Effective. Running Communications on Irregular Migration from Kos to Kandahar," 49.
[335] Seefar, 20.
[336] Seefar, 20–21.
[337] Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 49.
[338] Sanchez et al., "A Study of the Communication Channels Used by Migrants and Asylum Seekers in Italy , with a Particular Focus on Online and Social Media," 9.
[339] Seefar, "3E Impact. Ethical, Engaged & Effective. Running Communications on Irregular Migration from Kos to Kandahar"; Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 45–47.
[340] World Bank Group, "A Migrant's Journey for Better Opportunities: The Case of Pakistan," 17.
[341] Gustavo Lopez, "Online Migration Campaigns: Promises, Pitfalls and the Need for Better Evaluations," *Migration Policy Practice* IX, no. 3 (2019): 20–24; Haarmann, Tjaden, and Lopez, *Assessing the Effectiveness of Online Facebook Campaigns Targeting Potential Irregular Migrants : A Pilot Study in Three West African Countries*.

and Facebook Messenger) have also become an important, low-threshold medium to engage potential migrants. However, the relevance of social media for migration decision-making should not be overestimated, as elaborated in Chapter 3 – it is one source of information, and a tool for building and keeping contacts, but usually not the most trusted source of information.[342] Not everyone has access to internet, not everyone uses platforms like Facebook, and those who are illiterate are excluded. Those without internet may also be those who are less informed, so actually may need to be prioritised more.[343] Furthermore, there is very limited evidence on the actual impact of social media on migration knowledge, perceptions, attitudes, intentions and behaviour.[344] While platforms like Facebook provide metrics on how many people were reached through messages, engagement does not necessarily translate into real-life impact. Another shortcoming is that it is almost impossible to evaluate whether those who are online on platforms, and willing to engage (by clicking on a Facebook ad, for instance) are also those that need to be targeted through campaigns (including because the profile of potential migrants is difficult to define).[345] Although there are advanced tools offered by Facebook providing additional information which would then allow evaluation, these come at considerable financial cost.[346]

In line with existing research results, Seefar therefore suggests using Facebook as a strategy to direct migrants towards face-to-face interactions.[347] In the recent IOM peer-to-peer campaign, social media similarly formed part of a mix of outreach channels.[348] ICMPD's MRCs in Pakistan have employed a similar strategy.

4.3.2 Relevance of content, messaging and the role of risk perceptions

The type of information (content) and its presentation (messaging/framing[349]) is highly relevant for migration information campaigns among potential migrants. This also implies that potential migrants' motivations need to be taken into consideration, including "intangible" ones steered by emotions, character traits and risk perceptions (see section 2.2.). Considering such insights is particularly relevant since messages can be dismissed, if certain dynamics of human behaviour (including around risk perception) are triggered.

As discussed previously, migrants have a general awareness that migration is risky.[350] Studies have shown that migrants will avoid or disregard information around (irregular) migration if they see the underlying intention as preventing them from migrating altogether.[351] Aiming for complete deterrence is therefore not only questionable ethically, but also strategically within a campaign. Migrants may furthermore discount reports of failed migration as not relevant for them, because they see it as individual bad luck or bad decision-making, particularly if previous migrants are painted as ignorant (or naïve victims of smugglers).[352] Potential migrants may show a "*quasi-fatalistic attitude*" towards the journey, speaking of fate with regard to the success of their migration plans.[353] Religious and spiritual beliefs may be connected to such fatalist beliefs; religiosity can also

