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Reporting on Media, Migration and Forced Displacement: Global Perspectives

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Cover photo: A migrant draws his migration history on a blackboard. He started in Mali, his country of origin, transited many African countries and Spain before he found home in Guinea-Bissau. Photo credit: Monika Lengauer

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FOREWORD: REPORTING ON MEDIA, MIGRATION AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT – GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

This paper presents the perspectives on reporting on migrants and refugees in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Asia, the Americas and the Russian Federation. It is intended to show that the topic of reporting on migration and forced displacement is by no means settled with existing publications, first of all the UNESCO Handbook for Journalism Educators researched and edited by Fengler, Lengauer, & Zappe (2021). These “Global Perspectives” on reporting on media, migration and forced displacement reveal an even greater variety of country studies in a growing global project.

The following sections’ authors present perspectives from different continents. Monika Lengauer looks at the Middle East and the GCC countries. Naila Hamdy and Ghadeer Ahmed share the East African context from the perspective of Egypt. Anna Litvinenko and Svetlana Bodrunova analyse the coverage of migrants and refugees in Russia. Isabella Kurkowski brings together Asian insights, and Sher Baz Khan shares views from Pakistan. Cilene Victor investigates the movements in Latin America with a focus on Venezuela and Brazil. Marcus Kreutler, Scott R. Maier, Layire Diop, Kaitlin Miller, and Rajeev Ravisankar provide an overview of media coverage of migrants and refugees in the media of the USA.

Along with a great variety of resources, these “Global Perspectives” on reporting on media, migration and forced displacement are available on the project portal www.mediaandmigration.com.

Susanne Fengler and Monika Lengauer

CONTENTS

<i>Monika Lengauer</i>	
Perspectives from the Middle East and the Arab Gulf region.....	3
<i>Naila Hamdy and Ghadeer Ahmed</i>	
Perspectives from Egypt: Intra-African migration to Egypt	7
<i>Anna Litvinenko and Svetlana S. Bodrunova</i>	
Perspectives from Russia: Migration in the Post-Soviet Space	10
<i>Isabella Kurkowski</i>	
Perspectives from Asia	14
<i>Sher Baz Khan</i>	
Perspectives from Pakistan	17
<i>Cilene Victor</i>	
Perspectives from Latin America	19
<i>Marcus Kreutler, Scott R. Maier, Layire Diop, Kaitlin Miller and Rajeev Ravisankar</i>	
How media in the US cover migrants and refugees	24
References	27
Table	34
Editors.....	35
Contributing authors	36

PERSPECTIVES FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE ARAB GULF REGION

by Monika Lengauer

This section starts with an exploration of media, migration and forced displacement in the 22 member states of the League of Arab States (Arab League). It is not one world but comprises several regions, including Northwest Africa, also known as the Maghreb with Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya; Egypt is sometimes considered almost a category in its own right. Geographically located in Western Asia are the countries also known as the Mashreq or the Middle East, which include countries of conflict (Iraq, Palestine, Syria) and host countries (Jordan, Lebanon). The Arab Gulf region – often referred to as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries with Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) – consists of the oil/gas-rich countries, destinations for migrant workers. Yemen is part of the Arab Gulf countries (not the GCC), and is one of the poorest countries globally, ravaged by war since 2015. Sub-Saharan countries are a fifth geographical group, with Somalia, Sudan, the Comoros and Djibouti.

Along with wars and conflicts, the region has been troubled by migration and forced displacement for decades, and it has also been enriched by some of these movements. Al Nakba – the catastrophe – says it all to the Arab people: Al Nakba stands for the traumatic displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians¹ from their homes, particularly after 1948 (UNRWA, 2010). Al Jazeera (2017) explains some of the Palestinian experiences and Arab perceptions. Each year, Palestinian refugees around the world commemorate Nakba and ask for the right of return (Middle East Monitor, 2020). Palestinians are defined as stateless² (Shiblak, 2006). On 14 May 1948, the State of Israel was proclaimed as a Jewish state, highlighting that “Survivors of the Nazi holocaust in Europe, as well as Jews from other parts of the world, continued to migrate to Eretz-Israel” (Yale Law School, 2008). Each year, Israel commemorates its Independence Day with a torch-lighting ceremony; in 2020, it was held for the first time in 72 years without spectators, part of the restrictions aimed at curtailing the spread of Covid-19 (Staff, 2020). Characterising Israel as a Jewish state is highly controversial (Nusseibeh, 2011; The BBC, 2018). This brief review cannot discuss, in any appropriate and meaningful way, the history, the legal matters, the human toll and implications of the conflict between the Jewish and the Palestinian people in this part of the world. The Palestinian refugees represent a combination of one of the longest-lasting crises and largest-unsettled populations since the end of World War II in 1945. They face a severe protection gap as they

