



MIGNEX Background Paper

Migration-relevant policies in Guinea

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MIGNEX

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See www.mignex.org.



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MIGNEX Background Papers

MIGNEX Background Papers are scientific papers containing the documentation and analyses that underpin the project results. Selected insights from background papers are also presented in non-technical form in other formats, including MIGNEX Policy Briefs and MIGNEX Reports.

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List of acronyms

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AVRR	assisted voluntary return and reintegration
CNLTPPA	National Committee for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons and Related Practices
DGGE	National Directorate of Guineans Abroad
ENABEL	Belgian Agency for Cooperation
EU	European Union
FODEL	Fund for Local Economic Development
DCPAF	Directorate for Air and Border Police
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EUTF	European Union Trust Fund for Africa
GIZ	German Society for International Cooperation
IDPs	internally displaced persons
ILO	International Labour Organization
INTEGRA	Support Programme for the Socio-economic Integration of Young People
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MAEGE	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, African Integration and Guineans Abroad
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPCI	Ministry for Planning and International Cooperation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NMP	National Migration Policy
OGLMI	Guinean Organization for the Fight against Irregular Migration
PNDES	Plan for National Economic and Social Development
SENAH	National Service for Humanitarian Action
SLED	Supporting Local and Economic Development
UN	United Nations
WFP	World Food Programme

MIGNEX Background Paper

Migration-relevant policies in Guinea

This paper presents the results of the policy review of the MIGNEX project in Guinea. It provides an overview of the key migration policies in Guinea and their interaction with development and development policies.

Guinea has drafted its New Migration Policy, but it has not come into force yet due to the September 2021 coup d'état.

Despite being a country of major emigration, policies for regular labour emigration are absent, while donor programming on irregular migration is rife.

Guinea's collaboration with the European Union (EU) is centred around the latter's priorities of return and reintegration and irregular migration.

About the MIGNEX policy reviews

This is one of 10 MIGNEX Background Papers devoted to a review of policies in the 10 countries of origin and transit covered by the project. The term **policy** can refer to many different phenomena. MIGNEX adopts a broad perspective and regards policy to include the existence and effectiveness of particular laws, common practices, development initiatives, policy interventions and the broader policy environment or framework. This inclusive definition encompasses the needs of the project's overall research.

Much of the analysis in the review involves policies that relate directly to migration and its link to development. The concept of **migration-related policies** includes both the migration policy environment and interventions that seek to affect the development impacts of migration. It also includes policy and projects that might have large effects on migration dynamics, even if not presented under a migration heading.

Methodological note

During August/September 2021, a systematic desk-based review was undertaken and 16 semi-structured interviews were conducted with 17

policy-makers and other experts (one interview with two respondents). Karim Balde conducted all in-person interviews (11) in Conakry, Guinea, with an additional five interviews conducted virtually by Gemma Hennessey. Interviews were conducted in either French or English. Access to interviewees was facilitated by the researchers' existing connections to relevant experts in Guinea and using a snowball method to make connections to other relevant experts, including policy-makers. Translations of policy documents and the desk-based review was supported by Nermin Abbassi.

It should be noted that during the data collection period, on 5 September 2021, there was a military coup in Guinea, which ousted the recently re-elected President Alpha Conde and dissolved his cabinet (Samb, 2021). In the aftermath, the leaders of the coup sought to set up a transitional government, which involved an audit of all government departments. This had an effect upon data collection, with many planned interviews no longer able to go ahead. The coup may also influence migration-related policies, for instance, the significance of the new migration policy, which was accepted on 1 September 2021. No information is available on what has happened with the migration policy since then.

A second methodological limitation concerns a broader-encompassing obstacle that can be observed not just in Guinea, but in several other countries of Africa too, namely the gap between *de jure* policies and their *de facto* implementation. Legal anthropologists (i.e., de Sardan, 2013; Herdt and de Sardan, 2015) point out that this happens for more than one reason: first and foremost, the scarce application of policies depends on the state's limited capacity (as also pointed out in the section on the Impacts on emigration). Similarly, population statistics are not always available, updated or reliable, which increases the difficulty in understanding how to implement a policy and whether or not it has been successful. Secondly, policies often are the result of priorities expressed by development agencies and by institutions funding development projects in the country, instead of being the outcome of consultations between local politicians and their electoral base. This trend is particularly visible in migration policies, as we point out in the section on the Externalisation of EU migration policies, when discussing the pervasiveness of the EU Trust Fund for Africa's (EUTF) own priorities into Guinea's national policies. Finally, some policies often encounter opposition at the local level exactly because local governments perceive them as imposed from the top and from external bodies. As a result, many policies are only partially implemented, if at all.

It is essential to remember these context-dependent limitations when reading the paper, as they can explain the mismatch between policies on paper and their implementation.

The time period of analysis for the paper is 10 years from 2011 to 2021. However, when necessary to understand the background of relevant policies, we also refer to political decisions and laws dating further back in time.

Summary of main results

This is a very transitional moment for Guinea's migration policy framework. Over the past three years, the country has drafted and approved its New Migration Policy (NMP), which also includes a strategy for the engagement of the diaspora. However, after the September 2021 coup d'état, the NMP has been paused and there is currently no certain information on when it will come into force.

Guinea is a country of major emigration, both towards other West and North African states and towards Europe. Yet, policies for regular emigration, including labour migration, are largely absent. Axis 4 of the NMP aims at creating a framework for that, but it is not clear when this will be activated, or which instruments it will use. The bilateral agreements Guinea has signed with European countries since the early 2000s do not mention regular migration quotas but rather focus on supporting return migration and reintegration. On the contrary, there is great emphasis on donor-funded programmes preventing irregular migration and anti-trafficking, which sideline all other forms of migration.

Guinea became part of the EUTF in 2017. Since then, the projects implemented within this framework revolve around the EU's own priorities of return migration, repatriation, increased border control and disincentives to irregular migration. Donors lead the design and implementation of these programmes, while the national government's participation is minimal. The EUTF projects have either been concluded or are in their final phase, which interestingly coincides with when Guinea's NMP is ready to be implemented.

Emigration

Main policies

The first element to mention regarding Guinea's emigration policies is the country's membership in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a regional political and economic community established in 1975 to foster economic integration in West Africa. As members of ECOWAS, Guineans enjoy freedom of movement in North-West Africa, which is reflected in the current migration trends (Devillard et al., 2015).

To date, there is no comprehensive domestic policy on labour migration. However, Axis 4 of the upcoming NMP plans to create a comprehensive framework for labour migration capable of matching regular and skill-sensitive migration with labour market needs abroad. As mentioned above, it is not clear if/ when this policy will be implemented, as a result of the coup in September 2021.

Since the early 2000s, Guinea has signed some bilateral mobility agreements, such as the Cooperation Agreement on Migration between the Kingdom of Spain and the Republic of Guinea (2006), the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Belgium (2008), the MoU with the Netherlands (2009), the Cooperation Agreement on Migration between the Government of the Republic of Guinea and the Swiss Federal Council (2011), and the MoU with

the United Kingdom (2014). However, their key focus is on return migration and integration (see section on Return migration). Strikingly, there is no bilateral agreement with key destination countries such as France or Italy. The Cooperation agreement on migration between Guinea and Switzerland does not mention regular migration quotas, but states that stay permit applications from Guinean nationals will be considered with ‘care, diligence and goodwill’ (Confédération Helvétique, 2011: art. 3[2]).

