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Edited by Franck Düvell, Irina Molodikova & Michael Collyer

Transit Migration in Europe

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Preface

What began as an international conference successively became a colossal project. It took over six years from preparing the conference to subsequent publication of some of the papers, and thus far longer than planned. This is maybe not unusual, but this time the challenges were multiple and not always anticipated.

At the beginning we held the international conference '(Irregular) Transit Migration in the European Space', which was held in April 2008 in Istanbul. It was funded by the Network of Excellence on Immigration, Integration and Social Cohesion (IMISCOE), organised by the editors, as well as Hein de Haas from the International Migration Institute (IMI) at Oxford University and Ahmet İcduygu, Biriz Karacay and their team from Koç University, which also generously hosted the event.

The conference brought together researchers from all relevant regions in Europe and its neighbourhood. Twenty-six experts from the Russian, French and English speaking scientific community presented papers on the cases of Azerbaijan, Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Hungary, Turkey, Cyprus, Egypt, Malta, Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Morocco, Spain and Portugal, and on methodologies and research ethics; colleagues and PhD students from another ten countries (USA, UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, France, Italy, Turkey, Libya and Estonia) contributed to the discussion. This circled on concepts and definitions, constructions and discourses, EU and Russian migration and asylum politics, migrants' strategies and smuggling, analyses and methods. Various perspectives were taken, as from sending (Moldova, Senegal) and receiving countries (Spain, Portugal), from staging posts (Mali), 'dead end roads' (Cyprus and Malta) and 'transit countries' (Ukraine, Turkey and Morocco).

For various reasons, not all papers could be considered for publication and not all papers could be published in one volume. Also, not all countries or regions that are transited by migrants are covered in this book. This is because first, not all regions are equally well researched and there remain research gaps; second, the cases presented here are considered to be precedent cases which also throw light on the countries not explicitly covered here; and third, more case studies would inevitably produce repetitive results. Some papers were made available in a special issue of *Population, Space and Place* published in 2011. Others went into a Russian volume which was published by University Books, Moscow, in 2009, which contains some of the chapters presented in this volume as well as contributions that were considered less

relevant for a Western audience. Several papers were made available online at the Centre for Migration, Policy and Society, University of Oxford, at www.compas.ox.ac.uk/events/past_conferences_events.shtml. Finally, a policy brief was published at the IMISCOE website at www.imiscoe.org/publications/policybriefs/documents/PB12-Transitmigration-Duvell.pdf.

All chapters in this book are revised and updated versions of the conference papers. The main challenge, as it turned out, lay in the different scientific cultures of the scholars involved, the trilingual communication between editors, authors and translators and the actual translation of the chapters from Russian and French into a common language, English. All chapters were updated by additional research, they were revised several times, some had to be translated and retranslated (our thanks go to Alan Watt at the Central European University) due to quality issues, another translator had to be replaced and still some final language editing (thanks to Briony Truscott from the International Migration Institute) was necessary. All this was only made possible by a team effort and the hard work of additional translators who remained anonymous to most of the editorial consortium. Our thanks also go to some anonymous referees who compelled us to make some cumbersome but necessary revisions that improved the volume. We hope the readers appreciate these efforts and enjoy the book!

Franck Düvell, Centre on Migration, Policy and Society, Oxford

Irina Molodikova, Central European University, Budapest

Michael Collyer, Sussex University, Brighton

Oxford, October 2013

1 Introduction

Transit Migrations and European Spaces

Michael Collyer, Franck Düvell, Hein de Haas & Irina Molodikova

The term ‘transit migration’ has a long history dating back to the movement of refugees out of German occupied Europe during the Second World War and covering immediate post-colonial arrivals of migrants in important gateway cities, such as Marseille (Temime 1989), but the use to which we refer may be traced to its appearance in policy documents from the early 1990s onwards to refer to largely irregular migration into the European Union (EU), initially across the EU’s Eastern external border (Wallace, Chmouliar & Sidorenko 1996). It is now used, almost exclusively in a European context, to refer to actual or potential irregular migration in the broader vicinity of Europe, to the east, south-east and south (Düvell 2006). Despite two decades of increasingly widespread use and growing signs that notions of ‘transit migration’ are filtering into more academic treatments of migration with relatively little critical analysis (Papadopoulou-Kourkoulou 2008), there is no substantial comparative empirical work which examines the use and usefulness of the term in the variety of contexts in which it is used: Central and Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean and North Africa. This book aims to fill that gap.

This book provides empirical evidence in support of arguments that the conceptualisation of what is called ‘transit migration’ is not currently sufficiently cohesive to provide a useful analytical category. This has been argued elsewhere, including in work we have completed ourselves (Collyer, Düvell & De Haas 2010), but has not previously received such broad based empirical support. As it is widely applied, the term refers both to individuals who have already migrated and individuals who are believed to be likely to migrate but have not yet done so. ‘Transit migrant’ may be used to refer to individuals who have arrived in Europe. Although the ambiguity of its usage is such that it is not possible to be certain that it has never been used in this way, we know of no clear evidence of an intention to use the term specifically to refer to individuals on EU territory; in any case, once individuals have reached Europe, their means of entry becomes legally irrelevant. In the operation of the Dublin Regulation, for example, it is only the country of entry, not the means of entry, which is considered. We also

know that the majority of irregular resident migrants in the EU entered legally, mostly on a visa, and subsequently took up employment in breach of visa regulations or failed to depart and overstayed.

