

WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Jørgen Carling

Introduction

West and Central Africa is a major source region of unauthorized migration. Trucks overloaded with migrants, rushing north along the sandy roads of the Sahara, have become iconic images of international migrant smuggling. This particular flow is important, but only one aspect of a complex and poorly documented landscape of migrant smuggling from West and Central Africa.

As in other parts of the world, migrant smuggling involves a range of activities that are less conspicuous than the dramatic journeys across deserts and seas. In particular, much unauthorized migration takes place on regular international flights, but is facilitated by documents that are falsified, abused or unlawfully obtained. But there is also a particular geographical circumstance that makes migrant smuggling in this region elusive: the area of free movement within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The majority of West Africans who are smuggled overland start their journeys under the provisions for free movement and violate immigration regulations only upon leaving the ECOWAS area.³

The external borders of ECOWAS run primarily through areas that are sparsely populated, politically unstable, and marked by general security deficiencies (Map 2.1). One indication of this geography of insecurity is provided by the travel advice issued by the Governments of France and the United Kingdom. As shown on the map, this advice currently warns against all travel to most of the Sahara and many other areas of West and Central Africa.⁴ In other words, the highly populated areas from which most migrants originate are almost completely encircled by a territory deemed too insecure for travelling.

³ There are limits to mobility within the ECOWAS area that may modify this general picture.

⁴ While the advice is issued specifically for citizens of the two countries, it reflects the general security situation in the areas affected. The advice warns against all but essential travel to a larger area, including all of Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Nigeria.

The fact that overland migrant smuggling out of the ECOWAS area happens in remote and insecure areas has three important implications. First, the limited government presence and control facilitates smuggling. Second, the general insecurity, coupled with harsh environmental conditions, increases migrant vulnerability. Third, the travel warnings limit possibilities for collecting data and carrying out research. For instance, many universities in Europe and North America would not allow students or faculty to carry out research in areas covered by such warnings.

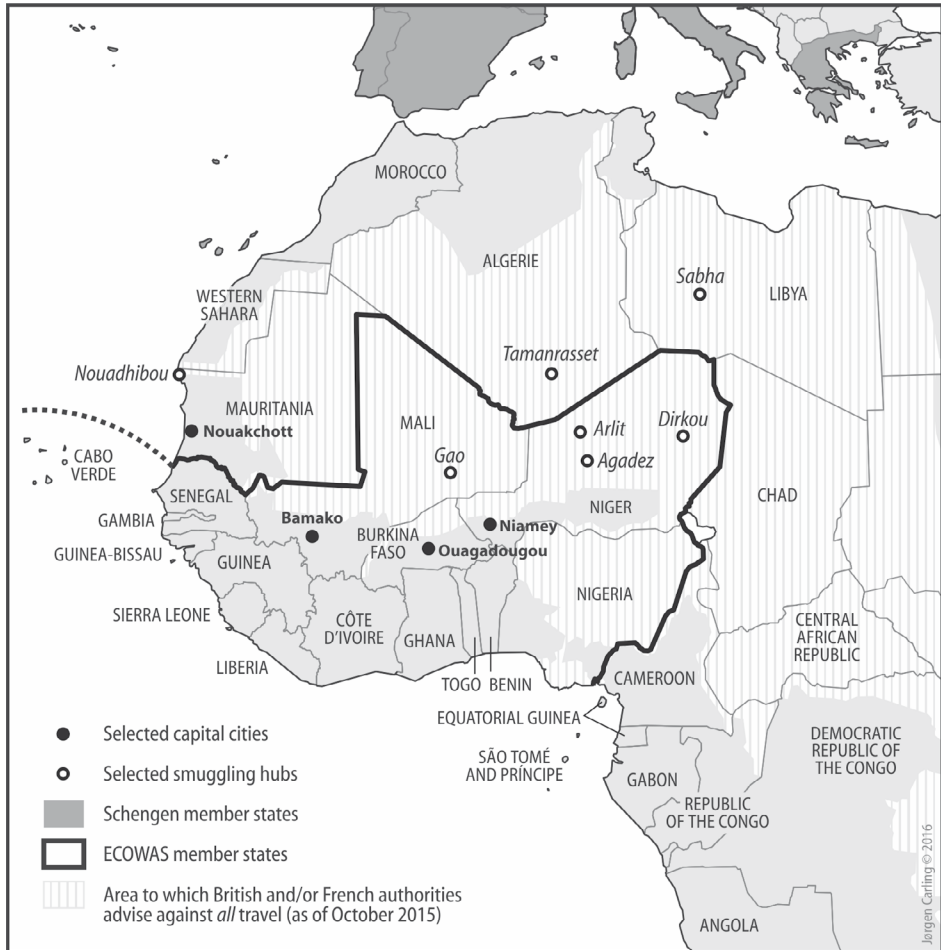
The countries of West and Central Africa differ in their capacity and dedication to migration management, but the relevant international legal frameworks are widely supported. The 2000 Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants has been signed by every country except Chad, Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon.⁵ Without exception, countries in the region have signed the following: (a) 2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children; (b) 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees; and (c) 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees.

This chapter broadly covers the countries of IOM's West and Central Africa region, from Cabo Verde and Mauritania in the west to the Republic of the Congo in the south. However, the western areas of Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo can be said to be part of the same migration system and are also included where relevant. Particular routes and practices of migrant smuggling from West Africa are continuously shifting, but there is also a strong element of continuity, especially in the period since the 1990s. Although the emphasis here is on research from the past decade, older publications remain relevant to understanding the dynamics of migrant smuggling in the region.

In the Francophone parts of the region, the key term for smuggler is the French equivalent *passeur*. The term *convoyeur* is also used (Andersson, 2014b; Daniel, 2008). In Anglophone West Africa, a smuggler is often referred to as a connection man, a term that alludes to the smuggler's role as a service provider with particular networks and skills (Carling, 2006; Lucht, 2013). In the Gambia, where unauthorized migration to Europe has reached extraordinary intensity, this mode of migration is known as the back way to Europe (Chant, 2015; Jagne, 2014).

⁵ Among the signatories, the Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Guinea-Bissau have not ratified the convention.

Map 2.1: Map of West and Central Africa



Source: Carling, 2016.

Overview of migrant smuggling in the region

The primary overseas destination for migrant smuggling from West and Central Africa is Europe. There are also important flows to the Americas, Asia and other parts of Africa, as well as within the region. The number of West Africans being smuggled to Europe is impossible to determine with certainty, but certain indications are available. In 2014, almost 60,000 sub-Saharan Africans were apprehended as undocumented entrants at Europe’s external borders (Frontex, 2015). Many originated from the Horn of Africa, but more than half were from West and Central Africa. In the same year, 73,000 West and Central Africans applied for asylum in Europe. These numbers indicate that many West and

Central African asylum seekers entered Europe either without being smuggled or without being detected.

The West and Central African experience brings out the truly multifaceted nature of migrant smuggling. Rather than thinking of “routes” as trajectories on a map, it is appropriate to approach the diversity of smuggling as a series of modes of migration with both geographical and organization aspects (cf. Carling, 2002). Migrants from West and Central Africa typically need to cross many borders to reach their desired destination, and each border can be crossed in a number of ways:

- **Visa-free entry under provisions for free movement of persons.**

This is the form of mobility allowed under ECOWAS provisions, and which generally takes place without the services of smugglers. However, smugglers play a role in providing ECOWAS passports to non-ECOWAS citizens to allow for mobility through West Africa en route to Europe. Facilitators also organize parts of the journey for ECOWAS nationals that do not involve smuggling (Daniel, 2008).