There is no policy preventing the emigration of Guineans abroad, although, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the government has imposed restrictions on mobility to protect public health. Similar restrictions were introduced after the Ebola breakout in 2014. Another exception to mobility on security grounds does not pertain to the realm of migration but rather to the penal procedural code: a law can prohibit a citizen from leaving the country or a certain area, for instance within the framework of a judicial decision over a crime.

Over recent years, Guinea has witnessed the emergence of several campaigns against irregular emigration run by international organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or United Nations (UN) agencies. Their goal is to prevent irregular emigration and combat human trafficking, informing people on the multiple dangers, duration and costs involved. For instance, CinemArena is a mobile cinema initiative run by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), launched to raise awareness about the dangers of irregular migration among potential migrants from rural areas. Between January and February 2019, the CinemArena team organised film screenings in 32 villages across various regions of Guinea (Bia-Zafinikamia et al., 2020).

Another example is the Support Programme for the Socio-economic Integration of Young People (INTEGRA), adopted in 2017 and run by the EUTF in partnership with the Belgian Agency for Cooperation (ENABEL) and the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ). INTEGRA aims to both prevent and limit irregular migration as well as reintegrate returns to promote the inclusive economic development of Guinea (EUTF, 2017).

Trends

Historically hostile to any form of international emigration until 1984 (Somparé, 2019), Guinean emigration policies have morphed and expanded noticeably over the past decades. However, they are still grounded in international projects and awareness campaigns managed by donors more than on national legal instruments. This will presumably change after the introduction of the NMP.

This gap remains surprising, considering that emigration – particularly to neighbouring countries – has been common in Guinea for decades.

Besides the bilateral agreements Guinea signed even before 2011, the inclusion of the country in the EUTF has marked a clear change in the country’s position on migration. Since 2017, the EUTF has implemented three projects in the country, which focus on preventing irregular migration.

Impacts on emigration

For several years, Guineans have been enjoying the freedom of movement that their membership in ECOWAS provides. In fact, most Guinean emigrants move to neighbouring countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Burkina Faso and Senegal (Fargues et al., 2020).

The impact of bilateral agreements is rather minimal and mostly focused on return (see section on Return migration). The 2006 agreement with Spain includes provisions for pre-departure training and training courses upon arrival in Spain, and for integration in the country of destination. However, it is not clear whether these plans have been implemented or not, due to limited capacity of the Guinean state (Verdeil, 2020).

There are very few data on the impact on emigration of awareness campaigns produced by the IOM and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). One reason for this is the limited time they have been running for, which does not allow the identification of long-term patterns. Concerning the evaluation run by CinemArena, potential migrants reported an awareness of the dangers, duration and costs of irregular migration (Bia-Zafinikamia et al., 2020). However, this does not mean that this has had an impact on emigration.

Finally, the EUTF pilot project to digitalise the Guinean civil status system (2020–2023), focusing on the Conakry–Kindia–Mamou axis, will have the indirect consequence of increasing border control. This may subsequently impact emigration patterns (see section on the Externalisation of EU migration policies for more details).

Impacts on development

The projects running in Guinea pair migration awareness with economic development.

INTEGRA's intervention areas are located on the migration axis to Senegal: Conakry to Labe (Conakry–Coyah–Kindia–Mamou–Dalaba–Pita–Labe). The programme focuses on raising awareness on the risks associated with migration and, in parallel, on the existence of sustainable economic alternatives. As of July 2022, INTEGRA created 3,000 jobs in Guinea, reaching 5,802 people overall of whom 25% are return migrants.¹ It is not clear what INTEGRA's impact on development has been, but the low number of beneficiaries suggests it is rather low.

Key incoherence across policies

More than incoherence, Guinean policies present a gap in the area of emigration.

A comprehensive policy on emigration has not been established yet. One of the reasons for this – besides political instability and the lengthy path for the approval of an NMP – lies in a general scarcity of data on Guineans abroad. The last survey was conducted in the 1990s (Verdeil, 2020) and has never

¹ N. Cascone, Project Officer on Human Mobility, ENABEL, pers. comm., 24 October 2022.

been updated. More detailed knowledge of the composition of the Guinean population abroad would help in drafting policies capable of tackling the population's most pressing issues.

In addition, a big obstacle for policy-makers lies in the fact that regular migration is expensive and not necessarily fruitful. The costs of regular emigration are disproportionately higher than for irregular migration, plus the duration of the process (i.e., the wait for the issuing of documents) is lengthy and uncertain. This determines a sharp inequality of access to regular migration, and in turn a skewed impact on the country (Somparé, 2019).

Finally, cooperation between national and international bodies is at times challenging, as one key informant suggested. The two entities might in fact not share the same objectives, which can result in disputes over the design and management of a project, such as in the case of 'Migrants as Messengers'. This project is currently run by IOM in collaboration with the Guinean Organisation for the Fight against Irregular Migration (OGLMI) (Dunsch et al., 2019), but it allegedly originated as an awareness campaign organised by ministries, the private sectors, and religious leaders (see section on Return migration).

Interaction with development policies

The central instrument guiding Guinean development policies is the Plan for National Economic and Social Development (PNDES), established in 2016 with the overarching objective of 'promoting strong and quality growth to improve the wellbeing of Guineans' (MPCI, 2016). One of the strategies it envisions to accelerate the demographic transition is investment in the fight against the irregular emigration of young Guineans (ibid: 97). In fact, the PNDES mentions the 'emigration of young Guineans to other countries' amongst the 'obstacles to maximising the demographic dividend' of the nation (ibid: 56).

In addition, Axis 4 of the upcoming NMP supports measures for the effective management of labour migration as part of a more general strategy of socioeconomic development and stability (Verdeil, 2020).

Diaspora

Main policies

According to the law, Guineans enjoy the right to dual nationality. They can vote from abroad since 1993, while residents abroad have the right to vote in national elections (Harley, 2020).

Over the past few years, Guinea has been developing a formal strategy for the engagement of its diaspora (Paone, 2020; Harley, 2020) as part of its NMP. It is still not certain which specific measures this strategy will include, but the government has established four main axes that will shape it:

1. To communicate and strengthen collaboration between associations and structures of the Guinean diaspora and the government.
2. To facilitate the establishment of a legislative and regulatory framework for civic and citizen involvement of the Guinean diaspora and return migrants.
3. To facilitate the transfer of financial resources from the diaspora.
4. To value the skills of the diaspora by transferring knowledge and skills, in particular for strengthening key sectors such as the health system and by strengthening the capacities of the National Directorate of Guineans Abroad (DGGE).

Besides the NMP, the government is planning other diaspora policy activities, though none have been implemented so far. The Guinean government foresees the establishment of a migration observatory² tasked with collecting data on the diaspora, which will help in the drafting of specific policies and actions of interest (Fargues et al., 2020). A key informant similarly discussed governmental plans for a census to take stock of Guineans abroad and, in turn, to understand how the diaspora could increase its contribution to the social and economic development of Guinea (see section on Emigration). Another key informant shared that the government has plans to establish a website to identify investment opportunities in Guinea, chiefly aimed at the diaspora.

