

Helpdesk Research Report: Migrants/Diaspora and Integration

Date: 10/03/08

Query: Please identify research on how the involvement of migrants/disapora communities in the development of their countries of origin impacts on their integration into their host societies.

Enquirer: DFID UK

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1. Overview and Definitions

There is a fair amount of literature that addresses the involvement of migrants and diasporas in their countries of origin; and the integration and social inclusion of migrants and diasporas in their host countries. There is less material that considers these two aspects together. Still, rising interest in the area of 'transnationalism <u>and</u> integration' has resulted in an increase in research studies in recent years.

Most of these studies find that migrant/diaspora involvement in their home countries is not a threat to their integration in host countries; rather transnationalism and integration can comfortably coexist. Further, some studies have found that transnationalism and integration often go hand-in-hand; and that the former can have a positive impact on the latter. Often, it is well established (socio-economically and politically) migrants and diaspora communities who are involved in economic and political development projects in their countries of origin, independently or through membership in immigrant organisations/hometown associations. In addition, economic remittances to home countries has resulted in financial integration in host societies as the need to transfer money compels senders to open bank accounts and learn about financial services in their host countries. Other studies have highlighted how transnational activities, such as earning extra income through transnational ventures; and feeling connected to family and friends in their home countries, can help poorer are more 'socially excluded' migrants and diaspora communities cope with living in their host country. Such coping strategies can help migrants and diaspora communities feel more confident in engaging and integrating with others in their host countries.

Recent studies have also emphasised the importance of examining not just the willingness *but* also the ability of migrants and diaspora communities to integrate. Hence, problems of social exclusion must also be addressed by host countries.

Definitions:

Transnationalism - a key social scientific concept referring to how migrants' lives are lived with significant reference to places and people located both abroad (in homelands or elsewhere in the diaspora) and in their place of settlement.

-- Vertovec, S., 2007 (see 'Key Documents')

Migrant transnationalism - the process whereby social actors who have migrated maintain active ties with their homelands, or across national borders through participation in religious, social, cultural, economic, and political networks and processes.

Transnational activities may take various forms, including:

- social (regular contact with relatives and friends back home, travel for family occasions, etc.);
- cultural (e.g. celebrating ethnic, religious or national holidays associated with the home country);
- religious (e.g. maintaining religious identities and practices associated with specific leaders or institutions based in the home country or region, economic support for faithbased projects and organisations);
- economic (family remittances, collective remittances, investment, owning a home or property "back home");
- political (voting, raising funds for parties or social movements, lobbying the host government regarding homeland issues).
- -- Goldring, L., Henders, S. J. and Vandergeest, P., 2003

Integration - just as transnationalism is comprised of many different processes and activities, integration is also a complex concept. One expert notes that it has many dimensions – social, cultural, economic etc. and tends to be defined differently, even among countries in the EU.

Social inclusion - the ability of migrants fully to participate in the civic life of host countries, such as through employment rights, political participation, access to social services, rights to form associations, and freedom from discrimination.

-- Goldring, L., Henders, S. J. and Vandergeest, P., 2003

<u>Note</u>: 'Social inclusion' and 'integration' are similar concepts in the literature; however, while 'social inclusion' refers to the *ability* of migrants to be involved in their host countries, 'integration' refers more to the *willingness* of migrants to be involved in their host countries. 'Incorporation' and 'assimilation' are also used in this query to represent these concepts.

2. Key Documents

General

 Vertovec, S., 2007, 'New Complexities of Cohesion in Britain: Super-Diversity, Transnationalism and Civil-Integration', Commission on Integration and Cohesion: http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/socialchange/research/social-change/summer-workshops/documents/newcomplexitiesofcohesioninbritain.pdf

This report examines the transnational engagement of migrants - at social, cultural, economic and political levels – and notes that levels of engagement vary among migrants. Moreover, the report stresses that 'belonging, loyalty and sense of attachment' are not a zero-sum game: "the 'more transnational' a person is does not automatically mean the 'less integrated' they are, and the 'less integrated' does not necessarily prompt or strengthen the 'more transnational' patterns of association. While migrants continue to feel powerfully bound to homelands and communities elsewhere, they are now more able to maintain and enhance these feelings while at the same time are quite capable of developing a new life, livelihood, social ties and political interests in their places of settlement" (p. 5). The report provides a useful review of earlier studies that have looked at migrants, transnationalism and integration. These include:

➤ Itzigsohn and Giorguli-Saucedo (CEIP, 2005): they conclude that "the same factors that promote incorporation – i.e. exposure to American life, increased socioeconomic status – also promote transnational participation. On the other hand, factors that hinder the process of incorporation, namely the encounter with the American racial systems, also push immigrants toward transnational participation" (p. 21).