The term is more commonly used to refer to individuals in any of the countries bordering Europe or indeed several more distant countries. It therefore assumes an intentionality to migrate to Europe. For individuals who are actually engaged in the migration process, such intentions are clear, but the label is not limited to those whose intentions can be read in their behaviour. There is a wider assumption that irregular migrants from elsewhere in the world who are resident in the countries surrounding Europe are also engaged in attempts to reach Europe. In countries with substantial legally and irregular resident migrant populations, such as previously was the case in Libya, politicians encourage the assumption that many such resident individuals also fall within the definition, since this increases their potential value to European border control agents.¹ Yet migrants, even undocumented migrants, frequently deny such intentions (Collyer 2010). A definition would inevitably rest on the intentions of particular migrants, which are not only uncertain but change regularly.

An alternative to basing a definition exclusively on uncertain future intentions is only to consider transit migration to have occurred once it has been completed. Aspasia Papadopoulou-Kourkoula adopts this approach in the only existing monograph on the subject. She defines transit migration as ‘the situation between emigration and settlement that is characterised by indefinite migrant stay, legal or illegal, and may or may not develop into further migration depending on a series of structural and individual factors’ (Papadopoulou-Kourkoula 2008: 4). This definition has the merit of recognising that intentions may change, so that final destinations may become staging points (see Alioua, this volume) and points that were initially expected to be final destinations may simply be temporary stops while new destinations become the focus of further journeys. ‘It is only a posteriori that the observer (and the migrant) knows if a particular stay was temporary or not’ (Papadopoulou-Kourkoula 2008: 5).

This approach is clear from a sociological perspective and provides a neat definition, but it does not reflect the way the term is used in a policy context. Manifestly, migrants are labelled as transit migrants before they reach a presumed final destination in Europe, that is, the term is not used *a posteriori*. Indeed, once migrants have actually arrived in Europe their legal status

1 For instance, on a visit to Italy in August 2010 the then Libyan leader Gaddafi claimed that migration control cost Libya €5 billion a year (*Guardian* 1 September 2010).

becomes more significant than their means of entry and from the perspective of the states in which they reside they are not treated any differently to the more numerous illegally resident migrants who overstayed visas. Their status as 'transit migrants' therefore has no meaning *a posteriori*, in policy terms. In order to focus on the policy context of the term, which is the intention of this volume, we must accept the centrality of migrant intentions in any definition of the term, though this is unsatisfactory from a theoretical point of view.

The centrality of intentions is not the only problem in this definition: the term also covers a variety of legal statuses, including the typically complex arrangements between legal/illegal border crossings, asylum, residence and work. Moreover, the adjective 'transit' is applied not just to migrants themselves, but to the practices in which they are engaged ('transit migration') and regions where they are to be found (the ubiquitous 'regions/countries of origin and transit'). 'Transit migration' therefore appears as a confused political construction of dubious scientific value. In light of these criticisms, we are to some extent sympathetic to those who argue that the term should be abandoned entirely. However, as is apparent from the title of this book, we still see some value in its use, although only in reference to a migratory phenomenon, not to a label that can or should be assigned to individual migrants or to the countries through which they are considered to pass.

Finally, this volume is ultimately about the construction, definition and use of categories and typologies in migration research and thus includes two methodological messages. First, that political categories should not be simply accepted but scrutinised for their discursive purpose, use and power. Instead, this volume suggests that scientific typologies are to be developed from rigid comparison of individual cases along criteria of similarities and differences, and that one should accordingly cluster cases along these criteria and finally identify patterns which then warrant labelling (see Düvell and Vogel 2006). Second, the volume, by the way it is designed, implicitly promotes multi-sited research on transit and other similar forms of migration, notably research along the routes of migration and on both sides of the border, hence at exit and entry points. Indeed, only by including those in the research that have not yet or did not manage to arrive in the EU can the full reality of this type of migration become apparent.

1.1 The value of the concept of 'transit migration'

Despite its problems, the term 'transit migration' has lasted. While other terms have come and gone, 'transit migration' has retained some wide

appeal in a variety of political and advocacy contexts over more than two decades. Given the impossibility of reaching a clear, workable definition that is both scientifically robust and reflects the dominant policy context of the term, we do not propose using 'transit migration' as a category of analysis in the book, but as a category of practice,² a significant political label (Brubaker & Cooper 2000; Zetter 2007). The flexibility and ambiguity of the term, which make it inappropriate for scientific use, make it ideally suited to the politics of migration in the European neighbourhood. In such highly charged political environments, terms which can convey a variety of meanings are particularly popular. There may be good reasons for this, such as during the initial stages of complex negotiations when securing agreement on anything is a positive step. However, there are also significant problems, particularly when these terms begin to enter wider currency. Ambiguous language may then be used not to secure initial agreement but to mask continuing disagreement.

In the case of 'transit migration' to the European Commission and EU member states it refers to the perceived need to be seen to control undocumented migration across the EU's external border; to neighbouring countries, it may initially have been imposed upon these neighbouring countries, but there are increasing signs that they are identifying elements of self interest in responding to new forms of immigration which are partially shaped by attempts to control undocumented migration; finally, for migrants' rights groups it has provided a label for a range of primarily humanitarian concerns, and for 'no borders' advocates it is a useful illustration of the harmful and self-defeating character of EU migration controls.