[342] Sanchez et al., "A Study of the Communication Channels Used by Migrants and Asylum Seekers in Italy , with a Particular Focus on Online and Social Media."
[343] Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 45.
[344] Lopez, "Online Migration Campaigns: Promises, Pitfalls and the Need for Better Evaluations," 22; Haarmann, Tjaden, and Lopez, *Assessing the Effectiveness of Online Facebook Campaigns Targeting Potential Irregular Migrants : A Pilot Study in Three West African Countries*.
[345] Lopez, "Online Migration Campaigns: Promises, Pitfalls and the Need for Better Evaluations," 22–23; Haarmann, Tjaden, and Lopez, *Assessing the Effectiveness of Online Facebook Campaigns Targeting Potential Irregular Migrants : A Pilot Study in Three West African Countries*, 2–3.
[346] Lopez, "Online Migration Campaigns: Promises, Pitfalls and the Need for Better Evaluations," 24; Haarmann, Tjaden, and Lopez, *Assessing the Effectiveness of Online Facebook Campaigns Targeting Potential Irregular Migrants : A Pilot Study in Three West African Countries*.
[347] Seefar, "3E Impact. Ethical, Engaged & Effective. Running Communications on Irregular Migration from Kos to Kandahar," 30; Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 46–47.
[348] Dunsch, Tjaden, and Quiviger, "Migrants as Messengers: The Impact of Peer-to-Peer Communication on Potential Migrants in Senegal. Impact Evaluation Report.," 10.
[349] Framing means that certain aspects of a situation are highlighted, while others are neglected, impacting how people estimate the relevance of information, and has been demonstrated by behavioural science to be effective. See Hallsworth et al., 20.
[350] Hernández-Carretero and Carling, "Beyond 'Kamikaze Migrants': Risk Taking in West African Boat Migration to Europe"; Schans and Optekamp, "Raising Awareness, Changing Behavior? Combatting Irregular Migration through Information Campaigns," 17; Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, "Journeys to Europe: The Role of Policy in Migrant Decision-Making," 26.
[351] Hernández-Carretero and Carling, "Beyond 'Kamikaze Migrants': Risk Taking in West African Boat Migration to Europe"; Heller, "Perception Management - Deterring Potential Migrants through Information Campaigns."
[352] Townsend and Oomen, "Before the Boat: Understanding the Migrant Journey"; Hernández-Carretero and Carling, "Beyond 'Kamikaze Migrants': Risk Taking in West African Boat Migration to Europe."
[353] Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 24.

provide the hope needed to embark on the journey.[354] Relatedly, confidence or the belief in ones' abilities is also positively related to migration.[355] As noted under 3.3.2, this further interlinks with how masculinity shapes attitudes towards irregular migration – risk can form part of what makes the idea of irregular migration appealing, adventurous and "manly".[356]

A number of practical approaches have been suggested to counter these dynamics. Seefar suggests that it is more effective to engage with actual individual reasons behind wanting to emigrate, as well as imagined and actual outcomes (including addressing (mis)conceptions about conditions in European destinations). Seefar warns of painting hardships associated with the journey in drastic pictures, in order not to trigger adventure-seeking behaviour.[357] According to Seefar guidance, the attitudes towards risk just described should be concretely addressed through "sustained engagement", talking through the way risks around (irregular) migration compare to other risks, to (imagined) rewards, and options that potential migrants have taken into consideration.[358]

With regard to the specific risks involved in irregular migration and migrant smuggling, migrants have been shown to put great care in the choice of smugglers, but they do so under difficult conditions, including information asymmetry and difficulty in confirming reputations.[359] A realistic portrayal of smugglers who may have very ambiguous relationships with migrants, and whose behaviour can also range widely from the helpful to the criminal,[360] may therefore also be a point in this direction, although not substantiated by the literature.