1 Note that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) refers to “Palestine” refugees, not “Palestinian” refugees, defining the group as “persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict” (UNRWA, n.d.). This paper uses, in line with common parlance, the term “Palestinian” refugees.

2 For a definition of “statelessness”, see glossaries recommended hereby (EMN, 2018; IOM, 2019; UNHCR, n.d.b)

are explicitly excluded from the 1951 Refugee Convention which deprives them of specific refugee rights enshrined in the Convention, for instance the individualized definition of a refugee as opposed to the group-approach; the principle of non-refoulement (meaning that a refugee must not be returned to the country of origin against her or his wish); resettlement in third states. Instead, Palestinians are supported by the UNRWA which provides direct relief and establishes work. The definition of Palestinian refugees differs fundamentally from the definition of refugees under the 1951 Refugee Convention with the 1967 Protocol, and so does the protection provided by the UNHCR to refugees as opposed to the services provided by the UNRWA to Palestinian refugees.

When UNRWA “began operations in 1950, it was responding to the needs of about 750,000 Palestine refugees. Today, some 5 million Palestine refugees are eligible for UNRWA services” (UNRWA, n.d.). About one-third of all registered Palestinian refugees still live in camps – after 70 years of displacement – in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem (UNRWA, n.d.). Palestinian refugees are entitled to receive basic subsistence including shelter, food and clothing but none of the protections for refugees under UNHCR’s mandate.

Jordan is a country deeply affected by migration and forced displacement. The country is flanked by protracted conflicts, starting with Palestine 1948 and 1967, extending to Lebanon (civil war 1975-1990; Israel-Hezbollah war 2006), the Arab Gulf region (in response to Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait, 1990-1991), Iraq (invasion starting 2003), Syria (starting 2011), and has been termed a “refugee haven” (Chatelard, 2010). Jordanians are not known as refugees because they rather migrate for economic and educational reasons. Palestinian refugees, in particular, affect the country’s perception of migration, forced displacement and respective policies. Many Palestinians now have full citizenship in Jordan (El Muhtaseb, 2013). During the war in Syria that has uprooted hundreds of thousands citizens since it started in 2011, nearly 10,000³ Palestinian refugees from Syria have sought assistance from UNRWA in Jordan (UNRWA, 2016). Jordan has not ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention nor the 1967 Protocol but its constitution prohibits the extradition of political refugees; the country welcomes refugees in the spirit of guesthood, although the term has no legal significance (El-Abed, 2014).

The wider MENA region could remain an “epicentre of global displacement challenges” as a result of conflicts and limited prospects for comprehensive political solutions, according to the UNHCR’s Regional Director (UNHCR, 2020b, p. 100). The Syrian situation remains the largest refugee crisis in the world⁴: Around 13.5 million Syrians are forcibly displaced which include 6.8 million people who are internationally displaced (refugees) and 6.7 million people who are internally displaced (IDPs; UNHCR, 2021a). Counting in Palestinian refugees under UNRWA’s mandate – 5.7 million people – provides a glimpse into the region’s massive refugee movements due to conflict. Refugees

³ Numbers and decimals are rounded in this text, keeping a good balance between accuracy and readability.