In all of these contexts, 'transit migration' is used as shorthand for more significant changes within global migration systems, which require more detailed attention. As it is currently used, it may gesture towards important changes in migration systems in and around Europe. Indeed, while it is important to maintain a critical position on its broader application, it may describe an amalgamation of concerns surrounding immigration into states neighbouring Europe, particularly when that immigration is not authorised by those states. This includes the easier access that migrants are thereby assumed to gain to European territory, the (related) increasing stringency of controls at the European external border, the means of onward transportation and the physical risk this poses to the migrants. The situa-

2 Brubaker and Cooper define 'categories of practice' as 'categories of everyday social experience, developed and deployed by ordinary social actors [in this case policymakers] as distinguished from the experience-distant categories used by social analysts' (2000: 4).

tion is complicated when individual migrants wish to register a claim for protection as refugees, which requires some attempt to classify the nature of refugee movement and distinguish it from that of other migrants, a situation described by a wide variety of labels in recent years such as 'irregular secondary movement', the 'migration-asylum nexus' or 'mixed migration'. The increasingly common result is that migrants are 'stranded': unable to continue, unable or unwilling to return and often facing considerable hardships just to remain where they are.

At this stage we do not wish to focus this range of possible meanings and uses of 'transit migration' into a clear definition. This breadth of application is one of the secrets of the term's success and any attempt at more specific definitions would inevitably exclude some important ways in which the term has been used. There is no single element common to everything that has been labelled transit migration. We wish only to recognise this plurality of uses, indicated by the plural 'transit migrations' in the title of this introduction. Much the same could be said of 'European space', a second deliberately broad term that draws attention to the euro-centeredness of all considerations of 'transit migration'. The same range of migratory phenomena can be found in Central America and Mexico, in the south of Africa, across the Gulf of Aden to Yemen, from North Korea through China to South Korea, or in the vast open oceans between Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Malaysia and Australia. Yet 'transit migration' as a term is applied almost exclusively to the European space.

1.2 Charting European spaces: Place or flow?

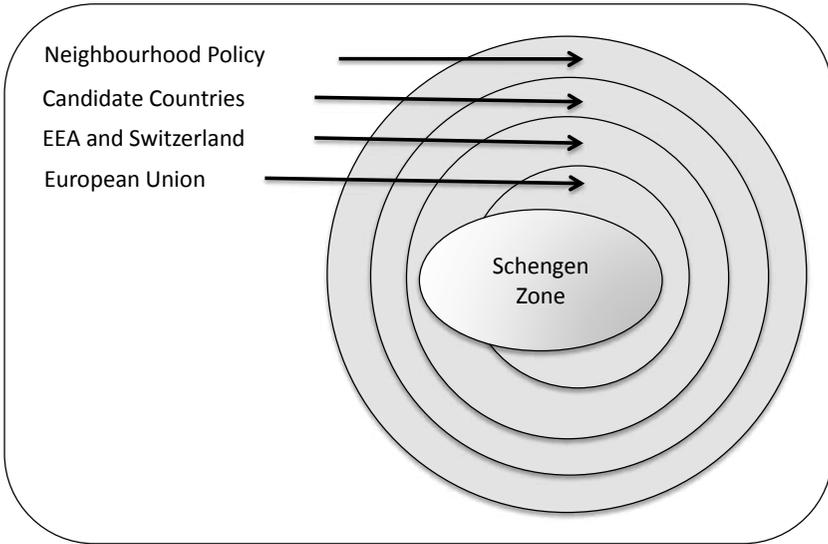
'European space' is most obviously the territory of the European Union and it is important to remember that 'transit migration' is an issue within the EU, as many EU member states have historically been transit points for migrants seeking to reach other parts of Europe and indeed many continue to be so. This is apparent at the few controlled borders within the EU, such as the informal settlements in and around the town of Calais. These points typically occur at the borders between the Schengen Zone and the EU member states situated outside Schengen (such as the UK). These are likely to change, as internal Schengen border controls are periodically re-established, as they have been between Italy and France in response to concerns around migration from Libya in April 2011. Recent enlargements of this core 'European space' have incorporated further transit points, represented by the chapters on Malta and Hungary in this volume. Yet European

space extends beyond the current external border of the EU, through the wide range of political agreements drawing surrounding countries into the European sphere of influence. We follow a hierarchical understanding of European space beyond the EU which may be imagined as a series of concentric circles (figure 1.1).

Immediately beyond EU territory sit Norway and Iceland, politically distinct, since they are not involved in the EU political institutions, but virtually an integral part of the EU from the perspective of migration through their participation in the Schengen system. Neither Norway nor Iceland are significant in terms of transit migration so we have no case studies of this section of European space. A step further from core EU space are candidates for EU membership, currently only two (Turkey and FYROM), though the EU recognises a further six 'potential' candidate countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo and Iceland). Turkey is in a special situation due to the duration of its accession negotiations, and to the widespread opposition amongst several EU member states to its final accession. Turkey is one of the most significant areas of concern to the European Commission in terms of transit migration and so an important case study for this book.

The third and final element of European space which we examine in this book is those countries which are more unlikely to become members, yet nonetheless retain a special relationship with the EU through the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). This is Europe's 'circle of friends', as Romano Prodi first described them, 16 countries who will eventually share in the basic freedoms of Europe without participating in European institutions. Migration is one of the key reasons for the importance of the EU's relationship with these countries and this is reflected in the prominence of migration in all ENP action plans and country reports.³ We consider Morocco, Egypt and Moldova; Ukraine is another relevant country and looked at from the perspective of its EU neighbour, Hungary. Indeed, it falls in-between the categories. A previous president expressed an interest in EU membership, which however, is unlikely to materialise at any time in the near future. We also consider Russia, which is not included in the ENP, though it was initially invited and is therefore considered as belonging to this division of European space by the Commission. Russia rejected membership of the ENP, since the importance of Russia's bilateral relationship with the EU (for both parties) cannot be considered as comparable with that of other ENP members.