Finally, another government plan mentioned by a key informant is the introduction of a low-cost transfer mechanism for transferring funds from the diaspora through the Central Bank of the Republic of Guinea. This measure – still at the proposal stage – would be part of the new national monetary policy. Today, many Guineans abroad rely on personal connections or on the expensive rates of microfinance to send money to Guinea.

The body responsible for overseeing diaspora engagement and keeping in contact with the diaspora associations is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, African Integration and Guineans Abroad (MAEGE). In 2017, MAEGE launched a process that led to the establishment of the High Council of Guineans Abroad (HCGE), which was then presented at the Diaspora Forum in 2018, a collaboration between representatives of the government and of Guineans abroad. It is, however, unclear how the High Council functions at present and indeed whether it is still active, due to the political instability the country has recently faced.

Also in 2017, several Councils of Guineans Abroad were founded in various countries. They are umbrella organisations that include the main diaspora associations in each country and are supported by the Guinean Embassy. In certain countries, such as France, Belgium or Italy – where the Guinean diaspora is substantial – national development agencies contribute to the funding of some projects, especially when focusing on integration or repatriation. The objective of the Councils and High Council is to strengthen

² The National Observatory on Migration (Observatoire Guinéen des Migrations (OGM)) was launched in early January 2020 in partnership with IOM and is funded by the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). While a building has been purchased, the OGM does not yet have a legal basis in Guinea and is therefore not yet implemented (ICMPD, 2021).

transnational cooperation between Guinean authorities and diaspora groups (Scarabello, 2019).

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Diaspora associations in different countries can also launch specific projects. For instance, the Association Diaspora Guinéenne, set up in Belgium, supports a construction project in Conakry, and lobbies for both the establishment of parliamentary groups representing the diaspora and for the reduction in the cost of plane tickets to Guinea through the construction of new airlines. In addition, Diaspora Guinéenne argues for the reduction of visa costs to foster tourism to Guinea. It is unclear, however, whether these projects have been implemented (Diaspora Guinéenne, 2017).

Trends

The relationship Guinea has with its own diaspora is far from simple and retains some elements of the way diaspora was narrated between the country's independence in 1958 and 2008. Somparé (2019) explains that, during the socialist government of Touré (1958–1984), the youth in particular, as well as the rest of the population, was strongly encouraged to stay in Guinea to contribute to the country's development. Touré opposed international emigration, portraying the diaspora as an enemy that withdrew precious manpower which could have been used to build a prosperous country. Conté's government (1984–2008) was instead marked by a detachment from socialist ideals and a simultaneous opening towards western countries. On the one hand, this turn encouraged many Guineans to migrate, while on the other hand it fostered the return of business owners and large traders from the diaspora, who started investing in their country of origin (ibid.). Thus, the diaspora has moved from being narrated as a traitor of its own country to being considered a model of entrepreneurial success, which still inspires many Guineans to migrate.

The Guinean diaspora has achieved an important demographic weight over the last few years (AUC, 2019), coinciding with the emergence of a body of projects and plans for its representation and engagement. According to a key informant, some delegations of the diaspora actively participated in the drafting of a memorandum on diaspora engagement policies – forming part of the diaspora engagement strategy – which was well received by the government. The bilateral agreement Guinea signed with the UK in 2014 explicitly mentions the support to relations with the diaspora, while most of the other MoUs have a strong focus on readmission and return migration (see section on Return migration).

Impacts on development

In 2020, official remittances were recorded as US\$33 million, which accounted for 0.3% of gross domestic product (GDP) that year (Harley, 2020). However, it is important to keep in mind that remittances are private monetary transfers. While they still may indirectly impact on the development of the country, this depends on how these private transfers are utilised. We did not find any evidence on the impact of remittances in Guinea.

The Guinean government regards diaspora and related policies as crucial for the country's development. Thus, some programmes for local economic development pay specific attention to diaspora engagement (see Return migration section). For instance, the Talents Guinée project, operating since 2012 under the Youth and Youth Employment Ministry with the collaboration of IOM and the Agency for the Promotion of Private Investments (APIP), aims to foster links between diaspora members and entrepreneurship projects in Guinea. Through a job fair, the project puts young people from the diaspora in France in contact with Guinean companies (Verdeil, 2020). Although the initiative is well-attended, there is no evidence on the impact it has had on development.

There are also projects supported by national development agencies that focus on the links between Guinea and its diaspora in one specific country. For instance, in 2017 ENABEL, IOM Belgium and Guinea, in partnership with MAEGE and APIP, implemented a pilot project to support the link between Guinean diaspora in Belgium and their country of origin. The project included capacity-building training, reciprocal visits and the presentation of DGGE and APIP's services in support of the diaspora's involvement in Guinea (IOM Country Office for Belgium and Luxembourg, 2018). There is no information on this project implementation nor on its impact on development.

Key incoherence across policies

Although all diaspora-related initiatives are under the ultimate responsibility of MAEGE, a key informant reported that actions are always coordinated with the PNDES. This stands in contrast with the lack of inter-ministerial coordination that followed the recent creation of new institutions and legislative frameworks to manage different aspects of migration (Verdeil, 2020). More generally, capacity and coordination problems jeopardise the functioning of structures and actors in charge of issues related to diaspora (MAEGE et al., 2021).

Other obstacles to policy coherence stem from the political changes following the coup d'état, the limited resources available to DGGE, and the divergence between diaspora groups and the government's interests (Harley, 2020). However, according to a key informant, projects such as Talents Guinée are welcome because they have the potential to bring the youth and the diaspora closer to authorities, thus generating closer cooperation.

Interaction with development policies

The PNDES recognises the diaspora as one of the main donors for local development, particularly around basic community services and to generate informal income (ibid.).

Diaspora engagement policies are aimed at job creation and enhanced employment rates – especially for youth employment, but also connected to the prevention of irregular migration. These issues stand at the core of Guinea's development policies. Therefore, projects and activities in this field are grounded in the provision of technical and/or entrepreneurial skills

training for young people. As it is the case for emigration, these projects too are chiefly designed and implemented by donors.

For instance, the Supporting Local and Economic Development (SLED) Project, running between 2019 and 2021, was funded by the Italian Agency for Cooperation and managed by IOM in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth (Italian Agency for Development and Cooperation and IOM, 2021). SLED provided professional training to young people (i.e., in agriculture, farming, mechanics, plumbing, electricity, masonry, carpentry, tailoring, accounting, IT and soap making). Evaluations report the project was well-attended but, considering the low numbers (190) of beneficiaries reached it is doubtful this training had tangible impact on the country's development.

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Transit migration

Main policies

Because of its location, transit through Guinea is very common. This frequently translates into trafficking, especially of young people and children (Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, 2017) – although it is important to point out that this is by no means the only form of transit migration through the country. Trade is, for instance, one of the most common reasons for transit and circular migration between Guinea and its neighbouring countries. A key informant pointed out that trafficking mostly takes place within the sub-region, for instance between Guinea and Sierra Leone, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. So far, there is no comprehensive national policy that addresses issues of trafficking in persons or transit migration, but measures against it are included in some national laws. For example, art. 334 of Law 59/2016 (the Criminal Code Act) penalises the smuggling of migrants, while art. 339 of the Criminal Code Act punishes violent acts, inhuman treatment and exploitation of migrants. These articles expand on the penal legislation codified in Law 09-1994 (Guinée, 1994), which regulates foreigners' entry, stay and settlement in Guinea but does not include explicit provisions against migrant smuggling and/or exploitation. A key Informant pointed out that, over the years, this legislative gap has constituted an obstacle to the work of judges.