- > Snel, Engbersen and Leerkes (2006): they found that "transnational activities occur both among migrants with good and with marginalized social positions (in terms of educational level and labour market participation) in the host society" (p. 22).
- Jayaweera et al. (COMPAS, 2007): their findings indicate that when "immigrants feel well plugged into a field of interactions whether in the UK or spanning a place of origin, this may well provide a sense of confidence to engage yet other people and spaces. If, on the contrary, exclusion from interaction in the UK or place of origin is felt, this may work to mitigate propensities to engage further" (p. 22).
- Goldring, L., Henders, S. J. and Vandergeest, P., 2003, 'The Politics of Transnational Ties: Implications for Policy, Research, and Communities', YCAR-CERLAC Workshop Report, 7-8 March, York University, Toronto: http://www.yorku.ca/ycar/workshop/workshop/marrative_report.pdf
 http://www.yorku.ca/ycar/workshop/narrative_report.pdf

This report synthesises the outcomes of a workshop on transnationalism of migrants in Canada. It stresses the need to move away from suspicion that transnationalism is a security threat or that it indicates a lack of commitment to civic life in Canada; and to engage instead in more nuanced research and understanding of its implications. It emphasises that 'transnational livelihood strategies' are often integral to alleviating human insecurity in Canada and in home countries. It recommends that more attention should be paid to the social exclusion/inclusion of migrants (in terms of immigration policies, rights protection, labour market/employment policies and settlement services). It notes that exclusion/inclusion in the host country can impact on the level of transnational activities: e.g. the lack of recognition of the employment credentials of middle-class professional migrants pushes some of them to maintain residence in Canada while seeking employment abroad. The report also stresses that migrant transnationalism can support Canadian foreign policy goals (particularly, the promotion of human rights and human security). It highlights the importance of exploring the various ways in which this can be achieved.

 Sherrell, K. and Hyndman, J., 2006, 'Global Minds, Local Bodies: Kosovar Transnational Connections Beyond British Columbia', Refuge, vol. 23, no. 1, pp: 76-96: https://www.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/refuge/article/viewFile/7016/6200

This study explores the quality and distinctiveness of transnational links of Kosovar refugees, who arrived in British Columbia (BC) after 1999, and their implications for settlement and integration in Canada. It finds that Kosovars who took part in the study were committed to obtaining Canadian citizenship and viewed integration as "becoming Canadian" while still maintaining Kosovar identity and culture. The study concludes that "the transnational linkages Kosovars in BC maintain with Kosovo/a do not necessarily detract from their 'integration' in Canada. Continued uncertainty in Kosovo/a may in fact hasten settlement in Canada" (p. 17).

 Hooshiyar, K., 2003, 'Transnational Solidarities and Newcomer Incorporation in Canada', Preliminary Report, Centre for Refugee Studies, York University: available at: http://www.yorku.ca/cohesion/publications.htm

The preliminary report looks at Kurdish newcomer (refugees and immigrants) incorporation and social cohesion in Canada. It finds that transnational links and practices can have both a positive and negative impact in integration: "Non-political transnational links such as cultural, social, and economic contacts usually play a positive role in Kurdish incorporation into Canadian society. Economic contacts with families, for example, in such forms as sending money back home (remittances) would bring a peace of mind for the sender (positive psychological effects) and, at the same time, help that person to become and be a part of the work force; hence, incorporation into the economic life of the host country. Communication links with friends and families in the country of origin through such methods as written correspondence, internet/email, telephone contacts, etc., would also help Kurdish newcomers' incorporation into the Canadian society more likely. This is mainly because of the fact that these linkages make them feel not so apart from their loved ones and help them to keep in touch with and vicariously share in everyday life in the homeland [...] Political transnational links, however,

do not always advance the cause of integration and incorporation. It is highly likely that a person who is affiliated with a home-based political organization is more concerned about the politics of the country of origin than that of the host country" (pp. 9-10).