3 Action plans and country reports for all 16 countries are available on the Commission website at http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm.

Figure 1.1 Schematic illustration of the 'European space'

As others have recognised, this understanding of levels of European space presents a fundamentally hierarchical division of territory. This division relates to the level of access that can be gained to the core European space of the EU and the imagination of this in the pattern of concentric circles translates to political and spatial proximity to the EU core. There are other parts of the world which may arguably form part of this European space, perhaps most obviously the European space inside consulates, embassies or, increasingly, private firms where visas are delivered. These and other 'remote controls' are important stages in the encounter between a non-European migrant and the European border, but they are distinct from the more directly spatial imagination of concentric zones since there is no direct access from visa delivery points to the core EU territory except through regimented channels. The reason why transit migration raises such concerns from a policy perspective is the very avoidance of these channels, and this is seen as more likely from the more immediate spatial proximity of the European Neighbourhood.

Our choice of case studies in this book is not only influenced by an interest in representing the distinct policy regimes linking each of these concentric zones to the EU but also by a desire to reflect the variety of routes taken by transit migrants. This relates to a different, more linear imagination of European space, as a 'space of flows' as much as a 'space of places' (Castells 1996), an understanding that is common to border control

agencies. In this interpretation, European space as understood above may be divided not into concentric rings but into zonal quadrants, identifying different geographical regions from which migrants originate and the nature of the barriers they have to encounter along the way. Following observations from border control agencies and common policy conceptualisations of transit migration (e.g., ICMPSD 2007) we identify four clear zones within the European space: Western Mediterranean, Central Mediterranean, Eastern Mediterranean/Middle East and Central and Eastern Europe.

The chapters which follow therefore also provide some insight into the contrasting situation in each of these zonal quadrants. With regards to Central and Eastern Europe, the chapters on Russia, Moldova and Hungary present different aspects of the policy framework and empirical context of migration in this quadrant. Turkey occupies a key position in the Eastern Mediterranean/Middle Eastern quadrant, bordering Greece and Bulgaria but also Syria, Iraq and Iran, and is in reach of Afghanistan, Eritrea and Somalia. The booming economy of Istanbul and the tourist zones of the south west of the country create the demand for migrant labour, its ports and airports are major hubs for internationally mobile populations and its proximity to some troubled parts of the world results in significant arrivals of refugees. But the rising migrant and refugee population just outside the EU's external border also provokes concerns from the EU.

In the Central Mediterranean, Libya has attracted most attention recently and has a similar mix of large-scale labour immigration, recently interpreted as an indication of significant transit migration. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasise that Libya is first and foremost a destination country for labour migrants from poorer North African and sub-Saharan African countries (Hamood 2006; Pliez 2005). Research in Libya remains extremely difficult and our case study from this region is the situation in Egypt where substantial refugee migration, besides labour migration, provides a migration connection between the conflict affected countries of Eastern and Central Africa and the Mediterranean. This is supplemented by the chapter on Malta, which, since its entry into the EU in 2004 has been seen as an important outpost in the EU's migration control system and as such has received a small but substantial number of migrants who arrive in their attempts to reach Italy or France. Finally, the Western Mediterranean quadrant describes a further distinct connection of migration systems between West and Central Africa, Algeria and Morocco, and Spain, which provides the regional case study.

Our conception of European space therefore relates to both place and flow. First, we are concerned with policy agreements and spatial proximity,

which combine to produce an imagined hierarchy of concentric spaces around the core EU space; and second, with a dynamic understanding of migration routes crossing these areas. Just as transit migration is more correctly thought of in the plural, it is obvious that this multiplicity of spaces and routes cannot be conceptualised as any kind of single homogenous 'European space'. We are really discussing many different European spaces that are produced and maintained in relation to each other in different ways. The production of this hierarchy of spaces is paradoxically reinforced by the intensified security apparatus, which has in turn driven up the rates that may be charged by smugglers or traffickers across the EU's external border and also around this neighbourhood region. The book sets out to disentangle the many themes involved in an analysis of the wide variety of practices of movement and non-movement subsumed under the label of transit migration in this patchwork of differently imagined European spaces.

1.3 Thematic analysis of transit migrations

There are a number of themes which emerge from this attention to transit migrations in European spaces which the book also aims to highlight. We identify six separate migration related issues which are brought into relief by the range of relatively new developments associated with the variety of migratory phenomena that are bundled into the single term 'transit migration'. These are humanitarian, statistical, legal, geopolitical, technological and broader conceptual concerns. The significance of these themes is an important element in the justification of transit migration as a focus of this book. They relate to a diverse array of changes in migration into and within European space over the last decade or so.

The first of these, and the most pressing concern, is the humanitarian issue posed by the very high risks involved in overland and maritime journeys. Such risks are now commonly recognised in media, policy and academic treatments of migration to Europe, though information on the numbers of individuals killed or injured during the course of their migration to Europe is inevitably tremendously uncertain. Those bodies washed ashore, found in the desert or mountains are grim testament to the number of individuals dying at sea by drowning, in the desert from dehydration or in the mountains from hypothermia. As journeys become increasingly lengthy and require much greater navigational skill, such as the passage from West Africa to the Canary Islands, or Libya to Lampedusa, death from

other causes, such as exposure or starvation, is common. Many bodies are never discovered, swept out to sea or buried by sand dunes leaving no trace. Statistics compiled by United against Racism (2013) provide evidence of more than 17,306 migrants who lost their lives in the decade 1993-2013 as a direct or indirect consequence of migration politics; almost 80 per cent of those lost their lives whilst attempting to reach Europe. These numbers seem to be increasing, though it is not clear if this is due to greater awareness and so wider reporting or if fatalities have actually increased. These estimates are shocking, but are likely to be short of the mark given that in the absence of bodies, which is the case in so many maritime incidents, it is very difficult to document the number of deaths. If we also consider those who die during a crossing of the Sahara, where information is similarly limited, the hazards of these high risk migrations to Europe may even be higher.