The governmental body deputed to the management of the anti-trafficking legislation is the National Committee for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons and Related Practices (CNLTTPA), created by a decree of the President of the Republic in 2004. It coordinates all actions in the field of prevention, repression and coordination of human trafficking. Its members include the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Social Action, the police, the NGO Sabou Guinea, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF). IOM supports the CNLTTPA's activities but is not part of the committee, for instance by training employees of Sabou Guinea. Further, the National Platform for Dialogue includes civil society organisations (CSOs) and NGOs. It engages with the private sector to address matters connected to trafficking such as recruitment and/or labour exploitation.

Other bodies involved are the police – under the Office for the Protection of Gender, Children and Morals (OPROGEM), whose role it is to intervene in the illicit trafficking of migrants – Judiciary Police Officials (OPJ), and the Ministry of Justice which ensures the trial of perpetrators of crimes and the rehabilitation of victims.

Trafficking is not the only matter falling under transit migration. In fact, Guinea also has valid legal instruments covering asylum and statelessness. Law L/2018/050/AN (Law relative to Asylum and to Refugees' Protection in the Republic of Guinea, see Guinée, 2018) codifies the protection of refugees, asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors, granting them access to education. However, it is unclear how often immigrants and refugee children effectively exercise this right. With respect to statelessness instead, in 2015 the government published the 10-year National Action Plan for Eradicating Stateless (2014–2024). In 2017, the Plan was codified into Decree D/2017/08/PRG/SGG (Guinée, 2017).

All initiatives on the topics above are required to align with the Global Compact for a Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (UNGA, 2018). For instance, in its recent evaluation, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA, 2021) has reported the implementation of the following measures: the strengthening of the refugee status determination and protection system and procedures; the establishment of a national data management unit for refugees, asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors; the conduct of awareness and information campaigns to prevent the emigration of unaccompanied minors; the development of measures to prevent the risk of statelessness and to protect cases of statelessness; accession to the Kampala Convention.

At the regional level, Guinea is part of an anti-trafficking platform shared with the other members of ECOWAS (Diallo et al., 2018). A key informant explained that the Chairs of the 15 ECOWAS countries have agreed on a common action plan and, in addition, each country has drafted its own plan, aligned with the sub-regional priorities. However, we could not find any information on whether Guinea has drafted its own plan. The same key informant also stated that there are plans to build a coordination platform to monitor trafficking between ECOWAS and the EU. Guinea is also part of a multilateral cooperation agreement with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

Additionally, Guinea has signed a bilateral agreement with Mali, with the aim of combating international trafficking through a common action framework. Guinea and Senegal are preparing a bilateral agreement³ for the protection of children in a situation of mobility and/or victims of trafficking. Finally, Guinea has also ratified all of the key international conventions on anti-trafficking.⁴

³ The agreement has the technical support of Save the Children, the International Social Service – West Africa, Sabou Guinea and of the Senegalese association Environment and Development Action in the Third World (ENDA-TM) (Verdeil, 2020).

⁴ ILO Convention No. 138 (Minimum Age Convention) of 1973; UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989; ILO Convention No. 182 (Convention concerning the Prohibition and

Trends

Guinea has long been a transit country but the attention of both research and legislation seems to have focused mainly on trafficking, excluding other forms and reasons of transit.

Practitioners point out how the nature of trafficking has changed over the last decade. From small-scale local smuggling networks, trafficking has mutated into wider transnational ones that stretch over the boundaries of Libya, Niger, Nigeria, Mali, Guinea, Sudan and Eritrea (Molenaar and El Kamouni-Janssen, 2017; Raineri, 2018). These regional networks have managed to survive and consolidate by resorting to large-scale corruption schemes involving high-level politicians, tribal authorities, militias and members of the security apparatuses (ibid.).

During the last 10 years, the Guinean legislation on trafficking has changed too. A key informant reported that there have been several improvements, particularly concerning the severity of sanctions. In parallel, the media have gradually increased their coverage on trafficking and on its punishment. The volume of projects dedicated to anti-trafficking, asylum and statelessness has also risen sharply since 2017, the year Guinea was included in the EUTF.

Impacts on immigration and transit migration

Guinea has implemented several projects and awareness campaigns against irregular migration and trafficking, together with NGOs and international organizations. For instance, OGLMI has conducted some studies to evaluate the response to their campaigns. They identified a positive increase in knowledge with respect to irregular migration. But, overall, it is not clear what their impact on immigration and transit has been so far.

IOM also maintains a presence at Guinea's borders with the purpose of gathering information through their border information software, Migrant Information and Data Analysis System (MIDAS). As stated on its website, MIDAS:

Enables States to collect, process and record migrants' information for the purpose of identification, authentication, data collection, and analysis. It can collect biographic and biometric data [...]. It helps to better monitor migrant patterns and to shape and influence migration and border management policies (IOM, n.d.).

In addition, between 2018 and 2020, Guinea established two transit centres for the management of irregular migration (UNECA, 2021), planned within the EUTF framework. One has been set up in the capital Conakry with the assistance of IOM, to provide orientation and support to transit migrants – including victims of trafficking (Ministère de l'Action Sociale et de l'Enfance,

Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour) of 1999; UN Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict of 2000; UN Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography of 2000; Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol) of 2003; ILO Convention No. 189 (the Convention concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers) of 2011.

Direction Nationale de l'Enfance de Guinée and UNICEF, 2020). It is unclear, however, what impact these initiatives have had on immigration and transit.

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Impacts on development

Some key informants pointed out that raising awareness on the risks of irregular immigration can prevent talented young people from leaving the country, which means that their stay could slow down the brain drain Guinea is experiencing.

In relation to this, some international bodies have initiated projects aimed at reinforcing state agencies' capabilities in anti-trafficking, with the ultimate goal of fostering development in the country. IOM runs a training programme funded by the United States Department of State, which is aimed at police officials, border officials, labour inspectors, prosecutors, and magistrates. Another programme centred around the improvement of state institutions, running from 2019 to 2023, is co-funded by the EUTF and France and is implemented by Expertise France (Altai Consulting for EUTF, 2021a). Although reportedly well-attended, there is no evidence on whether these programmes have had any impact on development.

Key incoherence across policies

The main incoherence in this sector is that most projects focus on trafficking, while ignoring transit migration in its other forms, that is, when migrants transit through Guinea at their own will. Donor funding and priorities are set on anti-trafficking, but the vast majority of people decide to move through the region, rather than them being coerced.

Although there seems to be agreement and political will to tackle trafficking, the main critique from two key informants concerned the government relying too heavily on foreign donors, such as the EUTF of national government agencies – which are the almost sole funders of anti-trafficking activities – while failing to develop long-term solutions for the support of internal bodies such as the police.