⁴ In 2020, 68% of all refugees globally came from just five countries – mostly from Syria (6.7 million), Venezuela (4 million), Afghanistan (2.6 million), South Sudan (2.2 million), Myanmar (1.1 million; UNHCR, 2021a, p. 3).

from MENA mostly find refuge in their own region, as is usually the case around the world (Lengauer, 2021, pp. 197-222). They are mainly hosted by Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. Turkey hosts the largest number of refugees worldwide, with 3.7 million people that year. Absolute numbers are one side of the story, relative numbers tell another one: Lebanon, a country shaken by crises itself, hosts the largest number of refugees relative to its national population, with one in eight people being a refugee; in Jordan, one in 15 people is a refugee, and in Turkey one in 23 (UNHCR, 2021a, p. 3).

The MENA region is not only troubled by migration and forced displacement, but also seen in another dimension to these movements. Interventions to better integrate refugees aim to benefit both refugees and their host communities and to make tangible migrants' contributions to their host countries. Remittances sent by migrants are appreciated in receiving countries. Donor funding support to host large numbers of refugees provides some assistance to countries like Jordan (Kellerer, 2017). In addition, labour migration is a strong factor in MENA, telling stories from at least two perspectives: Some of the MENA countries welcome remittances, which represent a considerable share of GDP, for instance in Lebanon (36%), Jordan (9%), Egypt (7%), Morocco (6%) or Tunisia (5%; World Bank, 2020). These monies are mostly earned in another part of MENA, in the oil-rich Arab Gulf countries, where ILO estimates 23 million migrant workers including 9 million women (39%) to be employed. These are mainly from Asia but with sizeable numbers also from Egypt and increasingly from Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. The proportion of non-nationals in the employed population in the Arab Gulf countries is among the highest in the world with an average of over 70% and more than 80% of the population in Qatar and the UAE (ILO, 2020). The rights

Table 1: Definition of “refugee” according to the Refugee Convention versus Definition of “Palestinian refugee” according to UNRWA

Refugee Convention: Definition of “refugee”	UNRWA: Definition of “Palestinian refugee”
<p>“The term “refugee” shall apply to any person who: [...]</p> <p>(2) As a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951 and owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it”(UNHCR, 2010, Art. 1A).</p> <p><i>Note that refugees from war or conflict are included.</i></p>	<p>Note that UNRWA services are available to all those living in UNRWA areas of operation (e.g. Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and Gaza) who meet this definition, who are registered with UNRWA and who need assistance. The descendants of Palestine refugee males, including adopted children, are also eligible for registration (UNRWA, n. d.).</p> <p><i>Note that UNRWA services are available to all those living in UNRWA areas of operation (e.g. Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and Gaza) who meet this definition, who are registered with UNRWA and who need assistance. The descendants of Palestine refugee males, including adopted children, are also eligible for registration (UNRWA, n. d.).</i></p>
<p>Source: Own illustration.</p>	

of labour migrants in the Gulf countries are issues reported by scholars, the media and institutions (e.g. Best, 2019).

Arab journalists, too, are refugees, and some have fled “to tell the tale” (Reporters Without Borders, n.d.). The world mourns almost 200 journalists who have lost their lives by the end of 2020 in Syria, Iraq and other MENA countries (CPJ, 2020; UNESCO, 2020). Among the cases are founder and director of the independent Syrian station Radio Fresh, Fares Raed, and Hamoud al-Jnaid, Radio Fresh reporter and photographer, who were assassinated in 2018 (CPJ, 2018). Marie Colvin is among the foreign journalists who paid with their lives reporting from the frontlines. She, too, was murdered because of her profession (Hilsum, 2019). Self-exiled Saudi Arabian journalist Jamal Khashoggi, a columnist for the Washington Post newspaper, was killed in October 2018 in the consulate of Saudi Arabia in Istanbul, Turkey (Dora, 2020; Khamis, 2018).

Other journalists have managed to escape the bombs, bullets and attacks on their lives, and they are, fortunately, even able to look back to decades of telling the stories of people who try to escape conflicts throughout the region. Jane Arraf, for instance, the veteran journalist reporting from Iraq (Arraf, 2009; Arraf, 2019a), witnessed the Yazidis escaping the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and embarking on the perilous move to Europe (Arraf, 2015). Four years later, Arraf interviewed ISIS families, now refugees in Syrian camps themselves, praying “for the caliphate to return” (Arraf, 2019b).