This uncertainty of basic data leads to our second theme of statistics. Few countries in the world collect perfect migration data, but within the EU social scientists have come to rely on officially produced migration statistics as a reasonably close approximation of reality. Notably in the field of irregular migration, FRONTEX, the 'European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union', now almost holds a monopoly on data on irregular border crossings and thus considerable discursive power and it has become highly complicated, if possible at all, to control such data. In most cases, despite their flaws, official statistics are used as if they *were* reality, receive broad consensus and are generally adequate to detect trends and fluctuations in migration. This is very different in the case of transit migrations, where no information receives such consensus. This obviously arises from the lack of basic agreement on exactly who is a transit migrant. Not only is there no consensus on basic definitions but there is no data available on any of the possible alternative meanings: individuals illegally resident in Europe; illegally resident individuals who also entered Europe illegally; illegally resident individuals in countries surrounding Europe; illegally resident individuals outside Europe who also eventually intend to reach Europe, legally or illegally; individuals beyond the immediate fringes of Europe. The centrality of intentions to understandings of transit migration means that it is not only practically very difficult to be certain of statistics (as with undocumented migration more generally) but theoretically impossible.

The only data which are certain and verifiable are the number of apprehensions of migrants, but the relationship of this number to the unknown number of migrants who evade controls is so uncertain that a fall and

a rise in apprehensions can both be interpreted as a sign of successful border control operations or a fall or rise in actual migration flows (Collyer 2008; De Haas 2007). And because migrants try to cross borders more than once in the case they are apprehended they are sometimes counted repeatedly, hence the number of apprehensions is higher than the number of individuals apprehended (Düvell & Vollmer 2009). The understanding of transit migrations as encompassing migrants who are actively engaged in attempts to reach Europe and those who may well be content to stay where they are adds to the difficulty of estimating numbers. This fact means that estimates of the number of migrants attempting to reach Europe can be easily manipulated, a fact we consider in more detail under the theme of geopolitics below. Evidence from surveys with undocumented migrants in Spain and Italy suggests that only a small minority of them (5 to 10 per cent) reached Europe in a clandestine manner.⁴ The vast majority arrived with legitimately obtained visas and overstayed. This suggests that the significant media and policy attention devoted to transit migrations outweighs their numerical significance from an EU perspective. This is important to bear in mind. Indeed our argument for the significance of transit migration does not depend on its numerical significance, but on the challenges it poses to a range of accepted principles of studying migration, in this case, reliance on data.

A further challenge posed by transit migrations and the third theme we consider here is the legal context. Legal status is significantly more varied than more easily classified forms of movement. Concern about the human cost of transit migration is expressed by the European Commission and member state governments, by governments of neighbouring countries, by international organisations, such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) or the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and most forcefully by migrants' rights and community organisations. What differs across this range of interest groups is the explanation given for the high incidence of migrant fatalities and with it the possible legal remedies to reduce the risks of migration. For many civil society groups it is migration legislation itself which is at the root of the regular tragic

4 The Spanish Police Union (*Sindicato Unificado de Policia*) reported that only 5 per cent of undocumented migrants to Spain arrived by boat in 2006, compared to 80 per cent who arrived at Madrid or Barcelona airports (*El Pais* 4 January 2007). Similarly, according to Italian police data only 10 per cent of undocumented migrants in Italy had entered the country by sea (cited in Cuttitta 2005). The survey of 2,200 migrants from Morocco or Senegal to Spain and Egypt or Ghana to Italy by the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI) found that, of those who reported illegal residence, 58 per cent had overstayed visas (Schoorl et al. 2000).

incidents at the land and sea borders of Europe. According to this argument, the displacement effect of increasingly strict controls on air travellers, since the late 1980s, initiated the rise in overland migrations. As border controls on the shorter routes, such as across the Straits of Gibraltar, have intensified, migrants put themselves in greater danger to avoid them, for example through the gradual migration of departure points down the North West coast of Africa from Tangier to Dakar and eastward to the Algerian, Tunisian and Libyan coastlines. In a limited number of cases border control officials have actually been directly responsible for migrant deaths. This was the case in September 2005 at the borders of Ceuta and Melilla, when 16 migrants died. On the Eastern European land borders, however, very few deaths are reported and increased border controls have not resulted in fatalities. Another issue that raises concerns of humanitarian organisations is the treatment of the apprehended migrants, notably detention conditions, which in Libya, Turkey and Ukraine are reported to be often inhumane.