- **Visa-free entry under country-specific regulations.**

Migration trajectories can make use of country-specific provisions for visa-free entry to transit countries. For instance, citizens of Cameroon – which is not an ECOWAS member – can travel without a visa to Nigeria and Mali. And Malian citizens enjoy visa-free entry to Algeria. Such provisions are used legally but also create a black market for passports (ibid.).

- **Entry with short-term visa.**

Visas for business, family visits or other short-term purposes can play a role in migration trajectories that also involve smuggling. Legally obtained visas can provide access to transit countries. For instance, visas to Portugal have been important transit point for Angolans who later travelled onwards to the Netherlands to seek asylum (Van Wijk, 2007). Visas from West and Central Africa to countries of destination or transit are also often obtained in unlawful ways, with or without the help of professional smugglers (Åkesson, 2013; Alpes, 2014a; Altai Consulting, 2013; Burrell, 2012a).

- **Unauthorized crossing of land borders between border crossing points.**

This is the prototypical form of migrant smuggling, exemplified by overloaded trucks crossing the Sahara. While such unauthorized entry happens on foot in other parts of the world, this is virtually unthinkable along most of the external borders of ECOWAS. Unauthorized border crossings in the Sahara involve long

distances in sparsely populated areas with extreme environmental conditions. Fatalities are frequent, but their number is unknown (Altai Consulting, 2015a; Horwood and Malakooti, 2014).

- **Bribery-facilitated unauthorized entry.** Corruption plays a key role in migrant smuggling also in West and Central Africa. Even if the actual crossing of a border takes place between border crossing points, smugglers and their passengers will often have to pass military or police checkpoints on the way. Possibilities for paying one's way out of these situations – even if the purpose of the journey is obvious – can be decisive for the smuggling enterprise (Adepoju, 2011; Cherti, Pennington and Grant, 2013; Daniel, 2008; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2013).
- **Unauthorized boat migration.** Overland smuggling from West and Central Africa to Europe usually proceeds with a crossing of the Mediterranean by boat. In the recent past, boat migration directly from West Africa to the Canary Islands has also been an important mode of migration (Hernández-Carretero and Carling, 2012).

Overland smuggling routes run north across the Sahara, in a network of trajectories that stretches from Mauritania in the west to Chad in the east (Altai Consulting, 2013; Carling, 2007b; de Haas, 2008; Frontex, 2014a; Pliez, 2011). The relative prominence of different trajectories continuously shifts in response to a host of factors, including crises in countries of origin, political unrest in transit countries, anti-smuggling measures, and the migration and asylum policies of Schengen countries along the external border. The overall structure of northbound trajectories is nevertheless well-established.

Many journeys pass through West Africa's northernmost capital cities, Nouakchott, Bamako, Ouagadougou and Niamey. These are all large cities with diverse economies, where smuggling plays a marginal role. One step further, however, are hubs that have often served as trans-Saharan trading posts for centuries, including Agadez, Arlit, Dirkou and Gao. In these towns, migrant smuggling has become a significant part of the economy. Such specialized hubs are a particular feature of geography of migrant smuggling in the Sahel and Sahara. Foremost among them is Agadez in Central Niger, where trajectories from across West Africa converge. This is also a city where migrants chose between onward routes that fan out and lead towards either Spain or Italy (Bomono, 2011; Brachet, 2005a, 2005b; European Commission, 2015; Kuschminder et al., 2015; Pliez, 2011). The cost of overland smuggling from West and Central Africa to the North African coast ranges from USD 100 to USD 1,000 (Altai Consulting, 2013, 2015a).

In the 1990s and 2000s, West and Central Africans who were smuggled to Europe often became illegal residents. Many were apprehended, but released from detention with an expulsion order before the authorities were able to arrange readmission to the country of origin (Carling, 2007a). Today, a much larger proportion of West and Central Africans who are smuggled to Europe apply for asylum. The majority have their applications rejected, but a substantial minority are given protection in Europe. In 2015, that proportion was 29 per cent for West and Central Africans in total (Eurostat, 2016). In other words, smuggling has two very different outcomes. On the one hand, it leads many people down a dead-end path to failed asylum applications, empty-handed return or illegal residence in Europe. On the other hand, smuggling provides access to protection for a large number of people who have a well-founded fear of persecution or otherwise qualify for humanitarian protection.

The hardships and dangers of overland migration through the Sahara are unquestionable, even if numbers on fatalities, assaults and other forms of exploitation are unavailable. Indeed, some migrants fear the Sahara more than the subsequent crossing of the Mediterranean. Anthropologist Hans Lucht (2011) presents four cases of Ghanaians who travel north from Agadez, recounting their experiences of robbery, deaths and the fight for water. The dangers of the journey result not only from the smugglers' disregard for migrants' welfare, but also from the presence of armed robbers and the risk of getting lost in the desert (Altai Consulting, 2013; Carling et al., 2015; Lucht, 2011; Triulzi, 2013).

Review of data on migrant smuggling

Publicly available data on migrant smuggling in West and Central Africa is extremely scarce. This is partly a consequence of the geographical circumstances described in the introduction to this chapter: many journeys involve smuggling only upon departure from the region. Systematic data collection on migrants who are smuggled out of West and Central Africa is therefore primarily carried out elsewhere, such as at the external borders of the Schengen area (e.g. Frontex, 2015). The data sources described in the chapters on Europe and North Africa are particularly relevant for smuggling from West and Central Africa.

There are essentially three types of data that can be valuable as a public resource. The first is aggregate statistics, such as time series or cross-national comparisons. Tables that present interceptions of unauthorized migrants by nationality, year or location are a case in point. For instance, Frontex publishes data on the number of unauthorized entries detected at external borders, separated by land borders, sea borders and border crossing points and broken

down by nationality.⁶ These entries do not all result from smuggling, but in the case of West and Central Africans, it is safe to assume that the vast majority of entrants have been assisted by smugglers. Table 2.1 exemplifies this type of data.

Data of this type is evidently valuable but almost always comes with limitations. In particular, data is typically selected or aggregated in ways that make sense in a particular publishing context, but may limit the potential for analysis and secondary use. For instance, the border crossing data produced by Frontex is published in the form of tables of “top 10 nationalities” with the result that time series are interrupted. So although the type of data displayed in Table 2.1 is published as far back as 2008, the time series for these four nationalities cannot be extended backwards because other nationalities happened to be more numerous in previous years.

Similarly, the Frontex data exemplifies the problem that, in data by nationality, smaller countries tend to be merged in large residual category of “other” nationalities. The analytical value of the data is then reduced, especially for West and Central Africa. Migration from this region is spread across a large number of countries of origin, many of which have small populations. So even if unauthorized migration is proportionally much more important in Mauritania and Guinea than in Nigeria, for instance, the two former countries will be hidden from view, buried in a residual category. This approach to data management and publication reflects the destination-country bias with which most migration data is collected and published.

Table 2.1: Detected unauthorized border crossings between border crossing points at the external sea borders of the European Union, by nationality, 2010–2014

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014*
Nigeria	196	6,380	575	2,870	8,490
Gambia (the)	125	511	514	2,722	8,642
Mali	23	2,484	422	2,236	9,789
Senegal	10	453	145	1,391	4,769

Source: Frontex, 2014b, 2015. Only nationalities from West and Central Africa that are among the top 10 nationalities are included.