Seefar recommends targeting what is viewed as failure from potential migrants' point of view, including "*failure to settle, failure to find wealth and failure to start a new life*", while indications of how they made new experiences or generated income would provide an enticing frame to origin country audiences.[361] Portraying returnees as "poorer, more socially alienated, less proud" while emphasising alternatives to migration they could have chosen is also indicated as a powerful message when working with returnees.[362] A successful example comes from the previously mentioned recent IOM campaign, which aimed to achieve behavioural change through emotional identification with the content and returnee messengers; in the evaluation, there was less measurable effect regarding knowledge uptake of participating potential migrants, but migration intentions had significantly decreased.[363] This is in line with lessons from previous campaigns to focus on values, appealing to emotions and using storytelling for content.[364]

Engaging through returnees may be one way of offering concrete stories of what can go wrong en route and in the destination country, as long as they are not portrayed as having "failed" (including because they were subject to forced return), naïve, or trigger jealousy in their achievements, as mentioned above. [365]

4.3.3   Target group segmentation

Target group segmentation, i.e. differentiating messages and channels between particular groups, is a standard technique in information campaigns and PR more broadly. The previous sections have already addressed a number of target group characteristics to be differentiated, depending on the message relevant for them. The

[354] Hagen-Zanker and Hennessey, "What Do We Know about the Subjective and Intangible Factors That Shape Migration Decision-Making? A Review of the Literature from Low and Middle Income Countries," 25–26; Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*; Hernández-Carretero and Carling, "Beyond 'Kamikaze Migrants': Risk Taking in West African Boat Migration to Europe."

[355] Hagen-Zanker and Hennessey, "What Do We Know about the Subjective and Intangible Factors That Shape Migration Decision-Making? A Review of the Literature from Low and Middle Income Countries," 31; Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*.

[356] Ahmad, "The Romantic Appeal of Illegal Migration: Gender, Masculinity and Human Smuggling from Pakistan."

[357] Seefar, "3E Impact. Ethical, Engaged & Effective. Running Communications on Irregular Migration from Kos to Kandahar," 15–18.

[358] Seefar, 15–18; Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 48.

[359] Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, "Journeys to Europe: The Role of Policy in Migrant Decision-Making"; Campana and Gelsthorpe, "Choosing a Smuggler: Decision-Making Amongst Migrants Smuggled to Europe."

[360] Schans and Optekamp, "Raising Awareness, Changing Behavior? Combatting Irregular Migration through Information Campaigns," 18; Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, "Journeys to Europe: The Role of Policy in Migrant Decision-Making," 21–22; Campana and Gelsthorpe, "Choosing a Smuggler: Decision-Making Amongst Migrants Smuggled to Europe."

[361] Seefar, "3E Impact. Ethical, Engaged & Effective. Running Communications on Irregular Migration from Kos to Kandahar," 28.

[362] Seefar, 28.

[363] Dunsch, Tjaden, and Quiviger, "Migrants as Messengers: The Impact of Peer-to-Peer Communication on Potential Migrants in Senegal. Impact Evaluation Report."

[364] Dennison, "How to Perform Impact Assessments: Key Steps for Assessing Communication Interventions," 20.

[365] Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 7.

primary target group of the PARIM campaign are potential irregular migrants. In the context of Pakistan, these are typically young, male, educated and unmarried. General personality traits demonstrated as typical of migrants that might be addressed by campaign messaging and segmentation are extroversion, openness and curiosity about new experiences, and optimism (see 2.2.).[366]

Between the different strands of the PARIM campaign, further differentiation may be relevant, although at this point the correlation between factors to be outlined is somewhat speculative (and needs to be further confirmed by PARIM research).

For instance, it may be pertinent to consider who is most at risk during the journey – a proxy could be who might be least informed. This would lead to a slightly different target group, the less educated, first time, rural migrants, possibly illiterate and with no internet access.[367] Risk behaviour is also an important characteristic here. (Potential) migrants have been found to be more tolerant towards risk (i.e. more willing to engage in risky behaviour) and more confident in their abilities. For instance, the Optimity Advisors/Seefar study on West Africa concludes that those potential migrants with lower education and less access to information actually have the most confidence in their migration and should therefore be a main target.[368]

Another way of segmenting might be to think about income and education levels (together with specific migration drivers): less well-off and less educated migrants may see no alternative to emigration, while more educated potential migrants may have more specific goals that could be addressed by a campaign, as well as alternatives to migration, in mind.[369] Those with higher income levels can also afford more expensive (and safer) irregular travel modes offered, e.g. through forged documents and air travel.