The media is often met with much criticism about newsrooms that parachute inexperienced journalists into the complexities of Arab conflicts, Palestine today, Iraq tomorrow, Syria next, getting ready for Yemen after a stopover in Somalia before flying out to Egypt on the way to Morocco via Libya. Journalists withdraw their attention as readily as new crises arise. Raed Fares regretted having “noticed a marked drop in interest in the Syrian conflict. Reporters who had once reached out to him daily had moved on to report on other crises” (Vidwans, 2018). Veteran reporters with decades of experience, tried, tested and trusted networks in the region plus survival skills are a rare treasure, but they exist, and they are needed as good practices in breaking the news and reporting competently with profound knowledge. UNESCO strongly promotes the safety of journalists and combatting impunity for those who attack journalists (e.g. by a model course on teaching safety for journalists which is also available in Arabic: Foley et al. 2017).

Looking from the Middle East and the Arab Gulf region to North Africa, a different set of issues of migration and forced displacement unfolds. Naila Hamdy and Ghadeer Ahmed show the complexities of Egypt (see below) and explain in-depth the case of Sudanese refugees in Egypt, including media coverage thereof. They also show that the Egyptian constitution guarantees asylum for political refugees.

PERSPECTIVES FROM EGYPT: INTRA-AFRICAN MIGRATION TO EGYPT

by Naila Hamdy and Ghadeer Ahmed

Egypt has a central position in the MENA region, connecting Europe, Asia and Africa, which made it a destination for regional migration flows from Africa. This is why during the past few years Egypt has exerted so much effort to deal with the flows from Africa, combating human trafficking and irregular migration through strengthening the sentences for traffickers (MHub, 2018).

Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt mostly come from East Africa and the Middle East. Some of them are fleeing conflicts and civil wars, and others migrate to seek better opportunities. As per the UN report of 2019, Egypt in 2019 had over 500,000 migrants, most of whom are from Syria (UNDESA, 2019). The anatomy of these numbers is as follows: 255,000 refugees and asylum seekers registered with UNHCR in Egypt. 133,000 are Syrian, 42,000 are Sudanese, and 16,000 Ethiopian; the remaining were Eritreans, South Sudanese, Yemenis, Somalis, and Iraqis, amongst others (UNHCR, 2019a).

Egypt's policy towards the refugees and asylum seekers in general is multifaceted, starting with the Egyptian constitution. Article 53 of the Egyptian Constitution guarantees asylum for political refugees and also states that "Egypt is obliged to grant the right of political asylum to any foreigner who has been persecuted for his defense of the interests of people, or of human rights, peace or justice". The Office of the President is in charge of granting asylum to political refugees. However, little is known about the procedures for qualifying as a "political refugee" (Zohry, 2003).

Egypt has signed and ratified many international conventions to protect the rights of asylum seekers and refugees, such as the OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Declaration on the Protection of Refugees and Displaced Persons in the Arab World from 1992, guided by the provisions of the UN instruments relating to human rights and refugees, as well as relevant regional instruments (Grindell, 2003).

Despite the constitutional rights guaranteed by the Egyptian constitution, and Egypt's signature and ratification of many conventions on the rights of asylum seekers and refugees, Egypt lacks national laws that can regulate the situation of refugees, and the unwritten non-integration policy of the refugees leaves them in a non-solid basis. As a result, the Egyptian government has left the UNHCR to be responsible for regulating and assuming responsibility on all refugee status determination. However, this complicates the UNHCR work to fulfil its primary mandate of refugee protection. Additionally, there are no procedures for a judicial review for status determination and no obvious appeal processes for rejected refugees (Kagan, 2002; Kagan, 2003).