 Dorais, L.J., 2003, 'From Refugees to Transmigrants: The Vietnamese in Canada' Preliminary Report, presented at the 8th International Metropolis Conference, September, Vienna: available at: http://www.yorku.ca/cohesion/publications.htm

This preliminary report looks at Vietnamese migrants in Canada, who arrived as refugees in the 1970s. It states that they "genuinely wish to participate as best they can in mainstream economy and society". At the same time, they are concerned with their home country politically and socially. They remain connected to their ancestral culture and their family, many of whom are in Vietnam and elsewhere. This generates transnational activities, which may be economic (money remittances and parcel gifts), social (letters, phone calls and visits to relatives and friends) and cultural (Vietnamese music, food etc. imported from Vietnam or elsewhere). The report also notes that several young Vietnamese Canadians wish to spend time in Vietnam, working for international development projects.

Political and Normative Integration

 Portes, A., Escobar, C. and Arana, R., 2007, 'Bridging the Gap: Transnational and Ethnic Organisations in the Political Incorporation of Immigrants in the United States', Princeton University: http://cmd.princeton.edu/papers/wp0705.pdf

This study addresses concerns that immigrant organisations, especially those of a transnational character, may hinder the political integration of recent Latin American migrants to the United States. It investigates Colombian, Dominican and Mexican organisations in the U.S. and finds almost no perceived conflict between transnational activism and political incorporation. It notes that most organisations maintain close ties with U.S. political authorities and engage in a number of U.S.-focused civic and political activities. The study provides general conclusions from its findings:

- "Transnational ties are strong and many immigrant organizations are fiercely dedicated to promoting the welfare of communities in the countries that they left behind. However, leaders of these organisations can see no contradiction between pursuing these goals and a process of successful integration into American society (i.e. U.S. citizenship and voting) [...]
- The distinction between transnational and domestically-oriented organizations with which the project started is overstated. Most organizations engage in a mix of activities and the original distinction is of no use in predicting leaders' beliefs or organizational involvement in U.S. politics.
- ➤ On the contrary, the type of activities to which an organization is dedicated has a significant effect on incorporation, with civic/cultural associations initiating a much greater number of U.S.-oriented civic and political activities.
- Factors identified by the empirical literature as predictors of individual-level transnationalism play a comparable role with respect to attitudes and activities of organizations. Those with a better-educated and better-established membership are significantly more likely to endorse a pro-integrative stance and to involve themselves in civic and political activities.
- > Notable differences exist, however, between the three immigrant nationalities" (p.29).
- Portes, A., Escobar, C. and Arana, R., 2007, 'Divided or Convergent Loyalties? A
 Report on the Political Incorporation of Latin American Immigrants in the United States',
 Princeton University: http://cmd.princeton.edu/papers/wp0704.pdf

This study examines whether home country linkages and loyalties of Latin American immigrants hinder their social and political incorporation in the U.S. (i.e. their citizenship acquisition, learning of American values, and involvement in the political life of their adopted country). It confirms the findings made in their study above – that immigrant transnationalism does not necessarily have 'disintegrative' consequences. It repeats the conclusions cited above.

 North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, 2006, 'Social Remittances of the African Diasporas in Europe: Case Studies: Netherlands and Portugal', Migration and Co-Development:

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/nscentre/Resources%5CPublications%5CSocial_Remittances_August2006_en.pdf