Secondary target groups foreseen by the PARIM project are the "key influencers" already discussed, including (extended) family and friends, former and current migrants (i.e. members of the diaspora and returnees). This approach is generally confirmed by available evidence, although the following may need to be considered – as discussed: returnees' message should be framed so as not to be perceived as "failed" migration; diaspora can form part of a campaign, as long as their role is carefully evaluated because individuals may not have the right profile, motivations or provide accurate information; the influence of women/female household members needs to be carefully assessed.[370] In general, the role of women might be minimal in the campaign, since their share in emigration is very small, and their influence may not be great. An open question is therefore whether PARIM wishes to take an "affirmative action" approach in promoting female emigration and influence, despite their current limited relevance in the field of irregular migration. Certainly, the results of this report indicate that further promotion of (safe) female emigration and support of Government efforts in improving related policies should form part of ICMPD's ongoing engagement in Pakistan.

[366] Hagen-Zanker and Hennessey, "What Do We Know about the Subjective and Intangible Factors That Shape Migration Decision-Making? A Review of the Literature from Low and Middle Income Countries," 13–14.

[367] Based on research results from West Africa, those migrants with access to internet are often also those better informed. Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 45.

[368] Optimity Advisors and Seefar, 23; Seefar, "3E Impact. Ethical, Engaged & Effective. Running Communications on Irregular Migration from Kos to Kandahar," 15.

[369] Optimity Advisors and Seefar, *How West African Migrants Engage with Migration Information En-Route to Europe*, 47.

[370] Optimity Advisors and Seefar, 12.

5 Conclusions and questions for further research

Although migration information campaigns have become an increasingly popular policy tool for European policy-makers, actual evidence of their effectiveness is still limited. Reviewing the latest studies and impact evaluations that have become available only recently, this report finds that despite clear persisting limitations, some of the key assumptions behind migration information campaigns can be confirmed, at least for migration from Pakistan.

Information about the risks and dangers involved in irregular migration is indeed lacking in Pakistan: although potential migrants and their families have a general awareness that irregular migration is risky, potential migrants lack concrete information that would allow them to prepare. Aside from information provided through ICMPD's MRCs, available information is also inaccurate or incomplete, since facilitators (including smugglers, extended families and friends, sub-agent recruiters) do not share the full information, be it intentionally or unintentionally.

Evidence on whether new information (from a campaign) is trusted and whether it will affect knowledge, perceptions and/or attitudes, is still inconclusive. Nevertheless, the arguably most important assumption behind migration information campaigns, that new information will indeed affect behaviour, has been directly and indirectly confirmed by recent studies and impact evaluations of migration information campaigns (although not directly for the Pakistan context). This means that migration information campaigns can be meaningful and impactful interventions, within the scope of certain important caveats[371] and provided they are built on a sound understanding of macro, meso and micro drivers of migration decision-making in the country context, as well as lessons learned from previous campaigns regarding trusted messengers, relevance of content, messaging (framing) and target group segmentation.

The following conclusions draw on available evidence on the drivers of migration from Pakistan. Each conclusion is followed by more tentative extrapolations that may be relevant for the implementation of the PARIM information campaign, which will need to be further substantiated through the campaign's research component, communications strategy, MEL component and final evaluation. Potential areas for further research that may be explored through the ongoing research activities are also provided.

**1.	Pakistani emigrants are on average young, male, educated, and not from the very poorest households.** Those going to Europe are also more likely to be unmarried. Those with higher income levels can afford more expensive (and safer) irregular travel modes offered, e.g. through forged documents and air travel. Other differences among potential migrants to be kept in mind could be rural vs. urban potential migrants, those without internet access, illiteracy, and first-time migrants vs. experienced migrants.