The argument that border control causes migrant deaths is rejected by the European Commission and member states who point, rather, to the development of smuggling and trafficking operations as the main culprit; indeed members of the European border control organisation, FRONTEX, cite incidents where border control officials have actually saved migrants stranded at sea. The policy priority is therefore to stamp out migrant smuggling and trafficking operations and to develop partnerships with neighbouring states to facilitate this. This polarisation of explanations with governments on the one side and civil society on the other is slightly over-simplified and there are plenty of examples when the complexity of the issues is acknowledged by both sides. The European Commission and Parliament, in particular, have been quick to acknowledge incidents when border control officials appear to have been responsible for migrant deaths, such as Ceuta and Melilla in 2005. The EU also accepts some criticism of the detention facilities in certain neighbouring countries and through various programmes invests in improving these, as in Ukraine. Nevertheless the debate is taking place between questions of security and sovereign control over borders and migrants' rights and protection needs on the other. In this debate, international organisations have tried to identify actions involving a compromise between respecting state sovereignty and supporting migrants' welfare. IOM's 'Stranded Migrant Facility' is one example of this more pragmatic approach. It was established in 2005 to return migrants who applied and who were unable to either continue or return unassisted and particularly operates in countries around Europe. UNHCR's emphasis on 'protection sensitive borders' is another approach which recognises that

border controls and detention are an integral part of the state system, but attempts to prevent individuals with a claim to protection being completely shut out by the difficulty of even reaching EU territory.

In addition to legal aspects of migration control, a further trend that we may associate with transit migrations is the development of new technologies, the fourth theme we wish to consider. These technologies encompass both border control technologies and the technology employed by migrants in order to evade border controls and navigate in hostile environments. Some research has focused on the historic antecedents for modern movements in trans-Saharan trade routes or (pre-) Soviet migration patterns (Bensaad 2005). These examples are useful to focus attention on key elements of the landscape which may be favourable to migration, such as oases or easily negotiated valleys, but beyond these the context has changed radically from the pre-state organisation of territory into spheres of influence of shifting empires.

Borders themselves are of course one element of change,⁵ but even where physical borders have much longer histories, the application of technology in their control has expanded considerably over the last decade (CCTV, motion sensors, radar and thermal imaging, unmanned patrol vehicles and satellites are also deployed). Negotiating these borders, as migrants from sub-Saharan Africa or Central Asia must do if they are to get close to European space, can be a difficult process. In some cases borders are reinforced by natural hazards, such as a trans-Sahara journey. Other land borders are easier to cross, as between Ukraine and Hungary; there the main issue is not any natural obstacles though occasionally people get lost in the forests and mountains. The main obstacles are first, intelligence, as conducted by the secret service; second, internal controls along the routes towards the border region; and third, border guard patrols and technology-based policing on the borders. This represents an echelon of controls combining intelligence and enforcement as well as a combination of physical and technical and remote controls. Therefore, most migrants in the Eastern quadrant require the service of smugglers from the day they arrive in Europe, for instance in Moscow, in order to navigate these obstacles.

5 Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for highlighting this point. This varies from some areas of North Africa where borders have arisen relatively recently (as in the case of the border between Western Sahara and Mauritania, gradually imposed from the mid-1970s) to fixed borders which have seen dramatic strategic changes over a similar period, such as the borders between Hungary or Slovakia and Ukraine following the collapse of the USSR and then the accession of the former Soviet bloc countries to the EU.

Since the late 1990s some of this has begun to change. While having much deeper historical roots in the trans-Saharan trade, migration of nomads, traders and refugees to Mauritania, Algeria and Libya since the 1970s set the stage for contemporary trans-Saharan migration. Against the background of economic decline and warfare in West and Central Africa, Libya's new 'pan-African' immigration contributed to a major increase in trans-Saharan labour migration over the 1990s. Since 2000, a major anti-immigrant backlash in Libya has contributed to a diversification of trans-Saharan migration routes and the increasing presence of migrants in other Maghreb countries (De Haas 2007). Confronted with a persistent demand for irregular migrant labour in Europe, more and more sub-Saharan, mostly West African, migrants started to cross the Mediterranean. Illegal crossings of the Mediterranean by North Africans have been a persistent phenomenon since Italy and Spain introduced visa requirements in the early 1990s. The major change has been that, since 2000, sub-Saharan Africans have started to join North Africans (De Haas 2007).

In addition, technological changes and infrastructure development have encouraged migration along new routes. Handheld GPS devices are now no more expensive than a mobile phone, mobile phones can be used to communicate during the entire crossing of the Sahara, as signals are more widely transmitted and desert towns such as Tamanrasset in Algeria now have facilities to receive instant financial transfers, so migrants with family in Europe, or even support in their country of origin, can receive resources for onward movement. This implies that an increasing number of people now aspire and are also able to make the trans-Saharan journey, if they have access to only a few hundred Euros. Although various other costs along the journey may inflate this considerably, it remains well below the tens of thousands of Euros required for direct smuggling to Europe and makes these migrations attractive to those who wish to try to get work in North Africa and may have no ambition to move on to Europe. The development of increasingly rigid migration controls is therefore only one factor provoking the instigation of these migrations. Navigating the eastern borders instead mostly requires communication equipment; smugglers require informants, mobile phones and handheld radios to obtain information on the physical and technical obstacles so that these can be circumvented.

The fifth theme highlighted by transit migrations is the new geopolitical significance of migration. The relationship between the European Union and neighbouring states has always been important, but, with very few exceptions (such as Russia), the relationship has always been much more important for the neighbouring states than for the EU. For example, in 2008

63 per cent of Morocco's exports went to the EU but only 1 per cent of the EU's exports went to Morocco (EC 2009). This imbalance creates a strongly asymmetric relationship as most neighbouring states are far more economically dependent on the EU than the EU is on them. The development of transit migrations through these countries to the EU, however, has provided many neighbouring states with valuable bargaining power in their relations with the EU. States such as Morocco and Algeria for instance, located on overland routes from West Africa to Europe, have so far resisted growing pressure from the EU to sign new readmission agreements.