Note: *Data for 2014 includes 26,341 “unspecified sub-Saharan nationals”, which may include nationals of the four countries listed here.

Summary statistics are sometimes on the borderline of what can be considered “data”. Many of the published numbers relating to migrant smuggling

⁶ Frontex refers to entries as *illegal*, which can be disputed in the case of persons entering in order to seek asylum. The term *unauthorized* is therefore used here.



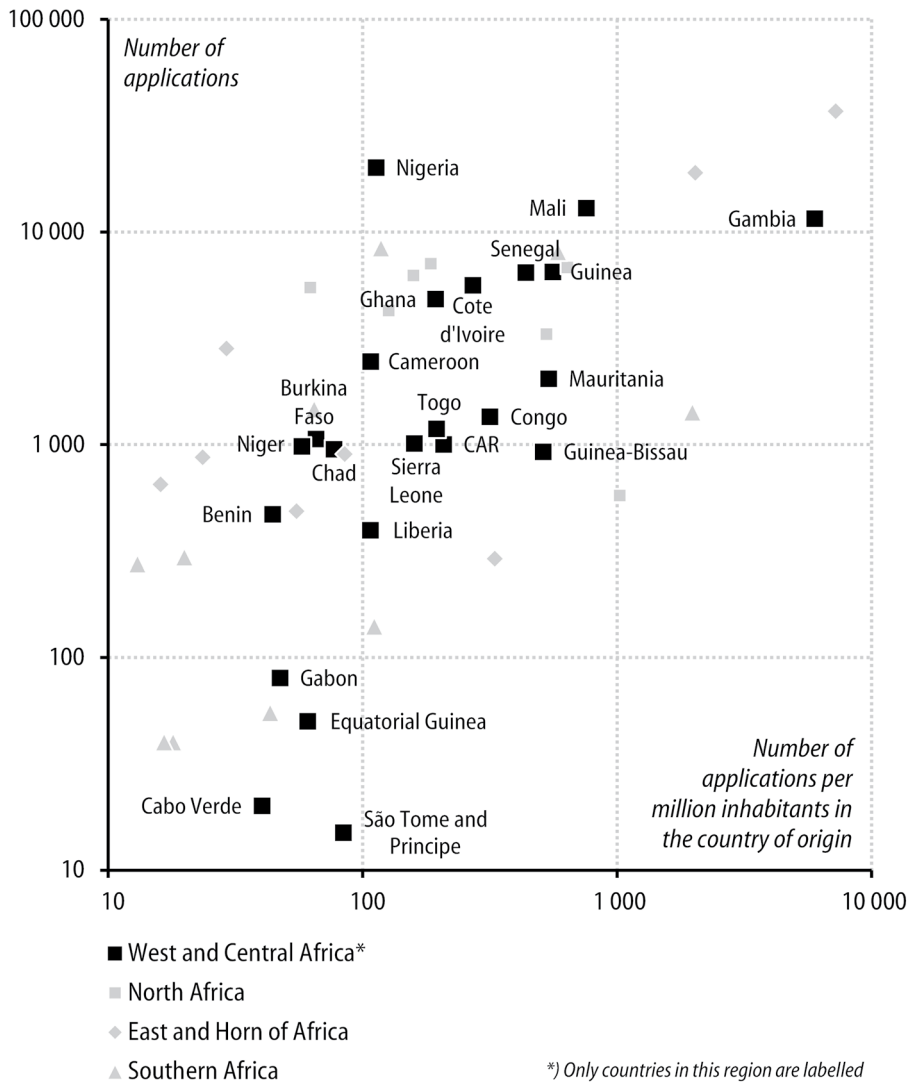
in West and Central Africa are rather a handful of data points. For instance, Massalaki (2015) reports that, according to UNODC, up to 4,000 migrants can pass through Agadez, Niger, every week. The year before, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimated that the weekly number of migrants passing through Northern Niger on their way to Libya is 750–1,000 (UNHCR, 2014). Although these are both estimates, it is hard to say how much of the difference can be attributed to an actual increase in migration. The two estimates are not exactly comparable in their geographical reference point, and there may be methodological differences in how the estimates were produced. This example illustrates the point that a call for more data on migrant smuggling is not simply a call for more numbers, but rather, for numbers that are systematically collected in a comparative way and made public together with the underlying methodology, definitions and assumptions.

Data on asylum represents an important resource, but with limitations. These data are collected, processed and distributed more systematically than any other statistical information related to smuggling. However, the relationship between smuggling and asylum is only partial; not all smuggled migrants apply for asylum, and not all asylum seekers have been smuggled. Still, asylum statistics are valuable for making cross-national comparisons in West and Central Africa.

Figure 2.1 displays the peak annual number of asylum applications launched in Europe by African citizens from 2008 to 2014.⁷ The figure makes cross-country comparisons with two perspectives: (a) how prominent was each nationality from the Europe point of view; and (b) how important was asylum migration to Europe from an origin-country point of view. The figure includes all countries in Africa, but only the ones in West and Central Africa are labelled. The vertical axis represents the absolute number of applications. Nigerians, Malians and Gambians stand out with more than 10,000 applications from each in their respective peak years. The horizontal axis expresses the number of applications relative to the resident population in the country of origin. Among the countries in West and Central Africa, the Gambia is in a league of its own in terms of the intensity of asylum migration. Next in line are Mali, Guinea, Mauritania and Guinea-Bissau. With the exception of Mali, these countries of origin receive little attention in a media and policy landscape that is focused on the absolute number of arrivals from a receiving-country perspective.

⁷ The number of applications fluctuates from year to year, and the peaks can have greater analytical value than the averages.

Figure 2.1: Asylum applications launched in Europe by African citizens, maximum annual figure by country of citizenship, 2008–2014



Source: UNHCR (asylum applications) and World Bank (population).

Moving on from summary statistics, the second form of data to consider is primary survey data. *Primary* here implies that the data is available in its most detailed form before any aggregation or analysis. For survey data, this implies data sets containing all the individual responses, possibly with modifications to ensure anonymity.



There are apparently no large-scale surveys that specifically address migrant smuggling in West and Central Africa. However, several more general surveys on migration include one or more questions related to smuggling. Primary among these are the data sets from the project Migrations between Africa and Europe (MAFE), led by the Institut national d'études démographiques (INED) in France (Beauchemin et al., 2014). The project team conducted interviews with representative samples of about 1,500 individuals (non-migrants and return migrants) in selected regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana and Senegal. In addition, 300 Congolese, 300 Ghanaians and 450 Senegalese were interviewed in Europe. The detailed migration histories include specification of whether or not the migrant travelled with a smuggler.

The MAFE project stands out not only by virtue of the scope and quality of the data, but also by the commitment to data sharing. The various data sets from the projects are available online, accompanied by a detailed guide that facilitates their use (ibid.). Professional funders of academic research often have requirements for making data publicly available after an embargo period. This is the case with the European Commission, which funded the MAFE project. But other agencies that commission or fund research typically have no such requirements. Consequently, a large part of the data that is collected remains inaccessible to other analysts.

This is unfortunate for several reasons. First, when there is no secondary use of the data, there is a risk that the time and goodwill of survey respondents do not produce new insights to the extent that would have been possible. Second, the conclusions drawn by the people who conducted the research are not supplemented by independent and critical scrutiny. This is particularly problematic when the authors have limited technical expertise on survey methodology or work for organizations with particular agendas. These limitations often apply to the so-called grey literature, which accounts for much of the available documentation of migrant smuggling in West and Central Africa. Finally, the research contributions to policy are not fully realized when the data cannot be re-analysed with additional perspectives or research questions. In the case of the MAFE project, the question on smuggling has not been examined in any of the project team's many publications, but this possibility is available to others because of the data sharing.