➢ Those potential migrants who can be considered most prone to risk with regard to the dangers en route can be further differentiated for specific messages, as this likely involves a slightly different target group – less educated, first time rural migrants, possibly illiterate and with no internet access.

➢ Risk behaviour may be an important characteristic to consider for campaign design, as (potential) migrants have been found to be more tolerant towards risk (i.e. more willing to engage in risky behaviour) and more confident in their abilities.

➢ According to previous research, those with lower education and less access to information actually have the most confidence in their migration decision and should therefore be targeted.

➢ With regard to messaging, less well-off and less educated migrants may see no alternative to emigration, while more educated potential migrants may have more specific goals, as well as alternatives to migration in-country, in mind, that can be addressed by a campaign.

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[371] Remaining caveats are: the relative importance of campaigns compared to drivers of migration (including conflict); the demand side of irregular migration, which cannot be addressed through campaigns in origin countries; the long-term sustainability of campaigns, since most are evaluated within the time frame of the intervention, a few exceptions evaluate months or a year after, but there are no long-term studies; the relevance of migration information campaigns compared to other interventions such as immediate improvement of livelihoods in origin countries has also not been studied. See also Tjaden, "Assessing the Impact of Awareness- Raising Campaigns on Potential Migrants – What We Have Learned so Far," 431–32.

For further research: verify correlation between various sociodemographic profiles, confidence/risk awareness profiles, information gaps/needs and migration intentions (including intention to migrate irregularly), in order to build evidence for target group segmentation

2. **Economic drivers are predominant for migration from Pakistan**. Irregular migration can be "worth it" financially, as costs can be recuperated within a few years, depending on current cost of smuggling and other illicit services. Seeking (better) education opportunities is the second most prevalent motive, and especially relevant for potential migrants toward Europe. Feeling under threat is also a motive for some, highlighting protection needs.

➢ When aiming for messengers who should embody a success story, economic or educational achievements may be relevant.

➢ Content-wise, the campaign may consider that irregular migration can also be a pathway towards asylum, therefore complete deterrence is questionable ethically – messages should be balanced between deterrence and more neutral or positive information delivery, including information on education and asylum.

➢ Regarding target group segmentation, potential migrants with economic motivations may be differentiated from those with educational motives.

For further research: verify correlation between different motives and sociodemographic profiles, in order to build evidence for target group segmentation

3. **The decision to emigrate is often a household income strategy** and migration is financed through household networks. There is a "culture of migration" in many areas of Pakistan, established by decades of emigration. Economic needs are interlinked with socio-cultural ideas about how households can generate income, as families often wish to send at least one member abroad to diversify sources of income. Immediate household or family members therefore play a significant role in making the actual decision to emigrate. Families also supported the potential migrant by identifying the smuggler.

➢ (Extended) families can be seen as "key influencers" of most potential migrants. Studies in other country contexts recommend targeting (male) family members (as female members may be less influential).

➢ Regarding channels, reaching families may imply more offline engagement, depending on the communication habits of families in the local context.

➢ Content-wise, it may again be relevant to address household (financial) needs and strategies.

➢ Since the role of women might be minimal for PARIM if focusing only on their influence, the question is whether PARIM nevertheless wishes to promote female emigration and influence. ICMPD's continued engagement in cooperating with the Government of Pakistan on the promotion of (safe) female emigration may be an important complementary approach relevant beyond the PARIM project.

For further research: verify communication habits and channels of family members; relative influence of male vs. female household members would have to be verified through further research, MEL component or final evaluation.

4. **The role of families/households is not exclusively positive**. Families may put pressure on young household members to emigrate. There are also those migrants who have broken ties with their families or wish to escape from the household, rather than contribute to it, including because they may have protection needs.

➢ With regard to target group segmentation, those embedded in families may be differentiated from those planning migration on their own.

➢ Again, the campaign may consider that irregular migration can also be a protection pathway.