These countries already accept the return of their own nationals found to be residing illegally in any EU member state, but they are now being asked to accept the return of individuals from other countries who are believed to have migrated through Morocco or Algeria. Such an agreement would manifestly not be in the interests of either Morocco or Algeria but blanket deportations to either country would be attractive for several EU member states, particularly for the Spanish and French governments. The European Commission, which is now responsible for negotiating such readmission agreements, is very keen to conclude negotiations, but although EU budgets for training of border control officials and other migration management-related technologies in Morocco, for example, have increased substantially, they have not yet been able to put together a sufficiently persuasive package. Libya has been even more successful at transforming its strategic location into resources from Europe. The widely quoted claim of the Libyan government that there were two million sub-Saharan Africans in Libya 'waiting' to come to Europe was widely seen as an exaggeration. There has always been a substantial immigrant population in Libya and this claim simply reclassified all of them into a 'transit migration' category. Yet, though the claim was largely fictitious, the Italian government has nevertheless made very considerable investment in Libya, in terms of detention centre infrastructure, training and equipment.

With Ukraine, however, such a readmission came into force in 2010 and after a two-year transition period during which only Ukrainian nationals were returned. The concessions made to Ukraine are (a) to assist the country in introducing a migration management system including detention centres and (b) to liberalise the visa regime for Ukrainian citizens; so far, the latter has not materialised and numbers of non-national returnees are low. Hence, Ukraine has used this agreement to modernise its migration control system, which is in the interest of the country without accepting larger numbers of returnees from the EU. Turkey, situated on the main route from some troubled regions in the Middle East and East Africa, is also lobbied by the EU

and in particular by Greece to accept readmission of irregular immigrants of various nationalities who have entered the EU from Turkey. But by 2013 still no such policy had been implemented and since Turkey's membership application has been put on hold for so long, one might wonder why the government should comply with EU wishes.

These themes all combine into our sixth and final consideration, the conceptual significance of transit migrations. Migration has always been considered as a relatively simple transfer from a country of origin to a country of destination, though this has never been considered unproblematic from the migrants' perspective. To some extent this was a reasonably accurate portrayal of migrant experiences of the immediate post-Second World War generation, when travel was becoming quicker and less expensive and their concerns were focused on what would happen when they arrived. Contemporary migration theory is rooted in this period, from approximately 1945 to 1975, though the migration experience of these decades is actually particularly unrepresentative of migration patterns before and after this time. When journeys were longer and more convoluted there was always the possibility that something could happen along the way to force a change of plans. For the loose range of experiences subsumed under the transit migration label, that experience of travel is again the case. Even those migrants who have a destination in mind when they leave may never get there and our own research suggests that this is probably not even a majority of migrants. In this sense, we see a linear logic is something that is imposed from the outside rather than something which reflects the experience of migrants themselves. The creation of 'transit migration' is a symptom of this trend, following the logic that since every migration has a pre-defined beginning and end, anything that falls in between is simply 'transit'. The experiences of migrants on these journeys belie this simple characterisation and suggest that we should pay much greater attention to the journey itself, to the responses to their the experiences in the various countries in which people spent some time and the dynamic decision-making processes of people once they have left their country of origin. The papers collected in this book set out to do just that.

1.4 Papers in this collection

In the following chapter, Ahmet İçduygu and Deniz Sert consider transit migration in Turkey. The chapter considers many years of relevant fieldwork and access to unpublished border control statistics. These provide a detailed

picture of the evolving nature of migration to and through what is, from the perspective of the EU, one of the most strategically significant migration crossroads anywhere in the world. Following this detailed statistical presentation İçduygu considers this migration from two important perspectives. First, they examine the migrants' perspective, characterising Turkey as an 'environment of uncertainty' when faced with border control agents of various countries and traffickers and smugglers. They then turn to consider migration from the perspective of the Turkish state, characterised as an 'environment of insecurity', looking at the range of readmission agreements signed by Turkey as a way of using international relations to resolve these problems of insecurity. They conclude by arguing that both perspectives are necessary if we are to understand the nature of this highly politically charged migration.

In chapter 3, Mulki Al-Sharmani examines migration trends to and from Egypt by Sudanese, Somali, Iraqi and other refugees. Although constituting a large segment of long-term migrants in Egypt, many refugees are deprived of basic resources that would enable them to establish stable and settled communities. This chapter questions the assumption that most of these refugees are transit migrants on their way to the West and therefore only to be considered as temporary. Al-Sharmani argues that a considerable number of these refugees have lived in Egypt for a decade or more and that only few of them actually resettle in the West. The analysis exemplifies the complexity of their multiple and subsequent movements which defy simple notions of them being 'in transit'. Some Somali and Sudanese refugees first migrated to other countries in Africa and the Middle East before moving to Egypt. Many Somali émigrés in Egypt were refugees in the Middle East and Africa, and resettled in the West, where they often obtained citizenship. Over the past decade, these North American and European Somalis have been increasingly relocating to Egypt, thus their movement to Egypt even turns out to be circular. Al-Sharmani argues that this highlights that the term 'transit migrant' fails to capture important aspects of migratory experiences of refugees in Egypt.