In addition to summary statistics and primary survey data sets, data on migrant smuggling could be made available in the form of in-depth interview transcripts or other qualitative data. Requirements for data sharing are increasingly also applied to such data, but this involves considerable ethical and methodological challenges. Whereas survey data can easily be anonymized,

qualitative data often contain detailed descriptions that render individuals identifiable, even if names of persons and places are removed. The confidentiality of informants is therefore ensured in the writing process. Qualitative research plays an essential role in understanding migrant smuggling in West and Central Africa, but in the form of published work rather than as raw data.

Box 2.1: Facing the risks of being smuggled

Migrants who are smuggled face considerable danger: fatalities are a common theme across news media, grey literature and academic publications about migrant smuggling (e.g. Brian and Laczko, 2014; Spijkerboer, 2007; Carling, 2007a). When the risks are so great, why do migrants resort to being smuggled? This question became prominent in West Africa in 2006, when a new migration route directly to the Canary Islands emerged. Thousands of migrants left Senegal and other countries on the West African coast in small wooden boats known as pirogues and spent a week or more at sea before reaching the Spanish archipelago. The media reported horror stories of death by starvation or drowning after engines failed or boats capsized. One pirogue was washed ashore in Barbados, on the other side of the Atlantic, with 11 desiccated corpses on board.

Hernández-Carretero and Carling (2012) examined how would-be migrants in Senegal related to the risks of pirogue migration. While some factors were specific to this form of boat migration, several psychological mechanisms could hold true for the risks of smuggling more generally.⁸

Ignorance: Some migrants were apparently unaware of the dangers that awaited them, but they appear to be a small minority. The rule here, as elsewhere, seemed to be that migrants knew very well that they were doing something potentially dangerous (cf. Sheridan, 2009).

Avoidance: Prior to departure, some migrants expressly rejected thinking or asking about potential negative outcomes, instead focusing on the possibilities of life in Europe. Such behaviour is an understandable psychological defence mechanism.

Discrediting: Much of the information about the dangers of migration came from government sources and campaigns. Some prospective migrants discredited the information by pointing to the governments' agenda of dissuading people from boarding the boats.

Distancing: Others acknowledged the risks as genuine, but distanced themselves from the danger by pointing out that others were more at risk. In particular, many prospective migrants held that the journey was dangerous for people from the inland who were not used to the sea, but not for people who had grown up in fishing communities.

Minimization: Prospective migrants pointed to a number of strategies for reducing the risk, ranging from bringing a backup GPS device to obtaining spiritual protection. All such measures reduce the sense of powerlessness in the face of danger.

⁸ The headings that are used for the different mechanisms are developed for this report and not taken from the original source.

Faith: Religious faith helped overcome fear among prospective migrants in Senegal. As one of Hernández-Carretero and Carling's informants expressed it, "if you are fearful, then you disbelieve God" (2012:415). The particular belief that one's time of death is predetermined at birth made fear of dying on the way to Spain irrelevant.

Bravery: Most prospective migrants sought to escape a feeling of social stagnation and hopelessness. Risking a journey to Europe was seen as a sign of determination and taking responsibility for oneself and one's family. The fact that this demanded courage did not make it less admirable.

Realism: Prospective migrants were aware that many others had faced the dangers, succeeded, and managed to improve the lives of their families. In light of the probability of different outcomes, taking the risk was for many a rational choice.

The flow of pirogues from West Africa to the Canary Islands eventually ceased, partly as a result of speedy returns. Migrants from coastal West Africa continue to leave for Europe, but primarily travel overland to Libya and then cross the Mediterranean to Italy.

Review of migrant smuggling research

Much of the research on smuggling of West and Central Africans has been conducted outside the region, especially in North Africa and Southern Europe. Research in those regions is covered in other chapters of this report.

Research on migrant smuggling within West and Central Africa can be divided into three main types, which will be discussed in turn: (a) investigative journalism; (b) grey literature; and (c) academic research. Across the three types of publication, the prominence of smuggling and smugglers varies. There are few studies that explicitly address smuggling, but a large number that examine irregular migration more broadly and include information about the nature of smuggling. Most research focuses on the migrant journey in one way or another, either by following one or more migrants en route (Andersson, 2014b; Lucht, 2011; Schapendonk, 2011; Schapendonk and Steel, 2014), focusing on particular transit towns and cities (Hinshaw and Parkinson, 2015; Pliez, 2011; Smith, 2015), or taking more of a bird's-eye view of migration routes (Bredeloup and Pliez, 2005; Kuschminder, de Bresser and Siegel, 2015). There is a smaller body of research that examines the various forms of brokerage and fraud related to migration documents (Åkesson, 2013; Alpes, 2013b; Alpes and Spire, 2014; Gaibazzi, 2014; Landinfo, 2012; Piot, 2010b). Some of the broader research on contemporary society in the region also yields insights on the facilitation of unauthorized migration. Examples include Emmanuel Grégoire's (2010) study of Tuaregs in Niger and Jenna Burrell's (2012b) study of Internet use in Ghana.

Investigative journalism

A substantial part of research on migrant smuggling in West and Central Africa has been conducted by investigative journalists. This is not surprising, since the combination of human drama and political urgency has great journalistic appeal. Several journalists have covered African migration issues for news media for a number of years and subsequently written a book about the subject (e.g. Daniel, 2008; Gatti, 2008; Liberti, 2011).

The French-Beninese journalist Serge Daniel wrote the book *Les routes clandestines: l'Afrique des immigrés et des passeurs* (2008) on the basis of four years of research in 15 countries and a voyage of several months that took him from Lagos to Ceuta, passing through Lomé, Accra, Gao, Kidal and Tamanrasset. His work stands out not just because of its thoroughness, but also because he is born and raised in West Africa. Most other researchers and journalists whose work on West and Central African migrant smuggling has reached an international audience are European or North American.

The research that fits the label “investigative journalism” gains strength from the emphasis on physical presence and first-hand accounts, even in harsh and dangerous environments. For instance, journalists have recently filed in-depth reports on migrant smuggling in Gao (Smith, 2015) and Agadez (Hinshaw and Parkinson, 2015), inside areas covered by the most severe travel warnings (cf. Map 2.1). Published pieces often combine reporting on the ground with contextual information gathered from “experts” of various kinds, such as local officials, non-governmental organization (NGO) workers, community leaders and academics, for instance.

A potential weakness of journalistic accounts of migrant smuggling is that poorly grounded affirmations from these experts become reproduced as factual truths after they are published in reputable news outlets. Many accounts also suffer from inaccuracy and sensationalist leanings. For instance, many journalists – even in leading news organizations, such as the BBC, *New York Times*, Reuters and *Wall Street Journal* – confuse trafficking and smuggling. The pressure on news media to cut costs and vie for attention in an overcrowded digital universe could harm the quality of coverage on migrant smuggling. The most valuable contributions to date have come from a combination of expensive on-site reporting and accumulated in-depth expertise that is increasingly difficult to sustain.