5. **(Irregular) migration can be attractive for young male Pakistanis, including because of the associated risks**. There is a "romantic appeal" to irregular migration for young men, as it can be seen as a kind of adventure. This may be especially relevant for regions where there are few other ways to create independent livelihoods for the less educated. Economic motives can be closely interlinked with emotional ones, such as jealousy of returnee's (perceived) wealth, frustration with the current situation and risk-tolerance coupled with confidence. Migration can also be a path towards individual autonomy for young men or a perceived escape from oppressive circumstances. Migration can financially enable young men to marry and provide for their families through remittances.

➢ Content-wise, it may be relevant to address the specific motives of young men attracted to irregular migration.

➢ Generally, it may be relevant to keep in mind emotions, ideas and norms around masculinity when creating messages: over-emphasising the hardship of the migration process may trigger a counter-intuitive effect – even if the effort is great, the outcome is worth it.

➢ Regarding content/messaging, it may be relevant to target what is viewed as failure from potential migrants' point of view; this may include failure to settle, failure to find wealth and failure to start a new life.

➢ Previous research also indicated portraying returnees as "poorer, more socially alienated, less proud", while emphasising alternatives to migration they could have chosen, as effective when working with returnees as messengers.

➢ It may be pertinent to avoid indications of how previous migrants made new, interesting experiences or generated income, as this may be an enticing frame for this target group.

For further research: relevance/effectiveness of these messengers and messaging/content in the Pakistan context would need to be confirmed through MEL component or final evaluation

6. **Social networks (extended family and friends) play a significant role in Pakistan in providing information** on migration, as well as further facilitating migration (providing financial support/ loans, supporting with documents, finding accommodation, finding employment, finding someone to help them migrate, e.g. smuggler, etc.). However, information shared by social networks may not be factually correct. Migrants who are already abroad also contribute to information asymmetries because they may not share the truth about their more negative experiences. While some friends or relatives may be of genuine help, social networks have also been shown to be complicit in deception of (potential) migrants.

➢ Returnees may act as trusted messengers as long as they are not perceived as having "failed" at migration (messaging).

➢ Diaspora can form part of a campaign, as long as their role is carefully evaluated because individuals may not have the right profile, motivations or provide accurate information.

➢ Diaspora and returnees may also be engaged to help migrants differentiate between correct and fake information online.

➢ Content-wise, it may be relevant to point out alternative (public) sources of information/support.

➢ Regarding target group segmentation, extended family and friends, returnees and diaspora members may be addressed as a secondary target group.

For further research: verify key messengers; relevance/effectiveness of these messengers and content in the Pakistan context would need to be confirmed through MEL component or final evaluation

7. **Information available on the internet, and particularly social media, seems less relevant** compared to social ties. Online interactions can be seen as extension or facilitation of face-to-face interaction. Studies also point towards the social stratification (inequality) evident in access to internet/social media: not everyone has access, and those illiterate are excluded.

> Facebook and other online channels can be used as a strategy to direct migrants towards face-to-face interactions.

> Regarding target groups, social media as a channel already implies target group segmentation – likely reaching younger, more educated audiences.

> Those without internet may also be those who are less informed and thus potentially more in need of information.

For further research: verify access to internet and relevance of various platforms; general internet access (and quality) in relevant districts of Pakistan, individuals using the internet, and individuals using specific online platforms would need to be verified through further research

8. **Smugglers are often perceived as sources of trusted information, even influencing the decision to migrate in the first place, but in reality can be deceptive**. The role of smugglers is ambivalent: they are facilitators of migration, but migrants are also – sometimes precariously – dependent on them during the journey. Smugglers actively recruit in some (rural) areas of Pakistan, thereby promoting irregular migration channels, including through sub-agents who may themselves be returned migrants. Some smugglers pretend that they are offering regular migration channels to Europe, while others are open about the clandestine nature of their services.