However, the policy regarding refugees and asylum seekers differs according to groups so they have different entitlements. Sudanese, because of bilateral agreements between Egypt and Sudan, have access to education and health. Sudanese can also work but the majority do so in the informal sector because of lack of opportunities. All other groups have no access to such rights. In Egypt, Sudanese have for a very long time enjoyed a status closer or similar to Egyptian nationals. This was mainly due to the large number of bilateral agreements between Egypt and Sudan, the latest being the Nile Valley Agreement of 1976, which guaranteed and allowed the safe and free movement of people and goods across common borders (Sperl, 2001). When Sudan faced the first wave of the civil war between 1955 and 1972, the first cohort of Sudanese asylum seekers came to Egypt. The second cohort started coming into the country because of the continued civil war in 1983. The Sudanese asylum seekers in Egypt are mostly from Darfur, Southern Sudan, and South Kordofan and South Blue Nile regions. But civil wars have not been the only reasons behind Sudanese seeking sanctuary in Egypt. Searching for better opportunities, and the famine that made life impossible around certain areas in Khartoum have made the Sudanese flee their home country (Cooper, 1993).

Until 1995, Sudanese refugees were not asked to seek asylum in Egypt and they were generally referred to as “displaced people”. However, after the attempted assassination of Hosni Mubarak, the former Egyptian president, in Addis Ababa, which was alleged to be supported by Islamic fundamentalists backed by the Sudanese government, Egypt changed its open-door policy towards Sudanese asylum seekers. Since then, Sudanese people are required to request a visa before they cross Egypt’s borders, and if the citizen was a refugee, she or he should follow the procedures of the refugee status determination process at UNHCR (Zohry, 2003). The numbers of Sudanese refugees recognized by UNHCR in 2001 was only 2,960, but this number does not even come closer to assuming or reflecting the real number of Sudanese who have fled Sudan due to war and conflict, and are estimated at around 28,000 (Brookings, 2016).

The next biggest number of African refugees in Egypt are Somali. Before the civil war eruption in Somalia in 1991, Somali citizens in Egypt were categorized into three groups: Diplomats and their families, graduate and undergraduate students and families headed by women who came to educate their children while their husbands worked in the Gulf (Al-Sharmani, 2003). In 2003, there were 1,832 recognized Somali refugee, 952 rejected applicants, and 1,544 asylum seekers (UNHCR, 2003).

A third group of African refugees in Egypt are Ethiopians, who started moving into Egypt from 1977 to 1979 to escape the Mengistu regime’s “Red Terror” (Cooper, 1992). The next wave came in 1991 and 1992 when the Mengistu regime fell, some of those refugees were military members of the regime. However, political suppression was not the sole cause for Ethiopians to flee their country. The border conflict between both Eritrea and Ethiopia 1998-2000, the lack and the suppression of freedom of expression, the absence of civil liberties in both countries at the time, and the

economic turndown caused both Ethiopians and Eritreans to flee their countries (Zohry, 2003). According to the UNHCR, in 2001, the official number of recognized Ethiopian and Eritrean refugees combined and living in Cairo was 77. Their recognition rate was 13% for Eritreans and 14% for Ethiopians. In 2000, however, according to Zohry (2003), the actual number of both the Eritrean and Ethiopian refugee and asylum seekers community is around 5,000 whose files, or most of them, have been closed by the UNHCR and who are subjected to deportation at any time (UNHCR, 2001).

The experience of some immigrants in Egypt has been a subject of controversy. According to Henry (2012), there have been negative comments regarding their skin colour and their culture. In 2013, with the issues following the process of the Great Renaissance Dam construction, hostility towards Ethiopian refugees increased. Amnesty International reported 20 incidents of attacks against Ethiopians in 2013. This has been linked to the negative role the media has played in framing the perception of Ethiopians to the local community (Soliman, 2016). In the Egyptian film industry, immigrants are mainly associated with being domestic workers or seen as a symbol of resentment due to their darker skin colour or sometimes as symbols of laziness (Eltigani, 2019). In 2019, an Egyptian actress participating in a candid camera show was trying to imitate Sudanese women through colouring her own skin and talking in a dialect that is not related by any means to the Sudanese dialect. This episode has created widespread criticism for the actress, accusing her of racism. However, in 2016 the women's magazine *Nos El Donia* featured personalized stories of refugees in Egypt, interviewing and portraying their day-to-day life. Good portrayals appear to be reserved for the Syrian community who have been successful in the food industry.