Grey literature

The term grey literature generally refers to research output that is produced outside of commercial and academic publishing and distribution channels, often by government institutions, NGOs or the private sector. On the topic of migrant smuggling from West and Central Africa, this type of literature includes a number of reports produced or commissioned by intergovernmental organizations (Altai Consulting, 2013, 2015a, 2015b; Barrios, 2015; Cherti, Pennington and Grant, 2013; Marie, 2004; European Commission, 2015; Finnish Immigration Service Country Information Service, 2015; Frontex, 2014a; Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, 2014; IOM, 2013, 2014; Reitano and Tinti, 2015; Shelley, 2014; UNODC, 2013). The authors – who include staff, consultants and academics – are in some cases identified and in other cases obscured by institutional authorship. These studies are often written with policy agendas in mind and valued for their policy relevance. They tend to focus on empirical documentation and sometimes have a limited shelf life.

The quality of the grey literature on migrant smuggling varies enormously. Many studies provide excellent and accessible overviews. However, a widespread weakness is that research methodology is poorly documented. The missing documentation makes it difficult to interpret the results, and leaves open the possibility of methodological flaws. Whereas academic publications are subject to critical scrutiny through anonymous peer review, there is no corresponding, consistently applied mechanism for quality assurance of the grey literature.

The close ties between grey literature and policy processes create both benefits and challenges. Grey literature can provide timely input to evidence-based policy. For instance, Horwood and Malakooti (2014) draw attention to fatalities of African migrants in the Sahara, showing that measures to reduce fatalities need to reach beyond Europe's external borders. Challenges can occur when grey literature is tied to specific policy agendas and selective perspectives and interpretations produce biased conclusions.

The grey literature has an image of being technical and objective, with “report” as the standard genre. However, such reports can also be tendentious. For instance, one recent report on migrant smuggling from Africa to Europe makes the assertion that “a far more violent and ruthless smuggling industry has emerged” and illustrates it with a drawing of a masked man wielding a knife above a person who is kneeling with hands tied behind the back (Reitano and Tinti, 2015:12). The image is clearly inspired by the execution videos released by the Islamic State in 2014 and 2015, and connections between migrant smuggling

and terrorism are mentioned in the text. But the insinuation that smugglers are now beheading their clients remains unsubstantiated.

Grey literature is, by definition, flexible in format and content. This flexibility can be used to great effect in documentation of migrant smuggling experiences. Hagen-Zanker and Mallett (2016), for instance, combine illustrative primary research, solid ties with the academic literature, and excellent research communication in their report on migrant journeys to Europe. Migration from Senegal, usually by means of smugglers, is one of the foci in the report.

Academic research

Boundaries between the literatures are blurred, since much of the grey literature is written by academics, and some academic publications provide summary overviews akin to grey literature reports. The focus in this section is on original peer-reviewed research, which is a work that draws upon primary data and has been subject to the quality assurance mechanisms of academic publishing.

The bulk of academic research on migrant smuggling from West and Central Africa uses ethnographic methods and analyses the experiences and perspectives of migrants and their communities of origin. It is carried out primarily by anthropologists, with a smaller number of geographers, sociologists and interdisciplinary Africa specialists. The resulting literature falls into four broad groups.

First, a number of recent studies have employed multisite fieldwork along smuggling routes from West and Central Africa towards Europe. Ruben Andersson (2014a, 2015b) and Joris Schapendonk (2011, 2012a, 2012b, 2007, 2014) have both followed migration routes from Senegal via Morocco to Europe. Hans Lucht (2011, 2013) have traced routes from Ghana to Italy, and, in ongoing research, Line Richter (2015) is following Malian migrants through the Maghreb. A contrast to these trans-Saharan journeys is provided by Pilar Uriarte Bálamo (2009), who examined clandestine journeys on cargo ships from West Africa to South America, based on fieldwork in Argentina, Ghana, Nigeria, Uruguay and Venezuela.

A second strand of ethnographic research examines the experiences of West and Central African migrants at transit points on the way to Europe. Examples include Kristin Kastner's (2009, 2013, 2014) research among Nigerians in the Gibraltar region, Brigitte Suter's research among Africans in Istanbul (2012a, 2012b, 2013) and Choplin and Lombard's (2009, 2013) research on

stranded sub-Saharan Africans in Mauritania. The concentration of migrants in these locations reflects the fragmentation of journeys that depend wholly or partly on smuggling (cf. Collyer, 2007).

A third set of studies focus on societies of origin, where facilitators arrange for migration on regular international flights, and where overland or maritime journeys start. These studies shed light on the organization of smuggling, as well as the motivations of smuggled migrants (e.g. Gaibazzi, 2012, 2013; Hernández-Carretero and Carling, 2012; Vigh, 2009). The work of Maybritt Jill Alpes in Anglophone Cameroon has been important to understanding how prospective migrants and brokers navigate the regulatory dynamics of emigration (Alpes, 2012, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c, 2014a, 2014b; Alpes and Spire, 2014). Her work is part of a larger, global line of research that examines migration brokerage, recognizing that the essence of such services is independent of the legal status of particular practices (cf. Lindquist, Xiang and Yeoh, 2012). Charles Piot (2010a, 2010b) provides another in-depth view of the social dynamics of migration documents in West and Central Africa. Based on long-term fieldwork in Togo, he examines how people play the US Diversity Visa Lottery in semi-legal ways. The quest for visas is also examined by Lisa Åkesson (2013) in Cabo Verde, Cati Coe (2013) in Ghana, and Paolo Gaibazzi (2014) in the Gambia. Complementary institutional perspectives on migration documents in West Africa are provided by Francesca Zampagni (2011) in Senegal and Pieter Boeles (2003) in Ghana and Nigeria.

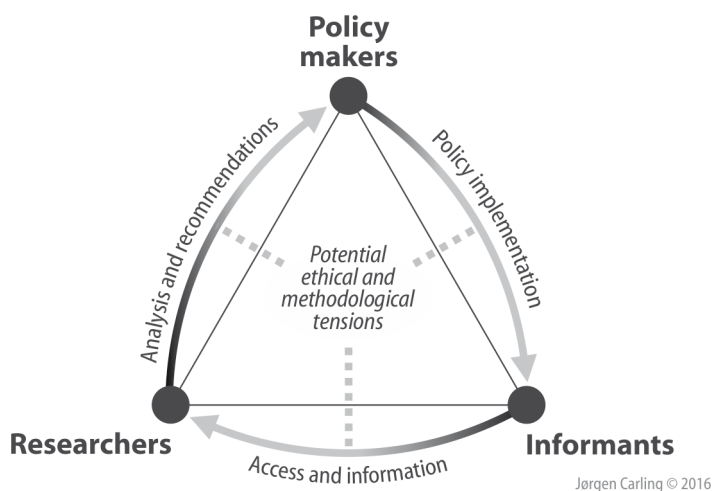
A fourth body of research examines the transnational families and networks of West and Central Africans. Facilitation of unauthorized migration is a minor theme, but emerges, for instance, in the work of Beth Buggenhagen (2012) on transnational Senegalese families and Valentina Mazzucato (2008) on transnational ties between Ghana and the Netherlands.

Migration documents play different, but still important roles for migration within Africa. Again, this is rarely a major theme in the literature, but is addressed, for instance, in Bruce Whitehouse's (2012) research on West Africans in Congo and Jesper Bjarnesen's (2013) examination of migration between Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire. Whitehouse shows how the prevalence of corruption undermines the legality of migration within Africa. Immigrants who were intercepted on the street in Brazzaville were often told by the police that "we don't eat paper" and consequently concluded that the expense of a permit was a poor investment. Similarly, legal circulation within ECOWAS is often impeded by rent-seeking officials (Lucht, 2011).