Problems of coordination amongst the various government bodies also emerged as relevant, for instance those happening between the CNLTPPA and the National Platform for Dialogue. While formally the Committee has more power, the Platform is newer and there are several crossovers between them.

A key informant pointed out that another incoherence is represented by the lack of harmonisation on what actually constitutes 'trafficking' and what is 'abuse' or 'exploitation', for instance in relation to child labour. This issue also connects with the impossibility of identifying all trafficking practices taking place on the ground.

Interaction with development policies

Anti-trafficking policies interact with projects aimed at fostering entrepreneurship and employment in Guinea, especially for young people.

Apart from the INTEGRA project (see the section on the Impacts on development of emigration), between 2018 and 2020 IOM ran the project Bridging Together Youth, Diaspora, and Local Authorities for an Integrated Approach to Promote Employment and Address Irregular Migration (YDLA).

Return migration

Main policies

The 2010 Constitution of Guinea guarantees the right to return. There are, however, no specific domestic laws or policies on return migration. Instead, there are a number of bilateral agreements and many donor-funded assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR) programmes. Moreover, Guinea has ratified a number of international interventions that protect return migrants and guarantee their return (ICMPD, 2021). The focus of existing return programming is on *voluntary* returnees, with key informants noting a gap in terms of forced returnees/deportees.

All bilateral agreements of Guinea mention repatriation (see Emigration section). Specifically, the bilateral agreements with Switzerland and Spain both include specific clauses on repatriation. The agreements cover voluntary return and include support from Switzerland/Spain for travel costs as well as the reintegration of returnees, for instance in the form of economic development projects (Devillard et al., 2015). However, the agreement with Spain is not being implemented due to lack of capacity within the Guinean government (Verdeil, 2020) and the one with Switzerland is not yet ratified (ICMPD, 2021).

MAEGE facilitates returns bureaucratically. The government body in charge of returnees once they are back on Guinean territory is the National Service for Humanitarian Action (SENAH). In principle, SENAH supports returnees who are part of AVRR programmes or emergency repatriations facilitated by Guinean embassies abroad (Verdeil, 2020). In practice, all of the returnee programming seems to be donor-funded and largely implemented by IOM, with no information found on any specific involvement or contribution by SENAH. Another key government coordinating body seems to be the Office of Reception, Orientation and Follow-up of Guineans Abroad (BAOS), which redirects returnees towards IOM-implemented return and reintegration programmes.

One government-led programme mentioned by key informants is the TOP 10 project, which aims to facilitate the social and professional reintegration of highly qualified members of the Guinean diaspora. The BAOS is currently drafting an action plan for Top 10. In any case, it seems like it targets a quite different return group to other return programmes – highly skilled diaspora returning to Guinea.

Like in other West African countries, there have been a number of return and reintegration programmes or projects implemented in Guinea. The largest of these is the EU-IOM Joint Initiative, part of the EUTF, which has provided individual and collective support since 2017, including to more than 15,000 voluntary returnees (ICMPD, 2021). Key informants noted that it

does not only cover return migrants themselves but also the wider community, for instance by also including cash-for-work schemes for returnees and the local population. The AVRR of the IOM has also supported close to 15,000 voluntary returnees since 2000, providing individual support to promote reintegration (ibid.). Other programmes or pilots funded by European countries of destination (e.g., the UK, Switzerland, and France) tend to cover much lower numbers of returnees, in the hundreds of people or even less (ibid.). Most are implemented by IOM.

Trends

Return migration policies have long been present in Guinea under different guises. For instance, in the so-called Second Republic from the mid-1980s onwards, policies encouraged emigration but also the return of skilled and successful migrants so that they could support and invest in their home country (Somparé, 2019). This kind of programming is more in line with the Top 10 action plan currently being developed.

A more recent shift in policies is the result of the EUTF. While there were a few bilateral agreements and AVRR programmes in place prior to Guinea joining the EUTF in 2017, there has been a steady growth in programmes since then. As mentioned above, their focus is on returnees from Europe, who agree to be repatriated through the AVRR programme. The sub-text of such programmes is much more on the prevention of re-migration than the development of Guinea.

After a high-level mission by four EU Member States, in 2017 Guinea agreed to a legally non-binding arrangement on readmission, given that Guinea is one of the top 10 origin countries of no-return irregular migrants⁵ in Europe (European Court of Auditors, 2021).

Impacts on return migration

There are no published evaluation reports or internal monitoring documents available for AVRR programming, and as such no quantitative evidence on how AVRR programming affects return migration. Given that support tends to be relatively low and short-term, it is unlikely to incentivise return in large numbers. A key informant noted that the long-term impact of AVRR and return support schemes is poor, with many returnees who are both higher and less skilled choosing to re-migrate.

Conversely, it seems that large numbers of migrants returned from neighbouring countries as a result of conflict over the past few decades. For instance, around 50,000–150,000 return migrants resettled in Guinea after fighting broke out in Côte D'Ivoire in 2012 (Verdeil, 2020). These returns 'independent of policy' are much larger in number, compared to assisted returns as a result of AVRR programming or bilateral agreements.

⁵ These are migrants classified as irregular by officials in European Member States, who have been deemed to have no right to stay (and have lost their appeal, if appealed), but who have nevertheless not yet returned/ been returned to their country of origin. A key reason for not return includes issues with travel documents (European Court of Auditors, 2021).

Impacts on development

The central idea between return and reintegration programming is that it improves skills and gives returnees short-term financial support, thereby helping them build livelihoods and improve the socioeconomic condition for themselves and their communities. As mentioned in the previous section, there are few evaluations of return and reintegration programming, so the existing evidence is based on interviews with stakeholders and beneficiaries. Our own key informants pointed out limited long-term efficacy. Perceptions of the effectiveness of programming and its medium- or long-term impacts on development (e.g., sustained employment) varies, with some beneficiaries pointing out that it depends on group composition (ICMPD, 2021). Given that some of the programming is based on collective approaches, if trust between returnees or between returnees and communities is lacking, programming appears to be less effective (*ibid.*). Moreover, much of the support appears to be delayed with transitional or post-programming support a key gap to ensure returnees build skills for the longer-term (*ibid.*). Programming often has a too short duration to create meaningful impact (Devillard et al., 2015).

Return programmes that are more flexible and adaptable and provide more substantive support, such as the one provided through the Swiss reintegration programme, seem to have had a more sustainable impact and more successful reintegration; however, this particular programme only covered 400 beneficiaries (Kessler, 2013; ICMPD, 2021).

A 2019 survey by IOM of 400 returnees, who were beneficiaries of AVRR programming in 2017, paints a bleak picture. It reveals a deterioration of living conditions of these returnees, compared to their situation before migration (Verdeil, 2020). For instance, 44% of respondents were unemployed at the time of the survey, compared to 5% prior to migration (*ibid.*). Given that AVRR programming often supports entrepreneurship, the fact that the proportion working on their own account had also dropped (from 22% before departure to 14% after return) also suggests that AVRR is not effective in fostering socioeconomic integration of returnees. Lastly, it should be mentioned that returnees often come back traumatised and that their migration/return often has a great psychosocial impact on the returnees, their families, and communities (*ibid.*).