PERSPECTIVES FROM RUSSIA: MIGRATION IN THE POST-SOVIET SPACE

by Anna Litvinenko and Svetlana Bodrunova

Since 1990, Russia has been one of the countries with the largest gross migrant population in the world. In 1990 to 2015, it has been the second biggest migrant attractor area (UN, 2019; OECD, 2013). With the rise of migration into the EU and Middle East countries in the second half of the 2010s, Russia has moved into fourth place, after the USA, Germany, and Saudi Arabia (UN, 2019; OECD, 2019), but still remains the ultimate destination for millions of post-Soviet migrants. If we consider the share of migrants in the country's population, as of 2012 Russia was only ranked in 55th place worldwide (Popescu, 2012). According to the Migration Data Portal (2021), the share of migrant population has been hovering around 8% since 1990. Stable for the country on the whole, the absolute number of migrants varies highly by region, with Moscow/Moscow region and St. Petersburg/Leningrad region hosting far more migrants than other areas (Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, 2020).

Labour Migration from Post-Soviet Countries

The reason for a large migrant flow in the past 25 years was mostly economic migration to Russia from the former Soviet republics, with people coming to seek employment in Russia. Bodrunova et. al. (2017a) state in their paper "Who's bad? Attitudes toward re-settlers from the post-Soviet south versus other nations in the Russian blogosphere": "Russia's contemporary migration issues have been strongly influenced by the USSR's policies on migration and ethnicity and their subsequent semi-abolition" (Bodrunova et al., 2017a, p. 3246). The economic rise in the 2000s triggered a new wave of labour migrants, coming mostly from Ukraine, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan (Bessudnov, 2016).

Since 2013, the overall number of foreigners in Russia fluctuated between 9.2 and 11.5 million people yearly. In 2019, Russia hosted about 9.56 million foreigners, of which circa 7 million were labour migrants, with only about half of them getting legally employed. Among those, the inflow of the so-called long-term international migrants has since 2014 been circa 560,000 to 600,000 people (Mkrtchan & Florinskaya, 2019). Since 2016, a decrease was observed, due to four factors.

First, the number of post-Soviet citizens who wished to resettle became naturally exhausted, while the living conditions in the post-Soviet states improved, which made the potential migrants of newer generations either remain in their countries of origin or re-orient to the EU or other destinations. Second, the Ukrainian conflict diminished the number of Ukrainians willing to move to

Russia. Third, in 2018, a sharp fall in the value of the Russian Rouble prevented many Central Asians from coming to Russia or even made them return to their countries of origin. Fourth, the outflow from the country has been growing, e.g. from 308,000 in 2014 to 441,000 in 2018 (Mkrtchan & Florinskaya, 2019). Due to these reasons, in 2018, the long-term migration ratio, for the first time in a decade, has not covered the natural decrease of the Russian population. However, for several months, a new jump in the migration figures was fixed when the Ministry of Internal Affairs started to provide more complex data on immigration registration, and, thus, the drop in the numbers for 2018 might have been an artifact of data collection methods (Mkrtchan & Florinskaya, 2019), but it remains unclear to what extent.

As of 2019, the leader among countries-of-origin for the overall number of the labour migrants on Russian territory was Uzbekistan (about 1 million people), with Tajikistan being second with 524,000 migrants (Torocheshnikova, 2019). In addition to migration from the post-Soviet countries, Russia has been experiencing a large internal migration, in particular from the poor regions of North Caucasus. These regions are represented by various ethnic groups such as Chechens, Dagestani and Ingushes (Bessudnov, 2016). Some media have been reinforcing alienation and hostility by highlighting the nationality of criminals in case of crimes committed by migrants (Malashenko, 2011). Malashenko states in his report “The North Caucasus: Russia’s Internal Abroad?” that some media, especially print outlets, have been creating an image of the “bad Caucasian” since the 1990s (Malashenko, 2011, p. 10). This was especially true regarding Chechnya and the ‘Chechen terrorists’ in the times of the two military campaigns against separatists in the republic. Reporting on Chechen terrorism as a social threat in a one-sided way imaged Chechnya as home for bandit groups and terrorists, and fed a lack of sympathy to the Chechen population in the conflict area (Gudkov et al. 2008). Malashenko (2011, p. 10) also highlights the importance of popular culture, books and films, where “evil doers” are often natives from North Caucasus. Immigrants were also ridiculed in comedy shows like *Nasha Rasha* (‘Our Russia’) on TNT, a widely popular private TV channel. This media discourse added to the perception of the word “migrant” as a pejorative associated mostly with temporary labour migrants from the post-Soviet Central Asia and North Caucasus.