Migrants (and their families) have been shown to put great care in the choice of smugglers, but they do so under difficult conditions, including information asymmetry and difficulty in confirming reputations. However, potential migrants often lack concrete information about possible negative scenarios that would actually allow them to prepare, and can fall victim to fraud, exploitation, or human trafficking. Since potential migrants already have a high risk awareness, increased awareness and knowledge of risks may have little influence on migration behaviour. Migrants will disregard information around (irregular) migration if they see the underlying intention as preventing them from migrating altogether. Potential migrants can easily dismiss information about failed migration as individual "bad luck" or bad decision-making, which they themselves will avoid.

> The emotions conveyed through messages may be more relevant than the message content itself.

> With regard to trusted messengers, returnees and diaspora may be engaged to provide more complete information on smugglers and what can go wrong en route, as long as migrants are not portrayed as naïve/victims of smugglers.

> Again, it may be relevant to consider what is seen as failure from potential migrants' point of view, consider the frame of returnees as "poorer, more socially alienated, less proud", and engage risk perceptions.

> It may be effective to openly address the ambivalent role of smugglers, who can have very ambiguous relationships with migrants, and whose behaviour can range widely from the helpful to the criminal.

> Previous studies recommend engaging with the way risks around (irregular) migration compare to other risks, to (imagined) rewards, and options that potential migrants can take into consideration.

> It may be relevant (ethically) to also address precautionary measures for migrants when engaging smugglers, e.g. paying in instalments (although there is possibly a risk that this could encourage irregular migration, depending on the framing).

For further research: verify confidence/risk awareness profiles among potential migrants in Pakistan; relevance/effectiveness of these messengers and messaging/content in the Pakistan context would need to be confirmed through MEL component or final evaluation; for future studies, further evidence is needed regarding individual-level decision-making on irregular migration and accessing smuggling networks in the Pakistan context.

9. **There seems to be confusion or conflation between registered and illicit migration agents,** since registered agents (OEPs) often employ illicit sub-agents in order to reach rural potential migrants; smugglers do

the same. Regular migration to the Gulf can also be facilitated by family/friends; the same is true of irregular migration.

- ➢ Previous migrants to the Gulf may be trusted messengers in this context.

- ➢ Content-wise, it may be relevant to provide information on regulatory frameworks in place, the role of OEPs within them, and help to differentiate between regular and irregular channels.

- ➢ Regarding target group segmentation, this issue is mainly relevant for those who may actually consider working in the Gulf as an alternative to irregular migration.

- ➢ ICMPD's continued engagement in cooperating with the Government of Pakistan on these issues is particularly relevant beyond the PARIM project.

For further research: *for future studies, further evidence is needed on the extent of these misperceptions/conflations among potential migrants.*

10. **Although legal frameworks are in place that facilitate regular migration**, they are hampered by very high cost for migrants, and different forms of exploitation throughout the process – negatively affecting the major alternative to irregular migration. The average cost for regular migration from Pakistan (to Saudi Arabia and the UAE) is highest as compared with other major origin countries. Although (potential) migrants may expect that direct employment through friends or family should be more cost effective and lead to a better migration experience overall, OEPs have been shown to be the cheapest channel to emigrate; those going to the Gulf through OEPs are more likely to benefit from free accommodation and medical care provided by the employer, resulting in higher savings. At the same time, migrants going to the Gulf through family/friends (direct employment) are more likely to experience deception.

- ➢ Previous migrants to the Gulf may be trusted messengers when relaying information on this channel.

- ➢ When discussing alternatives to irregular migration, information on acceptable cost, advantages of going through OEPs and concrete practices of exploitation also around regular migration may be crucial, particularly for first time migrants.

- ➢ According to previous campaigns, information about destination countries and support in calculating rewards against risks may be among the most relevant information for potential migrants.

- ➢ Regarding target group segmentation, this issue is mainly relevant for those who may actually consider working in the Gulf as an alternative to irregular migration.