The paper stresses the importance of looking not only at financial remittances to migrants' home countries, but also at 'social remittances'. Social remittances are defined in the paper as: "ideas, practices, mind-sets, world views, values and attitudes, norms of behaviour and social capital (knowledge, experience and expertise) that the Diasporas mediate and consciously or unconsciously transfer from host to home countries" (p. 12). It notes that African diasporas obtain social remittances through various ways, which include formal education and training in the knowledge institutions of their host countries; professional expertise in work places in their host countries; the internalising of new social values, attitudes and norms of behaviour through acculturation and socialisation with their host societies; and the creation of vast transnational networks that link their new residences with their homelands. The paper then explains the ways in which African diaspora transfer such social remittances to Africa. This can be through home visits, conversations with family and friends back home, facilitation of transnational business ventures, and participation in organised online forums. "Furthermore, the African diaspora transfer their social remittances by helping positive political forces at home to make contact with important and powerful political networks abroad. Some diaspora interviewed said they are members of the established political parties in the Netherlands. This strategic position enables them to facilitate valuable networks for the political parties in the homeland through the established political parties with which they are affiliated in the Netherlands (p.19)". The paper recommends that greater research is needed on the ways in which diaspora gain and transfer It also emphasises that diaspora communities should be politically 'social remittances'. integrated in host countries as "the right to vote and be elected in the host countries can be a positive sign for the home countries for the endorsement of an effective, responsible, transparent, accountable and democratic system of governance in Africa. It is therefore important that governments create new policies and legislation that increase the participation of the communities. Although immigrants contribute in societies through their precious labour and in civil society in their associations, it seems determinant that they could also contribute politically" (p. 33).

Socioeconomic and Financial Integration

 Marcelli, E. A. and Lowell, B. L., 2005, 'Transnational Twist: Pecuniary Remittances and the Socioeconomic Integration of Authorised and Unauthorised Mexican Immigrants in Los Angeles County', International Migration Review, vol. 39, no. 1, pp. 69-102: available via: http://cat.inist.fr/?aModele=afficheN&cpsidt=16698024

This study explores the relationship between remittances and Mexican immigrant integration in the United States; and the concerns that recent Mexican immigrants are the least likely to integrate easily in the U.S. – abstaining from community investments (i.e. housing). The study finds that although Mexican immigrants are more likely to remit money the less socially and economically integrated they are, this does not affect their community investment: "Contrary to straight-line assimilation theories and more consistent with a transnational or nonlinear perspective ... remittances are also estimated to have been positively related to immigrant homeownership in Los Angeles County" (abstract).

 Orozco, M. et al., 2005, 'Diasporas, Development and Transnational Integration: Ghanaians in the U.S., U.K. and Germany', Report commissioned by Citizen International through USAID, Institute for the Study of International Migration and Inter-American Dialogue:

http://www.microfinance-

platform.eu/mmp/online/website/menu vert/wg/888/893/file 6782/ghanaian transnation alism.pdf

This study explores the relationship of Ghanaian migrants, in the U.S., the U.K and Germany, with their home country. While remittances are the primary component of their economic involvement with Ghana, they are also involved in visiting the country, tourism, calling relatives, buying home country goods and belonging to hometown associations. The study finds that Ghanaians have financial interests not only in their country of origin, but also in their current place of residence – including bank accounts, mortgage loans and credit cards. They stretch their resources not only for themselves but to provide support to family members. The study also discusses the role of hometown associations, which brings together Ghanaian migrants and facilitates collective investment in local development in Ghana. The authors recommend that a diaspora outreach office should be established in order to promote recognition of diaspora communities and cooperation in addressing key issues and in investment initiatives. This they argue would help to achieve the end goals of building confidence among the diaspora and incorporating them as citizens.

 Orozco, M., Forthcoming 2008, 'Chapter 10. Diasporas and Development: Issues and Impediments' in J. Brinkerhoff and L. Rienner, eds., Diasporas and International Development: Exploring the Potential: see attachment 'Orozco'

This report discusses the ways in which diasporas remain involved economically with their home country. Remittances are the most important activity. Other activities include demand of services such as telecommunication, consumer goods, or travel; capital investment; and charitable donations to philanthropic organisations raising funds for the migrant's home community. Of particular relevance to this query is the section on "Development Initiatives *in* the Diaspora" (p. 21 onward). It discusses various initiatives introduced to assist with remittances, which in turn have facilitated financial integration of diasporas in their host country. These include financial and education support services aimed at helping immigrants access the U.S. banking system. These have resulted in over 50,000 new bank accounts in approximately 6 months by formerly 'unbanked' customers and over 35,000 immigrants participating in education classes or workshops.