Mehdi Alioua, in chapter 4, provides a geographically influenced analysis of the situation in Morocco, since the generalisation of the visa regime across the Schengen area in the 1990s, followed by the restrictions on issuing visas, established a barrier for many Africans wishing to migrate directly to Europe. He identifies staged transnational migration, which he refers to as 'transmigration', as one solution to avoid these new difficulties. Staged migration involves opening or reopening new migratory routes from sub-Saharan Africa, through the Maghreb, to Europe. These new

stopovers in the Maghreb have continued to serve as migratory staging posts for newcomers and they have a social history which has gradually become a part of migratory trajectories. Alioua's study of the sub-Saharan transmigrants' transnational networks therefore asks how we should see the creation of unrestricted spatial configurations produced by these moving populations, but situates this within a geopolitical context where the borders are not as porous as the term 'transnational' would suggest. In response to this, the notion of a stopover, seen simultaneously as an observation location, a methodological framework and an analytical tool, seems much more relevant than the notion of 'transit migration', which is too restrictive from the space-time point of view. In his chapter, Alioua develops and illustrates this idea, working from the example of Moroccan stopovers in the transmigration of sub-Saharan Africans.

In chapter 5, Cetta Mainwaring examines migration and migration policy in Malta and its new role as an island in the middle of a transit zone of migration. Having joined the EU in 2004 and having seen an increase in 'boat people' arriving on the island since 2002, Malta has become an EU watch tower, a state that now has the power to act as a barrier to the mixed migration flows traversing the Mediterranean Sea. In this context, this chapter examines the changing policies and politics of migration in Malta, since joining the EU. It focuses on the relationship between Malta and the EU and how this has influenced policies on the island, as well as the relationship between Malta and Libya, another transit point for migrants in the Southern Mediterranean. We turn then to look at the implications of these changes for the mixed flows of irregular migrants arriving in Malta, especially the new strategies they must pursue in order to overcome the impediments to mobility created by EU and Maltese policies. The chapter concludes in looking at public and media discourses.

Irina Ivakhnyuk, in chapter 6, deals with migration patterns that have emerged after the collapse of the USSR. Notably Russia is found to play an important role in the journeys of migrants and refugees. The chapter also focuses on some major changes around the turn of the millennium. First and foremost, Russia is a major destination country that is an equally important destination country as the EU. But whilst some features attract and facilitate migration to the country, others facilitate on-migration. Ivakhnyuk demonstrates that what is understood as 'transit migration' is indeed intimately linked with other forms of migration, such as student mobility, as well as labour migration. Chinese migration is used as a case study. Second, the chapter analyses governance of migration in Russia and the wider Eurasian space and its consequences for migration processes.

Indeed, international migration in Eurasia is less regulated than the Central and Western European space and the boundaries between the two spaces. Indeed, the borders of Russia are characterised as 'asymmetric', referring to relatively liberal arrangements in terms of entry from the South and East but relatively strict regimes in terms of exit to the West. Therefore, as the chapter suggests, smuggling networks are important institutions that facilitate on-migration to the West.

In chapter 7, Irina Molodikova concentrates on one of the new member states of the EU, Hungary and its non-EU neighbours to the East and South, notably Ukraine and Serbia. When the socialist system collapsed Hungary introduced liberal entry policies; as a consequence it attracted immigrants from the former Soviet neighbourhood, but began to also play the role of a transit corridor from East to the West. Even though Hungary adapted to the legal norms of the EU and subsequently became member of the Schengen space of migration control, its special relations with countries that host Hungarian minorities seem to undermine these otherwise strict regimes and facilitate irregular (transit) migration from more distant countries to Hungary as well as other EU countries. This chapter analyses migrants' journeys across the various borders of Hungary, life in refugee centres and migrants' migration strategies. It uses statistical data and interviews with different actors in the migration field: smugglers, migrants, refugees, human rights experts, police and politicians, and thus highlight the peculiarities of transit migration.

In chapter 8, Valerii Mosneaga takes the perspective of a small and poor agricultural sending country and addresses the issues of migration of Moldovan citizens. Indeed, up to a third of its working-age population is working abroad, often in an irregular situation. The major destinations, however, are not their neighbouring but various more distant countries in the Russian Federation and the European Union. Due to travel, immigration and employment restrictions, these cannot always be easily and legally reached. Therefore, Moldovan citizens frequently travel through other countries in order to get to their final destination. Often, as this empirically rich article illustrates, migration is irregular and facilitated by agencies and more or less unlawful services. Occasionally, Moldova too is transited by refugees and migrants aiming to get to another country. This chapter will mostly concentrate on transit migration of Moldovan and other citizens on their way to the EU. It is based on various qualitative and quantitative research projects, which contribute to the better understanding of the phenomenon of irregular transitional migration in its institutional and human dimensions.

Finally, in chapter 9, Franck Düvell summarises as well as contextualises the findings presented in these case studies. He returns to some of the themes raised in this introduction. The chapter examines the implications of transit migration for both the control and the study of migration. It argues that transit migration increases the geopolitical significance of the EU's relations with its immediate neighbours, that it poses new control and protection challenges and it questions established migration categories. Nevertheless, suggestions are made to preserve the category of transit migration but simultaneously fine-tune and apply it more rigidly.

The papers collected in this book make an important contribution to disentangling the range of issues that are brought together by the term 'transit migration'. At the moment the relationship between, for example, the statistical claims made by states such as Libya about the number of migrants attempting to reach Europe and the geopolitical significance of undocumented migration in the Euro-Mediterranean region are extremely difficult to separate. Similarly, the contribution of increasingly rigid migration controls at the European border and the greater ease of movement beyond those borders facilitated by access to cheaper technologies have not been clearly distinguished in previous treatments of these issues. In this introductory chapter, we have tried to show how these themes challenge preconceptions about migration in European space and how, in the absence of greater clarity, we find it useful to think in terms of 'transit migrations', at least for the moment. The overviews of each of the papers in this final section demonstrate how the new empirical research which they present may start to clarify the relationship between these various themes and work towards a more sophisticated theoretical basis for considering the many 'transit migrations' which are discussed.

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