Key incoherence across policies

The main policy incoherence is the contrast between the amount of funding put into AVRR programming and the limited evaluations of programming. Without monitoring and evaluations, it is impossible to say whether programmes are actually achieving their stated objectives and to eventually improve the support they provide.

There are plans to address this incoherence. Officials noted that one factor contributing to this lack of evidence is the high mobility of returnees and low capacity to track them – it is thought that planned biometric systems (see section Externalisation of EU migration policies for more information on the digitalisation pilot) will allow officials to track returnees in the whole country and help monitor programme effectiveness better (ICMPD, 2021).

The planned OGM also aims to build the evidence base on return and reintegration, with a particular focus on livelihoods and job creation (ibid.).

Interaction with development policies

On paper, returnees – as Guinean citizens – have access to social protection and other social policy provisions in Guinea. For instance, amendments to Decree D/2011/303/PRG/SGG of December 2011 (Republique de Guinee, 2013) provides the legal foundation for a social development and solidarity fund that enables vulnerable groups (which may include returnees) to obtain financial assistance. Returned migrant children also have access to education.

However, specific consideration of returnees in development planning – for instance in terms of youth employment – appears to be non-existent. Officials have pointed out the need for both stronger legislation as well as more funding to integrate migration into local development plans (ICMPD, 2021).

Immigration

Main policies

There are some legal instruments on immigration, but virtually no projects on it. This is due to donor priorities on Guinea's status as a transit country (see Transit migration section).

The main instrument concerning immigration into the country is Law 09-1994, regulating the entry, stay and settlement of foreign citizens (Guinée, 1994). To enter the country, people need a visa, which remains valid for 90 days and can be renewed one time (art. 3). ECOWAS citizens are exempt from this requirement, and this includes citizens of Morocco and Tunisia, with which Guinea has a reciprocity agreement. ECOWAS countries have in fact harmonised both travel certificates and passports.

To stay in the country for a period longer than 90 days, an individual needs to apply for a long-stay visa and a resident ID card (art. 26). Their validity lasts between one and three years and is renewable (art. 33). The Guinean government has the right to refuse a visa without providing an explanation (art. 12). Some categories of people are considered 'special residents' (art. 29), such as diplomats, foreign state employees under expatriate contract, people married to Guinean citizens, and foreign students.

Access to citizenship is regulated in the 2016 Civil Code (Guinée, 2016). It is possible to apply for naturalisation after five years of residence (art. 87, 89). However, the President has the power to refuse citizenship in the case when an applicant is considered a danger to the community (art. 96) or because of medical incapacity (art. 76).

Law 09-1994 also regulates matters of irregular immigration. For instance, the refolement of irregular migrants is regulated in articles 65, 66 and 71. Article 67 allows the state to deport individuals posing a threat to public

order, convicted criminals or those who have overstayed after their visa has been refused or withdrawn.

Article 75 includes sanctions for those who enter, stay in or return to Guinea without authorisation or using fraudulent documents. The law makes them punishable with detention for between one and five years and a fine between 700,000 and 5,000,000 FG (US\$550). The Ministry of Security and Civil Protection's Central Directorate for Air and Border Police (DCPAF) has the responsibility to enforce these dispositions.

Trends

Law 09-1994 is still the main and most recent legal instrument regulating immigration in Guinea (Guinée, 1994).

It is impossible to know the exact number of immigrants in Guinea, because many overstay their visa and remain in the country as undocumented. Another reason is that most migration takes place between ECOWAS countries that enjoy freedom of movement between each other. Refugees from Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire mainly settling in the capital Conakry, are part of the recent influx of migration into Guinea (Verdeil, 2020).

Naturalisation is not common amongst migrants, both because of the strict conditions attached to it and the complicated bureaucratic process. In recent years, Guinea has naturalised only dozens of people (Fargues et al., 2020).

Impacts on immigration

According to the DCPAF, controls on irregular migration into and within Guinea are far from being a political priority. The authority states it is complicated to identify irregular migrants, because most people enter the country regularly and remain after their visa expires (Verdeil, 2020). Many migrants residing in Guinea without documents or with expired visas work in the gold and diamond extraction sector (ibid.).

The Service for the Control of Foreigners' Stay and the Fight against Clandestine Migration, located within the DCPAF, ceased to be active in 2017 and, at present, random visa controls are rarely carried out (ibid.). To conclude, the national policies have had a negligible impact on immigration.

Impacts on development

Similarly to transit migration (see Transit migration section), inward migration influxes tend to concentrate in urban centres and industrial/mining districts. This trend is also similar to the one of internal migration (see Internal migration section), with individuals moving from rural to urban areas, and especially towards the capital Conakry.

However, there is no clear evidence on how immigration has impacted on the development of Guinea.

Key incoherence across policies

There is no incoherence across policies: immigration and naturalisation are both explicitly regulated. However, not all dispositions in Law 09-1994 are currently enforced.

Interaction with development policies

Neither the PNDES nor Axis 4 of the NMP explicitly mention immigration in relation to development. Similarly, there are no development projects focusing on immigrants.

Internal migration

Main policies

Internal migration takes place in Guinea for multiple reasons: better economic opportunities, marriage, family reunification, education, training, trafficking, displacement or *confiage* (fostering). Movement can be permanent or circular and there are different bodies that analyse and monitor these dynamics. Circular migration is generally a grey area, connected to no specific government body – and part of this is due to the informality of internal migration in Guinea.

The area within internal migration on which there is more extensive knowledge is internal displacement. There is a high level of analysis on internally displaced persons (IDPs) and their profiles, but no comparable legal framework to address their needs. Guinea is part of the 2009 African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (the Kampala Convention – AUC, 2009). However, it is unclear whether and how the Kampala Convention's provisions have been implemented on the ground. In addition, the SENAH has the power to conduct assessments and intervene in the case of a humanitarian emergency. SENAH is also responsible for assisting disaster victims, including IDPs.

The CNLTTPA takes care of IDPs when they fall under the trafficking category, since anti-trafficking legislation is quite well developed (see Transit migration section). Internal trafficking is widespread across the country and follows the rural-to-urban trajectory, specifically towards the capital Conakry (MGSOG, 2017). According to a key informant, this translates into 'intermediaries' picking up young girls from villages, promising a job as domestic workers in a city, and placing them with host families where they are often sexually abused, underpaid or sometimes not paid at all. According to a key informant, the CNLTTPA has established a partnership with the Domestic Workers Union to help combat trafficking within the country. The Domestic Workers Union identifies trafficked girls in need of support and refers their cases to the CNLTTPA.

Trends

Internal migration in Guinea has been a reality for a long time, but the analysis and understanding of its causes and consequences are a recent phenomenon.

Of particular interest for the Guinean and West African context, concerning mainly internal migration, is the traditional practice of *confiage* (fostering) (Thorsen and Jacquemin, 2015). *Confiage* involves young girls leaving their birth family, often in rural areas, to move in as domestic workers with another family living in an urban centre. Although in certain cases this practice can lead to exploitation, *confiage* has long had a positive reputation as an opportunity to strengthen family ties, but also to give young girls better opportunities for education, work experience and personal development.

A study by the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance (2017) revealed that internal migrants often return to their place of origin during the planting and the harvesting seasons to help their relatives, while urban households can host family members from rural areas. Usually, only some members of a family leave while others stay behind, and this generates patterns in the exchange of food, cash and information. However, in the long run, only five out of 100 migrants return to their region of birth after living elsewhere (Massandouno and Cisse, 2017).