For further research: *relevance/effectiveness of these messengers and messaging/content in the Pakistan context would need to be confirmed through MEL component or final evaluation*

11. **Migration information campaigns cannot address the demand side of irregular migration.** Considering that there is a lack of legal migration channels towards Europe, while there continues a demand for irregular (low-paid, low-skilled, exploitable) workers, including in (specific sectors in) Europe, migrants may follow the logic of available work opportunities rather than state regulations (when the two are conflicting).

- ➢ Keeping in mind the demonstrable positive effects of (successful) irregular migration for migrants and their families, messages should be balanced between deterrence and more neutral or positive information delivery. When aiming for deterrence, feasible alternatives to (irregular) migration should be considered and discussed.

6 Glossary

This Glossary is based on definitions and terms that have been published by acknowledged international organisations in the policy field of migration such as the United Nations Organisation (UNO), the European Migration Network (EMN), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Asylum	A form of protection given by a State on its territory, based on the principle of *non-refoulement* and internationally or nationally recognized refugee rights (as laid out by the 1951 Geneva Convention) and which is granted to a person who is unable to seek protection in their country of citizenship and / or residence, in particular for fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.
Asylum seeker	A person who seeks safety from persecution or serious harm in a country other than their own and awaits the decision on the application for refugee status as laid down by the 1951 Geneva Convention.
Chain Migration	Similar to network migration, the practice by which those who have settled in a new country pave the way for co-nationals to migrate, often through family reunification strategies.
Circular Migration	A repetition of legal migration by the same person between two or more countries.
Emigration	Act of departing or exiting from one State with the intention to remain abroad for a period exceeding one year.
Forced Migration	Migratory movement in which an element of coercion exists, including threats to life and livelihood, whether arising from natural or man-made causes (e.g. movements of refugees and internally displaced persons as well as people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine or development projects).
Forced Return	Compulsory return of an individual to the country of origin, transit or third country, on the basis of an administrative or judicial act.
Internal Migration	Movement of a person or a group of persons within a state for more than one year irrespective of the causes, voluntary or involuntary, and the means, regular or irregular, used to migrate
IDP	An internally displaced person (IDP) has been forced to leave their place of residence as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.
Irregular migration	Movement of persons to a new place of residence or transit that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries.
Labour migration	Movement of persons from one state to another, or within their own country of residence, for the purpose of employment.
Migrant	Person who is outside the territory of the State of which they are nationals or citizens and who has resided in a foreign country for more than one year irrespective of the causes, voluntary or involuntary, and the means, regular or irregular.

Note: The terms "aspiring migrant" "potential migrant", "prospective migrant" and "intending migrant" are often used interchangeably to refer to a person who is interested in emigration; also in the academic literature, there is so far no consensus on the terminology. In the PARIM context, potential migrants are defined as those who are merely interested in migration or have a desire or wish to emigrate. They are differentiated from those who have more substantial migration intentions and have made plans and preparations, such as procuring a passport or applying for a visa – *intending* migrants.

Migration	Movement of a person either across an international border (international migration), or within a state (internal migration) for more than one year irrespective of the causes, voluntary or involuntary, and the means, regular or irregular, used to migrate.
Refugee	A person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, is outside the country of nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country.
Reintegration	Reintegration is the consecutive process following a migrant's return, as migrants again become part of the society of their origin country. This includes two sides: returning migrants need to be willing and able to reintegrate, and the population of the country of origin needs to be willing to welcome them back. There are four dimensions of reintegration: social, economic, cultural and psychosocial.
Remittances	A cross-border person-to-person payment or a financial transfer from a migrant to a beneficiary(ies) in the migrant's country of origin.
Smuggling of Migrants	The procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the irregular entry of a person into a Member State of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident.
Trafficking in Persons	The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.
Voluntary return	Assisted or independent return to the country of origin, transit or third country, based on the free will of the returnee. In the context of AVR(R) programmes, the voluntary nature of return is often disputed. Voluntary return outside of programmes is also called spontaneous return.

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