 McIlwaine, C., 2007, 'Living in Latin London: How Latin American Migrants Survive in the City', Queen Mary, University of London: http://www.geog.gmul.ac.uk/staff/pdf/mcilwaine2007.pdf

This report documents a project which used a livelihoods framework to explore how recent Latin American migrants cope with living in London, including their economic, social and cultural strategies. It reports that some migrants are engaged in entrepreneurial activities, such as setting up small shops and services for the Latin community (including a small 'remittance shop'), which act as primary and supplementary sources of income. The project also found that an important coping strategy involved the maintenance of linkages with home countries, mainly through communication with family and friends and remittances. [For further discussion, see Dr. McIlwaine's remarks in the 'Expert Comments' section.]

 McIlwaine, C., 2005, 'Coping Practices Among Columbian Migrants in London', Queen Mary, University of London: http://www.geog.gmul.ac.uk/staff/pdf/colombian.pdf

This project looked at Columbian migrants in London and their economic, social and cultural coping strategies. It found that some migrants took on extra income-generating activities to raise extra funds. The report includes the example of one entrepreneurial migrant who set up a business importing designer jeans from Colombia in the smaller sizes needed by many Colombians. [For further discussion, see Dr. McIlwaine's remarks in the 'Expert Comments' section.]

3. Additional Resources

DFID-Related Materials

The following are a series of documents concerning diaspora communities and their role in development.

African Foundation for Development (AFFORD), 2000, 'Globalisation and Development:
 A Diaspora Dimension', AFFORD's Submission to DFID's White Paper on Globalisation and Development:

http://www.afford-uk.org/documents/DownloadArea/diaspora dimension.pdf

This submission includes AFFORD's comments on DFID's draft Globalisation and Development White Paper. It states: "The conditions under which diaspora groups exist within the UK shape to significant degrees their propensity and capacity to contribute to development in their regions of origin. Diaspora with access to jobs that reflect their educational attainment, skills and experience, the ability to travel freely, and an overall degree of integration within the host society will be able to play more effective roles as development players than those marginalised and stigmatised by laws, policies and hostile public opinion" (p. 17).

- Hear, N. V., Pieke, F., and Vertovec, S., 2004, 'The Contribution of UK-based Diasporas to Development and Poverty Reduction', A report by the ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), University of Oxford for the Department for International Development:
 http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/publications/DfID%20report%20summary.shtml
- Newland, K. and Patrick, E., 2004, 'Beyond Remittances: The Role of Diaspora in Poverty Reduction in their Countries of Origin', A Scoping Study by the Migration Policy Institute for the Department of International Development: www.livelihoods.org/hot_topics/docs/MPIDiaspora.doc

Social Cohesion and International Migration in a Globalising Era Project

http://www.vorku.ca/cohesion/

Strategic Research Project Funded by: Social Research Council of Canada (2002-2005) Headed by: Prof. Michael Lanphier, Senior Scholar, Department of Sociology; Deputy Director, Centre for Refugee Studies, York University.

The following is taken from the site:

"This project analyses the relationship between: Transnational practices and institutions (including initiatives led by home states and parties, as well as migrant groups), Canadian policies, institutions and organizations, and social, economic and political modes of incorporation in Canada. This project will provide a comparative analysis of groups whose displacement was prompted by political upheaval and violence. Newcomer incorporation will be approached from a "transnational" perspective, recognizing that incorporation is a complex social process that does not preclude, and may be accompanied by, the maintenance of social, economic, and political ties with homeland".

One of the questions explored is: How do transnational practices and institutions at various levels; and Canadian-based policies, institutions, and organizations, help to shape the pattern of incorporation and cohesion?

Journal Articles

 Sana, M., 2005, 'Buying Membership in the Transnational Community: Migrant Remittances, Social Status, and Assimilation', Population Research and Policy Review, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 231-261:

http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/klu/popu/2005/00000024/00000003/00004080

The following description is taken from the site:

"I analyze the effects that social status and immigrant incorporation have on migrant remittances. Understanding remittances as one type of transnational practice, I conceptualize them as the fee that migrants pay to remain members of the transnational community. I define a "status hypothesis" in terms consistent with the view of transnational engagement as a response to status loss, predicting a negative association between increases in social status and remittances. Since immigrant incorporation usually entails status gain, this hypothesis is consistent with the conventional assimilation paradigm. While the status hypothesis could be linked to the new economics of labor migration as well, it collides with the view of transnationalism as an alternative path for successful immigrant incorporation. Using data on male Mexican migrants to the United States, I find enough support for the status hypothesis, indicating the need to clarify the ultimate meaning of transnational practices. In addition, my analysis shows that there is room to integrate economic theory, the assimilation paradigm, and the transnational perspective into a comprehensive understanding of transnational engagement".