These considerations should be accompanied by a more detailed observation of the different migration dynamics of ethnic groups in Guinea. While some groups have historically migrated less (such as Soussous and Forestiers), others have been more mobile, although for different reasons. For instance, the mobility of Maninkas has been often connected to gold mining (see Botta et al., 2022). However, the specific focus of our interviews did not allow for questions concerning ethnic groups.

IDPs fall under the responsibility of the MPCJ through SENAH, but data collected so far mainly come from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). According to their surveys, climate change-related disasters such as wildfires or floods, plus the outbreak of the Ebola pandemic, have led to an increase in the numbers of IDPs, which reached 34,000 people in 2015 (MPCJ, 2016; IDMC, 2019). It is these phenomena, rather than political conflicts, that generates displacement in the country.

Impacts on internal migration

The absence of a set of policies addressing internal migration translates into a lack of impact on this phenomenon.

Activities such as CinemArena (see Emigration section), focusing on awareness-raising in rural areas of migrant departure, or SLED, providing skills training to young people, are designed to help curb migration through local alternatives. At present, there are no data indicating whether or not these initiatives have been successful in that, however.

Impacts on development

Internal migration in Guinea is tied to urbanisation processes: there are constant fluxes from rural areas to urban centres of both adults and children, seeking work in the industrial and mining areas (Verdeil, 2020).

Internal migration is quite sizeable and diverse and happens spontaneously rather than within a policy framework. Rural-to-urban fluxes have contributed to the development of urban areas, while in contrast rural enterprises and agriculture have declined, especially after events such as the Ebola pandemic (World Bank, 2014).

Key incoherence across policies

As for the case of emigration (see Emigration section), it is not appropriate to talk about incoherence as much as about gaps in the legislation. At present, the extent of data collection conducted by SENAHS is not clear, and a set of policies on IDPs is absent. There are also no specific policies on other forms of internal migration.

The anti-trafficking legislation is, in contrast, well developed, but that only covers a proportion of IDPs or other internal migrants.

Interaction with development policies

Internal migration is not explicitly mentioned in projects on employment and entrepreneurship. However, these initiatives often focus on rural areas, knowing that they are amongst the most common departure places for prospective internal and international migrants. In connection to this, the PNDES describes urbanisation as a current issue because it is both impacted by corruption and because it is growing fast and uncontrolled. The government recognises structural transformation as a ‘distinctive feature of the development project’ (MPCI, 2016: 74) but expresses the will to grant access to decent housing through controlled urbanisation.

Over the years, the Guinean government has also issued some interventions to sustain the agriculture sector (MPCI, 2016). In the PNDES, the government states a desire to see agriculture as central to accelerate economic growth. Similarly, the PNDES aims to ensure equal access to education and training to every citizen (ibid.). This Plan in fact describes emigration as one of the main obstacles to maximising the demographic dividend in Guinea (ibid.). Some projects, such as INTEGRA or SLED, interact with government interventions in that they include agricultural and farming training amongst their offer to young people, with the objective of fostering employment and entrepreneurial opportunities at the local level. This is ultimately aimed at curbing migration rates.

Finally, one key informant pointed out the underrepresentation of women in programs providing employment alternatives to migration. While most efforts are tailored to men, according to the informant women have much less options, which leads some of them to migrate and others to marry very young.

Externalisation of EU migration policies

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Main policies

In 2017, Guinea became part of the EUTF after a high-level mission by four EU Member States. The readmission arrangement that emerged from the negotiations is legally non-binding (European Court of Auditors, 2021). There are three main projects in Guinea running under the EUTF, namely: INTEGRA, RESIGUI (Improving the resilience of vulnerable populations in Guinea) and a project on civil registration.

INTEGRA – under the EUTF, GIZ, ENABEL and the International Trade Centre – centres around the development of technical and professional skills for Guinea's youth with an overall objective to contribute to the prevention and limitation of irregular migration. It also seeks to enable the reintegration of returning migrants and the sustainable socio-professional integration of young Guineans (EUTF, 2017b). Project documents provide a minimum target to return 45,000 people from the migration and diaspora groups (ibid.). The project was launched in 2017 with a budget of €65 million (Botta et al., 2021) and is part of the 2015 EU–Africa Valletta Action Plan on Immigration.

Under the EUTF, the EU gave €8 million to support World Food Programme (WFP) Guinea through a 16-month project targeting 100,000 food insecure people (20,000 households) in eight prefectures (Boke, Labe, Lelouma, Siguiri, Kankan, Macenta, Guekedou and Nzerekore). The project began in 2020 as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic to support households vulnerable to food insecurity during the lean season and post-lean season, before progressively accompanying them in the longer term to improve their livelihoods (WFP Guinea, 2020).

In 2020, the EUTF announced a €5 million capacity-building pilot project (EC, 2020a) for the digitalisation of the Guinean civil registry system and the electronic identification of citizens. It cited the lack of legally certified identity documents as a critical factor in rendering migrants more vulnerable to human trafficking. In 2017, a pilot phase was implemented in the N'zerekore region.

As noted already, a second set of programmes for Guinea consists of the EU–IOM Joint Initiative where IOM Guinea charts flights to bring emigrants back to Guinea. Depending on their profiles and needs, a commitment is made to returnees to establish small businesses, as an individual or within a group, or to enrol them in vocational trainings. To date the programme has recorded 15,000 voluntary returnees (ICMPD, 2021).

Trends

As noted in the sections above, while Guinea had several bilateral agreements in place with European nations prior to joining the EUTF in 2017, the number of programmes in place in Guinea under the EU has grown considerably since that year. The trend echoes greater attention in other West African governments to migration-related challenges in reaction to European involvement in the region. Under the EUTF, West African nations

have seen an increase in development projects whose operation is pitched as a direct alternative to migration (Trauner et al., 2019). The projects provide financial/technical incentives to national governments to welcome returnees (as seen by the ministerial-level welcome afforded to returnees under the EU–IOM Joint Initiative in Guinea) (IOM, 2017).

However, the impact of the policies at the level of policy discourse clearly lies in the internationalisation of migration control and the externalisation of EU migration priorities and policies. This is in line with the core objectives of the 2002 European Council from which the EUTF has emerged, namely:

- ‘Africans must help Europeans to disrupt smuggling and trafficking networks and more eagerly take back returnees.
- Europeans must help Africans to address the root causes of illegal migration (underdevelopment) and preserve remittances channels’ (Tawat and Lamptey, 2021).

A clear sign of the internationalisation of the EU’s role is the involvement in civil registration. This is as in Guinea, through biometric identification systems where the focus is more on migration management than local governance-building. In their analysis of the EUTF more broadly, Oxfam (2017: 16) notes:

It is highly questionable whether there is any benefit in implementing biometric identification systems under an emergency instrument. Biometric identification systems are often controversial and require thorough consideration. Yet, European governments consider them necessary to facilitate quicker identification and returns of irregular migrants to their countries of origin.

Impacts on immigration, emigration, return migration and transit migration

While it is too early for project end evaluations, even mid-term evaluation studies on the impact of the EUTF and the EU–IOM Joint Initiative in Guinea are not available at this point.