Ethnographic research and policy relevance

Much of this report's insight into migrant smuggling in West and Central Africa comes from ethnographic research. Such research typically involves a triangular relationship between researchers, their research informants and policymakers (Figure 2.2). The dynamics of this three-way relationship have decisive implications for the nature of research on migrant smuggling in West and Central Africa. Informants are the individuals who provide researchers with information – through interviews or otherwise – and who are directly implicated in the processes under study.⁹ In the case of research on migrant smuggling, informants could be migrants, prospective migrants and smugglers. Before any information can be obtained, however, the researcher needs access to informants. Undocumented migration and migrant smuggling are sensitive topics, and obtaining access is closely connected to building trust (Bilger and van Liempt, 2009; Kastner, 2014).

Figure 2.2: The triangular relationship between researchers, informants and policymakers in ethnographic research



Source: Carling, 2016.

Research on migrant smuggling can be valuable to policymakers, either in the form of analysis of the dynamics at work, or as explicit policy recommendations.¹⁰ But the policies that are developed and implemented will often affect the informants, if not at the individual level, then by targeting the same group. For instance, research that draws on smugglers as informants

⁹ Researchers differ with respect to their preferred terminology; informants are sometimes referred to as *research participants*, or, if interviewees are the primary data collection methods, as *interviewees*.

¹⁰ *Policymakers* is a shorthand term for individuals and organizations that develop and implement policy.

could inform anti-smuggling policies and in turn harm the people who make the research possible. The same applies to research with asylum seekers and other migrants who have depended on smugglers to reach their destination; research findings could inform counter-smuggling measures that hurt future migrants by making journeys more dangerous or costly.

These connections between ethnographic research and policy create ethical and methodological challenges. It is difficult to gain access if informants perceive that the outcome of research is not in their interest. And concealing such implications can contravene ethical guidelines and convictions. Much of the ethnographic research on unauthorized migration from West and Central Africa stems from months or years of building relationships with individuals and communities, and researchers are understandably wary of betraying that trust. Researchers manage obligations to their informants first and foremost by ensuring the confidentiality of individuals (and sometimes locations). It is difficult to tell whether findings are also presented selectively so that they do not facilitate the containment of migration. Because ethnographers often sympathize with their informants, there is a fine balance between research ethics and politically motivated self-censorship.

Many ethnographers working in West and Central Africa would probably be pleased to contribute to policies aimed at reducing migrant vulnerability. However, it is a concern that anti-smuggling measures have sometimes been justified with reference to migrant protection, even when the primary objective is to contain asylum seekers and other migrants against their will (Carling and Hernández-Carretero, 2011; Crépeau, 2003; Horsti, 2012).

Besides the issues of distrust and contrasting agendas, exchanges between ethnographic and policy communities are sometimes constrained by communication gaps that neither side is able to bridge. Policymakers may struggle to see the relevance of microlevel analyses, and ethnographers may lack the familiarity with policy processes that could have helped make the relevance explicit. But successful examples of bridging the gap exist in both the academic and grey literature (e.g. Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, 2016; Schapendonk, 2015).

Much of the ethnographic research related to migrant smuggling from West and Central Africa has been carried out by PhD candidates. Some convert their dissertations into books, and others publish articles that draw upon specific chapters or summarize the dissertation as a whole. From a policy perspective, it is worth noting that the original dissertations often contain detailed empirical descriptions that are lost in the competitive process towards scholarly publishing.

Conclusion and ways forward

Migration from West and Central Africa has been important for the region's development, as well as the safety and prosperity of individuals and families. When migrants resort to being smuggled, migration can become dangerous, traumatizing and unreasonably costly. There is substantial potential for change in the direction of IOM's vision of humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all.

Migrant smuggling can be curtailed by reducing either the supply or the demand. A central finding from research in the region is that migrants are defiant and determined in the face of dangerous journeys. This raises questions about the impact of anti-smuggling measures. Such measures typically reduce supply by increasing the risks and obstacles for smugglers. Consequently, the smugglers who are still in business can only offer services that are more expensive and dangerous for migrants. The question is whether this reduction in supply will reduce the volume of smuggling or simply expose the same number of migrants to greater risks and costs.

A second unanswered question is how demand for smuggling might be reduced. Logically, there are two possibilities: (a) enabling a shift to legal forms of migration; or (b) reducing demand for migration altogether. Both options are politically controversial. The requirements to succeed with either strategy are also unknown. New research can form a basis for simultaneously assessing the feasibility and desirability of measures that seek to reduce the demand for smuggling.

Closer ties between policy agendas and high-quality research could help design and implement policies that reduce migrant fatalities and suffering. Such connections are easier to forge when policies are genuinely oriented towards migrant well-being. Cross-fertilization between academia and policy could also be greatly enhanced by greater support for the open data agenda, exemplified by the European Union's European Data Portal and the World Bank's Open Data Initiative. Policy organizations that commission or conduct research on migrant smuggling could increase the value added by ensuring that primary data becomes openly accessible for additional analyses.

Most of the research reviewed here is conducted by people from outside West and Central Africa who are also based at institutions outside the region. In order to ensure cross-fertilization between migration research and policy, it is imperative to also strengthen research capacity and institutions within West and

Central Africa. In terms of methodology and research design, there is unfulfilled potential for research that explicitly addresses smuggling and carried out in a comparative fashion across several countries in West and Central Africa.

References

Adepoju, A.

- 2011 *Operationalising the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons: Prospects for Sub-Regional Trade and Development*. Network of Migration Research on Africa.

Åkesson, L.

- 2013 The Queue Outside the Embassy: Remittances, Inequality and Restrictive Migration Regimes. *International Migration*, 51(s1):e1–e12.

Alpes, M.J.

- 2012 Bushfalling at All Cost: The Economy of Migratory Knowledge in Anglophone Cameroon. *African Diaspora*, 5(1):90–115.
- 2013a Bushfalling: The making of migratory expectations in Anglophone Cameroon. In: *The Global Horizon. Expectations of Migration in Africa and the Middle East* (K. Graw and S. Schielke, eds.). Leuven University Press, Leuven, pp. 43–58.
- 2013b *Law and the credibility of migration brokers. The case of emigration dynamics in Cameroon*, Working Paper 80. International Migration Institute, University of Oxford, Oxford.
- 2013c *Migration brokerage, illegality, and the state in Anglophone Cameroon*. Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) Working Paper 2013:07. DIIS, Copenhagen.
- 2014a Female spouses at the doors of fortress Europe. *Tijdschrift voor Genderstudies*, 17(3):245–258.
- 2014b Imagining a future in ‘bush’: migration aspirations at times of crisis in Anglophone Cameroon. *Identities*, 21(3):259–274.

Alpes, M.J. and A. Spire

- 2014 Dealing with Law in Migration Control: The Powers of Street-level Bureaucrats at French Consulates. *Social and Legal Studies*, 23(2):261–274.

Altai Consulting

- 2013 *Mixed Migration: Libya at the Crossroads – Mapping of Migration Routes from Africa to Europe and Drivers of Migration in Post-Revolution Libya*. Altai Consulting, Paris.
- 2015a *Irregular Migration between West Africa, North Africa and the Mediterranean*. Altai Consulting, Paris.
- 2015b *Migration Trends across the Mediterranean. Connecting the Dots*. Altai Consulting, Paris.

Andersson, R.

- 2014a Hunter and Prey: Patrolling Clandestine Migration in the Euro-African Borderlands, *Anthropological Quarterly*, 87(1):119–150.
- 2014b *Illegality, Inc.: Clandestine Migration and the Business of Bordering Europe*. University of California Press, Oakland, CA.