Hutchins & Tolz (2015), analysing TV discourse in Russia on matters of migration, have found that TV content follows state policies. On the one hand, Russia has open borders with most countries of ex-Soviet Central Asia and South Caucasus and fosters labour migration, as well as repatriation of the Russian-speaking populace. On the other hand, the authorities in large cities such as Moscow and St. Petersburg have argued for the introduction of visas for labour migrants and call for higher criminalization of migrant communities than for the host city residents. In continuous attempts to lobby the introduction of labour visas for Central Asians, the Moscow authorities have many times publicly reported on the disproportionately high percentage of crimes committed by migrants. Hutchins & Tolz (2015) reveal that TV reporting on migrants reveals an embarrassment in reporting ethnic crises.

Xenophobic attitudes towards migrants on the rise

Bodrunova et al. (2017a) distinguish the following groups of migrants that are dominant in the mediatized public discourse of Russia: (1) Central Asians (*aziaty*), including Tajiks, Uzbeks, Kyrgyzs, and Turkmen (but not Kazakhs, who are “a different scenario”); (2) North Caucasians, including Dagestani, Chechens, Ingushes, Ossetians, and the pejorative *kavkaztsy* (Caucasians); and (3) South Caucasians, including Azerbaijani (*azery*), Armenians, Georgians, and the pejorative *kavkaztsy* belonging also to this group. They also mention the importance of Chinese migrants for the East Asian regions of the country but note that they are not prominently mentioned in Russian public communication on the federal level.

Some surveys have shown that the population demonstrates the most negative attitudes towards these groups of migrants, whereas migrants from Eastern European post-Soviet republics are being perceived more neutrally. As Bessudnov put it, “not all immigrants are equally unwelcome” (Bessudnov, 2016, p. 567). Based on a survey of 24,500 people in 2011, he concluded that Ukrainians and Moldovans were perceived more favourable by Russians compared to migrants from the Caucasus and Central Asia (Bessudnov, 2016).

According to one source, the xenophobic attitudes towards labour migrants were rather high throughout the 2000s, declined slightly since 2014 and increased again since 2017 (Levada Center, 2019). This is to some extent in line with the world trends. According to the World Values Survey, in 1995, 11 % of people did not want to have migrants as neighbours, while in 2011 it was already 32 % of population (Inglehart et al., 2018); calculation based on an earlier version of the database in Bodrunova et al. (2017a, p. 3247). The all-Russian survey demonstrated a 15 % growth of negative attitudes towards migrants between 2006 and 2012 (All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center, 2013). From 2017 to 2019, the share of people who supported the idea of limiting labour migration increased from 58 to 72 % (Levada Center, 2019). Experts link this recent trend to the overall economic recession in the country that was triggered by the introduction of international sanctions in 2014.

Several cases in recent Russian history have shown hostility towards labour migrants, such as the brutal conflict between locals and migrants in the town of Kondopoga in 2006 and anti-migrant beatings after an alleged killing of a Russian man by a migrant in Moscow district Biryulevo in 2013. Research of social media discussions around the Biryulevo case (Bodrunova et al., 2017b) has shown an institutional vacuum in protecting migrants’ interests in online public discourse. Thus, on Twitter, unlike in Germany, the pro-migrant discourse is virtually non-existent, while in Germany it has been present in the accounts of the left-wing media, NGOs, and regional-level politicians (Smoliarova et al., 2017). Conflicts related to migrants provoke radicalized discussions where two different ‘nationalisms’ (of the anti-establishment and pro-establishment stances) might be distinguished, in contrast to the neutral media-based discourse (Bodrunova et al., 2019). This is accompanied by awkward communication initiatives by local governments aimed at migrants’

integration but in fact supporting stereotypes and negativism towards the migrant communities. One such case was a brochure prepared in 2012 by a St. Petersburg NGO 'A Look into the Future' and then uploaded to the website of the regional governmental program 'Tolerance' and supported by the regional office of the Federal Migration Agency. The brochure contained instructions for the migrants on general rules of public behaviour; the subjects of the brochure were represented by a trowel, a broom, and other instruments of manual labour, while the locals they met (doctors, policemen etc.) were represented as people (Mavliev, 2012).