A ‘light touch’ report by Altai Consulting for the EU (Altai Consulting, 2021b: 26) on the impact of the EUTF generally in Africa as of 2021 notes:

...the attempt to show results in a transparent fashion through the Monitoring and Learning Systems and on the Trust Fund’s website is appreciated, even though there is clear impatience for ‘more than numbers’ and ‘real results’, which will hopefully be addressed by the work on outcomes that will start gaining momentum once enough projects complete and are thus able to deliver outcome results.

Thus, the report confirms that the evaluation will likely be project-specific rather than giving an overall picture in a particular country.

Impacts on development

The EUTF’s involvement in human development projects emerges from the underlying assumption that fostering development in Guinea will provide an alternative to migration. The lack of an overall evaluation limits the degree

to which the exact impact of human development indicators of EUTF projects can be noted. Looking at the impact on development of the EUTF in the region more broadly, Tawat and Lamptey (2021) highlight that ‘A clear picture of Domain 1 (migration and development) has not yet emerged because development involves longer and complex processes’.

Piecemeal evidence is unclear on the positive impact of the EUTF projects on longer-term development in the country, however. For example, the EUTF 2018 annual report notes that ‘quick wins’ have been achieved in supporting job creation for young people in Guinea, but it does not define what a ‘quick win’ constitutes either in terms of income stability or job security (EU, 2018). Indeed, Altai Consulting for the EU (2021b) remarks that the EU–IOM Joint Initiative’s aim to refer returnees (which are the main target group under the project) to other perhaps long-lasting income opportunities has not been successful. It goes on to state that referrals remain very low despite the presence of INTEGRA in the region ‘as returning migrants choose to stay with IOM due to perceived better conditions’ (ibid: 145) (see the section on Return migration for further details).

Generally, the combination of low coverage and the short duration of EUTF programmes is unlikely to lead to substantial or sustainable human development impacts (see section on Return migration and Emigration as well).

Key incoherence across policies

In the absence of evaluation, it is unclear how the results of the initiatives map against the objectives of the EUTF and the EU–IOM Joint Initiative programmes or indeed against national policies discussed earlier in the review.

While not a contradiction, the priorities of West African policy-makers to make migration safer and improve the channels for legal migration as well as cooperating more closely with diaspora are dissimilar to the priorities of the EU under the EUTF. The latter is focused on improving border control and repatriation and return of migrants (Adam et al., 2019).

Interaction with development policies

INTEGRA supports policies for youth employment which is a key area of interest to Guinea as outlined in its national development plan. However, while INTEGRA focuses on return migrants, the PNDES is interested in promoting development for those who are resident (e.g., in areas impacted by mining through the FODEL and FNDL funds (*Fonds de développement économique local* and *Fonds national de développement local*) as well as vocational training schools). As such there are currently no clear links between how returnees (the focus of EUTF policies) will be absorbed into the larger labour market in Guinea.

Main development policies

The selected policies

The main policies on development – both national and donor-led – revolve around employment creation. Donors have also been involved in crisis response policies following the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are two key programmes in Guinea – both under the EUTF policy – which have been touched upon earlier as well and are in line with the aim of the EUTF to promote development in the country as an alternative to migration.

INTEGRA centres around the development of technical and professional skills for Guinea's youth and industries. INTEGRA'S aim is to strengthen both the capability of local institutions as well as to support the professional integration of returning migrants to Guinea. INTEGRA focuses on three key areas (ITC, 2018): agribusiness, vocational training and increasing access to finance. As of 2021, 50 projects had been funded for individuals (Larue, 2021) in the INTEGRA programme. It is unclear if the objective of creating long-term jobs for people has been met.

A second short-term programme is RESIGUI, also funded by the EU, which came about in response to a crisis. In collaboration with WFP (2021), the programme delivered emergency assistance to 20,000 households, nutritional assistance to 10,000 children (aged 6–23 months), and 9,000 food assistance-for-assets (FFA) activities (on good agricultural practices, good governance, management, simplified maintenance and storage, processing, and marketing).

The current policies under the EUTF were preceded by bilateral engagements with EU countries such as Spain which provided financial grants for anti-poverty programmes (Botta et al., 2021).

National-level development policies on employment creation include the creation of FODEL sub-national funds (Botta et al., 2021; Lado 2020) that rely on mining-sector revenues to pay grants to people living in areas impacted by mining. However, these policies do not have a clear-cut relationship with low-income people given the high collateral required for the grant (Lado, 2020). Respondents in areas with FODEL indicated that funds were often mismanaged and processes were not devoid of corruption (Botta et al., 2021).

The EC is currently in negotiations (EC, 2020b) for a Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement (SFPA) between the EU and the Republic of Guinea. The clauses under negotiation are unclear; however, the Agreement will likely impact fishing activities along the coast of the country. The Coalition for Fair Fisheries Agreements (CFFA) (Gorez, 2020) has advised negotiators to ensure clauses protect coastal communities' livelihoods and the sustainability of the fish stock that the communities rely on. Both those factors underly the critiques of the EU's fisheries agreement with neighbouring country Guinea-Bissau (Okafor-Yarwood, 2019). Any adverse impact on livelihoods will undermine the EUTF's purported aim to create sustainable livelihoods as an alternative to irregular migration.

Interactions with migration-related policies

Guinea's NMP has yet to be implemented and the coup in the country in 2021 casts doubt on whether its first comprehensive domestic policy on labour migration will be in place soon. The policy has a framework that seeks to match regular and skill-sensitive migration with labour market needs abroad and as such is coherent with the focus of INTEGRA to discourage irregular migration. Similarly, the NMP aspires to put in place projects that strengthen links between the diaspora and residents in Guinea, but the exact strategy is currently not available.

INTEGRA, although focused on employment creations, has an explicit objective to reduce irregular migration with project documents stating that results in the project will be measured by a reduction in migrant departures (Oxfam, 2020).

Examples of impact on migration

While the impact of INTEGRA on migration is not known, qualitative evidence on the impact of INTEGRA under the MIGCHOICE project (Botta et al., 2021) shows that knowledge of the project in target communities was low, and the project did not work with individuals who were considered interlocutors in the community. As noted in the section on Return migration, it is not clear if the impact of INTEGRA can be considered sustainable, or indeed if it led to a reduction in re-migration.

The MIGCHOICE project country report for Guinea (Botta et al., 2021) – based on work in five sites – highlights that respondents did not see a linear link between migration and development in the country. In some areas, respondents were unaware of development interventions either under the EUTF or by the national government, showing perhaps the limited geographical and/or population scope of the projects in question. In other areas (e.g., in Kankan in Guinea, one of the MIGCHOICE sites), while respondents were aware of development interventions, the MIGCHOICE project did not substantially change their aspirations around movement and migration.

Any additional information related to COVID-19

After COVID-19 hit Guinea, the government put in place new rules preventing the population from leaving the country. These rules followed the global trend of border closures that started in 2020, which were grounded in efforts to protect public health.

The impact of the pandemic in Guinea has been particularly hard on the food security of households, thus the WFP has planned a series of relief interventions, such as RESIGUI (see the section on the Externalisation of EU migration policies).

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