Bálsamo, P.U.

- 2009 Perigoso é não correr perigo: Experiências de viajantes clandestinos em navios de carga no Atlântico Sul. PhD thesis. Instituto de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre.

Barrios, C.

- 2015 *Transit Niger: migrants, rebels and traffickers*, Report 31. European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris.

Beauchemin, C. et al.

- 2014 *Introduction to the MAFE datasets*. MAFE Methodological Note 7. Institut national d'études démographiques (INED), Paris.

Bilger, V. and I. van Liempt

- 2009 Methodological and Ethical Dilemmas in Research among Smuggled Migrants. In: *The Ethics of Migration Research Methodology: Dealing with Vulnerable Immigrants* (I. van Liempt and V. Bilger, eds.). Sussex Academic Press, Brighton, pp. 118–137.

Bjarnesen, J.

- 2013 Diaspora at home? Wartime mobilities in the Burkina Faso–Côte d'Ivoire transnational space. PhD thesis. Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology, Uppsala University, Uppsala.



- Boeles, P.
 2003 *Mensen en papieren. Legalisatie en verificatie van buitenlandse documenten in "probleemlanden"*. Forum, Instituut voor Multiculturele Ontwikkeling, Utrecht.
- Bomono, H.Y.
 2011 Filières migratoires transsahariennes du Cameroun vers le Maghreb. *Cahiers de l'Urmis*, 13:1–12.
- Brachet, J.
 2005a Constructions of territoriality in the Sahara: the transformation of spaces of transit. *Stichproben. Wiener Zeitschrift für kritische Afrikastudien*, 8:237–253.
 2005b Migrants, transporteurs et agents de l'état: rencontre sur l'axe Agadez-Sebha. *Autrepart*, 4(36):43–62.
- Bredeloup, S. and O. Pliez
 2005 Migrations entre les deux rives du Sahara. *Autrepart*, 4(36):3–20.
- Brian, T. and F. Laczko (eds.)
 2014 *Fatal Journeys. Tracking Lives Lost During Migration*. International Organization for Migration (IOM), Geneva.
- Buggenhagen, B.A.
 2012 *Muslim Families in Global Senegal*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington.
- Burrell, J.R.
 2012a Producing the internet and development: an ethnography of internet café use in Accra, Ghana. PhD thesis, Department of Sociology, London School of Economics and Political Science, London.
 2012b *Invisible Users: Youth in the Internet Cafes of Urban Ghana*. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.
- Carling, J.
 2002 Migration in the age of involuntary immobility: Theoretical reflections and Cape Verdean experiences. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 28(1):5–42.
 2006 *Migration, Human Smuggling and Trafficking from Nigeria to Europe*. Migration Research Series, 23. IOM, Geneva.
 2007a Migration control and migrant fatalities at the Spanish–African Borders. *International Migration Review*, 41(2):316–343.

- 2007b Unauthorized migration from Africa to Spain. *International Migration*, 45(4):3–37.
- Carling, J., A.T. Gallagher and C. Horwood
 2015 *Beyond Definitions. Global Migration and the Smuggling-Trafficking Nexus*, Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS) Discussion Paper 2. RMMS, Nairobi.
- Carling, J. and M. Hernández-Carretero
 2011 Protecting Europe and protecting migrants? Strategies for managing unauthorised migration from Africa. *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 13(1):42–58.
- Chant, S.
 2015 Dimensions and dynamics of the Gambian diaspora in the digital age. In: *Diasporas Reimagined: Spaces, Practices and Belonging* (N. Sigona, et al., eds.). Oxford Diasporas Programme, Oxford, pp. 54–65.
- Cherti, M., J. Pennington and P. Grant
 2013 *Beyond Borders: Human Trafficking from Nigeria to the UK*. Institute for Public Policy Research, London.
- Choplin, A. and J. Lombard
 2009 Migrations et recompositions spatiales en Mauritanie. *Afrique contemporaine*, 228:151–170.
 2013 Stranded in Mauritania: sub-Saharan migrants in post-transit context. In: *Long Journeys: African Migrants on the Road* (A. Triulzi and R.L. McKenzie, eds.), Brill, Boston, pp. 67–92.
- Coe, C.
 2013 *The Scattered Family: Parenting, African Migrants, and Global Inequality*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Collyer, M.
 2007 In-between Places: Trans-Saharan Transit Migrants in Morocco and the Fragmented Journey to Europe. *Antipode*, 39(4):668–690.
- Crépeau, F.
 2003 The Fight against Migrant Smuggling: Migration Containment over Refugee Protection. In: *The Refugee Convention at Fifty. A View from Forced Migration Studies*. (J.V. Selm et al., eds.). Lexington Books, Lanham, pp. 173–186.

- Daniel, S.
2008 *Les routes clandestines: l'Afrique des immigrés et des passeurs*. Hachette Littératures, Paris.
- European Commission
2015 *A study on smuggling of migrants: Characteristics, responses and cooperation with third countries*. European Commission, Brussels.
- Eurostat
2016 Eurostat online database. Available from <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database> (last accessed 20 January 2016).
- Finnish Immigration Service Country Information Service
2015 *Human Trafficking of Nigerian Women to Europe*, Suuntanus project report. Finnish Immigration Service, Country Information Service, Helsinki.
- Frontex
2014a *Africa-Frontex Intelligence Community Joint Report*, Frontex staff working document. Frontex, Warsaw.
2014b *Annual Risk Analysis 2014*. Frontex, Warsaw.
2015 *Annual Risk Analysis 2015*. Frontex, Warsaw.
- Gaibazzi, P.
2012 Home as Transit: Would-Be Migrants and Immobility in Ghana. In: *The Challenge of the Threshold. Border Closures and Migration Movements in Africa* (J. Streiff-Fénart and A. Segatti, eds.). Lexington Books, Plymouth, pp. 163–176.
2013 “God’s time is the best”: Religious imagination and the wait for emigration in the Gambia. In: *The Global Horizon. Expectations of Migration in Africa and the Middle East* (K. Graw and S. Schielke, eds.). Leuven University Press, Leuven, pp. 121–136.
2014 Visa problem: certification, kinship, and the production of ‘ineligibility’ in the Gambia. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 20(1):38–55.
- Gatti, F.
2008 *Bilal. Viaggiare, lavorare, morire da clandestini*. Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli, Milano.

Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime

2014 *Smuggled futures: the dangerous path of the migrant from Africa to Europe*, Research report. Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, Geneva.

Grégoire, E.

2010 *Touaregs du Niger, Le destin d'un mythe*. Karthala Editions, Paris.

de Haas, H.

2008 *Irregular Migration from West Africa to the Maghreb and the European Union: An Overview of Recent Trends*. Migration Research Series, 32. IOM, Geneva.

Hagen-Zanker, J. and R. Mallett

2016 *Journeys to Europe. The role of policy in migrant decision-making*. Overseas Development Institute (ODI) Insights. ODI, London.

Hernández-Carretero, M. and J. Carling

2012 Beyond “Kamikaze Migrants”: Risk Taking in West African Boat Migration to Europe. *Human Organization*, 71(4):407–416.

Hinshaw, D. and J. Parkinson

2015 “Migrant Boom Is Saharan Boon, Agadez Traffickers Profit from Movement Through Niger to Libya”, *Wall Street Journal*, 19 July.

Horsti, K.