Snel, E., Engbersen, G., and Leerkes, A., 2006, 'Transnational Involvement and Social Integration, Global Networks, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 285-308: http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1471-0374.2006.00145.x

The following description is taken from the site:

"In this article we offer a quantitative examination of the extent to which migrants from various countries are involved in transnational activities and have transnational identifications. The study is based on a survey of 300 immigrants (from the USA, Japan, Iraq, former-Yugoslavia, Morocco and the Dutch Antilles) living in the Netherlands. The respondents are deliberately chosen to include different categories of immigrants. Transnational activities constitute a substantial part of their lives and are to a large extent socio-cultural. Many migrants also transfer money abroad. Professional economic activities were rare and mainly limited to the American group. As a whole, our respondents identify more with other compatriots living in the Netherlands than with people living outside the Netherlands. The research also found that transnational involvement in general does not impede 'immigrant integration'. Migrant groups that are known as poorly integrated into Dutch society are not more involved in transnational activities and have no stronger identifications with the country of origin than other groups. However, within the Moroccan and Antillean groups those respondents with the weakest labour market position identify more strongly with the country of origin than others. Strong identifications with compatriots living elsewhere and withdrawal from Dutch society may reinforce their poor labour market integration".

 Levitt, P. and Jaworsky, B. N., 2007, 'Transnational Migration Studies: Past Developments and Future Trends', Annual Review of Sociology, vol. 33, no. 1, pp. 129-156:

http://arjournals.annualreviews.org/doi/abs/10.1146/annurev.soc.33.040406.131816

The following description is taken from the site:

"The past two decades have witnessed a sea change in migration scholarship. Most scholars now recognize that many contemporary migrants and their predecessors maintain various kinds of ties to their homelands at the same time that they are incorporated into the countries that receive them. Increasingly, social life takes place across borders, even as the political and cultural salience of nation-state boundaries remains strong. Transnational migration studies has emerged as an inherently interdisciplinary field, made up of scholars around the world, seeking to describe and analyze these dynamics and invent new methodological tools with which to do so. In this review, we offer a short history of theoretical developments, outlining the different ways in which scholars have defined and approached transnational migration. We then summarize what is known about migrant transnationalism in different arenas—economics, politics, the social, the cultural, and the religious. Finally, we discuss methodological implications for the study of international migration, present promising new scholarship, and highlight future research directions".

Books

• Joppke, C. and Morawska, E, eds., 2003, Toward Assimilation and Citizenship, Palgrave, Basingstoke: http://www.palgrave.com/products/title.aspx?is=140390491X

The following description is taken from the publisher's site:

"This book surveys a new trend in immigration studies, which one could characterize as a turn away from multicultural and postnational perspectives, toward a renewed emphasis on assimilation and citizenship. Looking both at state policies and migrant practices, the contributions to this volume argue that (1) citizenship has remained the dominant membership principle in liberal nation-states, (2) multiculturalism policies are everywhere in retreat, and (3) contemporary migrants are simultaneously assimilating and transnationalizing."

Contents include:

Part Two: Immigrants Between Assimilation and Transnationalism:

- Immigrant Transnationalism and Assimilation in the United States: A Variety of Combinations and the Analytic Strategy it Suggests; *E.Morawska*
- Keeping Feet in Both Worlds: Transnational Practices and Immigrant Incorporation in the United States; P.Levitt
- ➤ How National citizenship Shapes Transnationalism: Migrant Claims-Making in Germany, Great Britain and the Netherlands; *R.Koopermans & P.Statham*"

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Websites visited

Berghof Foundation, Centre for Migration and Development, Centre for Refugee Studies, Citizen International, COMPAS, Council of Europe, Google, Google Scholar, GSDRC, Ingenta journals, Institute for the Study of International Migration, International Migration Institute, IOM, Metropolis, migrationinformation.org, Migration Policy Institute, Panos Paris, SOAS, USAID, World Bank, York University

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