2012 Humanitarian Discourse Legitimizing Migration Control: FRONTEX Public Communication”. In: *Migrations: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (M. Messier, R. Wodak and R. Schroeder, eds.). Springer, Vienna, pp. 297–308.

Horwood, C. and A. Malakooti

2014 From Sub-Saharan Africa through North Africa: Tracking deaths along the way. In: *Fatal Journeys: Tracking Lives Lost During Migration* (T. Brian and F. Laczko, eds.). IOM, Geneva, pp. 109–138.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

2013 *The Mali Migration Crisis at a Glance*. IOM, Geneva.

2014 *Sur la route des migrants au Niger, Profilage de l’OIM: migrants en transit*. Report. IOM, Geneva.

- Jagne, F.S.
- 2014 The Back Way to Europe: A case study about why young men in Gambia are prepared to risk their lives to get to Europe. Bachelor thesis. Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Social Studies, Linnaeus University, Växjö.
- Kastner, K.
- 2009 Moving relationships: Family ties of Nigerian migrants on their way to Europe. *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal*, 3(1):17–34.
- 2013 Nigerian border crossers: Women travelling to Europe by land. In: *Long Journeys. African Migrants on the Road* (A. Triulzi and R.L. McKenzie, eds.), Brill, Boston, pp. 25–44.
- 2014 *Zwischen Suffering und Styling: Die lange Reise nigerianischer Migratinnen nach Europa*, LIT Verlag, Münster.
- Kuschminder, K., J. de Bresser and M. Siegel
- 2015 Irregular Migration Routes to Europe and Factors Influencing Migrants' Destination Choices. Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, Maastricht University, Maastricht.
- Landinfo
- 2012 *Nigeria: Pass, identitetskort og underlagsdokumenter*, Temanotat. Utlendingsforvaltningens fagenhet for landinformasjon, Oslo.
- Liberti, S.
- 2011 *A sud di Lampedusa. Cinque anni di viaggi sulle rotte dei migranti*, 2nd edition ed. Edizioni Minimum Fax, Rome.
- Lindquist, J., B. Xiang and B.S.A. Yeoh
- 2012 Opening the Black Box of Migration: Brokers, the Organization of Transnational Mobility and the Changing Political Economy in Asia Introduction. *Pacific Affairs*, 85(1):7–19.
- Lucht, H.
- 2011 *Darkness before Daybreak: African Migrants Living on the Margins in Southern Italy Today*. University of California Press, Berkeley.
- 2013 Pusher Stories: Ghanaian Connection Men and the Expansion of the EU's Border Regimes into Africa. In: *The Migration Industry and the Commercialization of International Migration* (T. Gammeltoft-Hansen and N.N. Sørensen, eds.). Routledge, Oxon, pp. 173–189.

Marie, C.-V.

- 2004 *Preventing Illegal Immigration: Juggling Economic Imperatives, Political Risks and Individual Rights*. Directorate of Social Affairs and Health, Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

Massalaki, A.

- 2015 Niger passes law to tackle migrant smuggling, first in West Africa. *Reuters*, 12 May.

Mazzucato, V.

- 2008 The double engagement: transnationalism and integration. Ghanaian migrants' lives between Ghana and the Netherlands. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 34(2):199–216.

Piot, C.

- 2010a Border Practices. In: *Hard Work, Hard Times. Global Volatility and African Subjectivities* (A.-M. Makhulu, B.A. Buggenhagen and S. Jackson, eds.). University of California Press, Berkeley, pp. 150–164.
- 2010b *Nostalgia for the Future. West Africa after the Cold War*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Pliez, O.

- 2011 *Les cités du désert. Des villes sahariennes aux saharatowns*. IRD Éditions, Marseille.

Reitano, T. and P. Tinti

- 2015 *Survive and advance: The economics of smuggling refugees and migrants into Europe*. Institute for Security Studies Paper, 289. Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria.

Richter, L.

- 2015a *Brokering in the Borderlands*. First Draft, Report. University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen.

Schapendonk, J.

- 2011 Turbulent Trajectories. Sub-Saharan African Migrants Heading North, PhD thesis. Human Geography Department, Radboud University Nijmegen, Nijmegen.
- 2012a Beyond Departure and Arrival: Analyzing Migration Trajectories of Sub-Saharan African Migrants from a Mobilities Perspective. In: *The Challenge of the Threshold. Border Closures and Migration Movements in Africa* (J. Streiff-Fénart and A. Segatti, eds.). Lexington Books, Plymouth, pp. 105–120.

- 2012b Turbulent Trajectories: African Migrants on Their Way to the European Union”, *Societies*, 2(2):27–41.
- 2013 Sub-Saharan migrants heading north: A mobility perspective. In: *Long Journeys: African Migrants on the Road* (A. Triulzi and R.L. McKenzie, eds.). Brill, Boston, pp. 9–24.
- 2015 De dynamiek van een migratiereis van Afrika naar Europa. *Justitiële verkenningen*, 41(3):59–70.
- Schapendonk, J. and D. van Moppes
 2007 *Migration and Information. Images of Europe, Migration Encouraging Factors and En Route Information Sharing*. Working paper Migration and Development Series no. 16. Radboud University, Nijmegen.
- Schapendonk, J. and G. Steel
 2014 Following Migrant Trajectories: The Im/Mobility of Sub-Saharan Africans En Route to the European Union. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 104(2):262–270.
- Shelley, L.
 2014 *Human Smuggling and Trafficking into Europe: A Comparative Perspective*. Migration Policy Institute, Washington, D.C.
- Sheridan, L.M.
 2009 *“I Know It’s Dangerous”: Why Mexicans Risk Their Lives to Cross the Border*. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.
- Smith, A.D.
 2015 Inside Mali’s human-trafficking underworld in Gao. *BBC News*, 21 April.
- Spijkerboer, T.
 2007 The Human Costs of Border Control. *European Journal of Migration and Law*, 9:127–139.
- Suter, B.
 2012a Social Networks in Transit: Experiences of Nigerian Migrants in Istanbul. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 10(2):204–222.
 2012b Tales of transit: Sub-Saharan African migrants’ experiences in Istanbul. PhD thesis. Department of Social and Welfare Studies, Linköping University, Norrköping.
 2013 Untangling immobility in transit: Sub-Saharan migrants in Istanbul. In: *Long Journeys: African Migrants on the Road* (A. Triulzi and R.L. McKenzie, eds.), Brill, Boston, pp. 93–112.

- Triulzi, A.
2013 “Like a plate of spaghetti” Migrant narratives from the Libya-Lampedusa route. In: *Long Journeys: African Migrants on the Road* (A. Triulzi and R.L. McKenzie, eds.). Brill, Boston, pp. 213–232.
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
2014 *Dirkou, porte d’entrée et porte de sortie de la Libye*. UNHCR, Niamey.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
2013 *Transnational Organized Crime in West Africa: A Threat Assessment*. UNODC, Vienna.
- Van Wijk, J.
2007 Luanda-Holanda: Irreguliere (Asiel)migratie van Angola naar Nederland, PhD thesis. Faculty of Law, VU University Amsterdam, Amsterdam.
- Vigh, H.
2009 Wayward Migration: On Imagined Futures and Technological Voids. *Ethnos*, 74(1):91–109.
- Whitehouse, B.
2012 *Migrants and Strangers in an African City. Exile, Dignity, Belonging*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington.
- Zampagni, F.
2011 *A visa for Schengen’s Europe: Consular practices and regular migration from Senegal to Italy*. CARIM Best participant essay series, 59. Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, San Domenico di Fiesole, European University Institute.