Support for the refugees from Ukraine

As our study of the Russian coverage of migrant and refugee-related topics in 2019 for the European Journalism Observatory (EJO) showed, the topic of labour migrants and in particular illegal labour migrants was, predictably, very prominent in both newspapers studied (Fengler & Kreutler, 2020). The word "refugee" is mostly used in Russian media to describe the so-called 'European refugee crisis', and only partly to mark the migrants who arrived in Russia from the Ukrainian war zone since 2014. As migration researcher Bessudnov estimates based on official statistics of migrants from foreign countries, the number of Ukrainian citizens who arrived in Russia right after the outburst of the war in Eastern Ukraine was approximately one million (Bessudnov, 2016). There has been no rise of anti-refugee attitudes detected by opinion polls at the time. It may be due to the fact that Ukrainian people usually quite easily blend in with the Russian population, so that this group of refugees remained almost unnoticed for the host population. Also, the pro-state media that supports the foreign policy of Russia, framed the hosting of Donbass refugees as an act of standing up for Ukrainian people.

One topic concerning migration that is positively framed in the Russian pro-governmental media is the re-immigration of Russians from abroad, the so-called "returning compatriots". For instance, there are German Russians who emigrated to Germany and now return to Russia, because of nostalgia and/or their proclaimed attachment to the so-called "traditional values". Episodically, regional media publish stories of unsuccessful repatriations that criticize both the policy and how repatriation is organized.

Brain Drain: The largest wave of emigration since the beginning of 1990s

A large wave of emigration of well-educated specialists remains virtually dethematised in the Russian public discussion. According to the estimation of Herbst and Erofeev (2019), between 1.6 and 2 million people left Russia since 2000. Currently, the level of emigration has reached a new peak after the wave of the 1990s, and the desire to emigrate among well-educated specialists is continuing to rise (Herbst & Erofeev, 2019). Based on focus groups and an online survey, Herbst & Erofeev (2019) have found that the main reason is a perceived increase of authoritarian trends in the country, as well as perceived suppression of freedom of speech and entrepreneurship.

PERSPECTIVES FROM ASIA

by Isabella Kurkowski

Asia-Pacific is one of the largest regions of migration and forced displacement worldwide. According to the Migration Data Portal, the total number of international migrants in Asia was almost 86 million in 2020 (Migration Data Portal, 2021). UNHCR (2020a) reports over nine million people of concern to the Refugee Agency across the region; this number includes over four million refugees and asylum-seekers, over three million internally displaced people (IDPs) and over two million stateless people. The majority of refugees originate from Afghanistan and Myanmar (UNHCR, 2020a). The reasons for migration and forced displacement are mostly armed conflict, political violence and climate-change induced disaster. Asia is affected by regular environmental disasters like flooding, soil degradations, typhoons, cyclones, earthquakes as well as droughts, which impact internal displacement. People affected by such regular disasters try to escape the situation, very often by migrating from rural to urban areas (ADB, 2012). South East Asia, East Asia and South Asia will, according to climate change predictions, very likely experience an increase of extreme weather conditions, such as heat waves and flash floods, as well as 10% to 20% increase in tropical cyclone intensities (ADB, 2012).

The reasons for migration and forced displacement are multi-faceted. Very often movements are cross-cutting and not focused on only one problem. Countries like Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan show different context factors for migration and forced displacement. While Bangladesh is a country with massive climate-change induced internal displacements (IDCM, 2021), it also hosts over 860,000 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar (UNHCR, 2020c). The refugees in all the camps in Bangladesh have limited freedom of movement. The Human Rights Watch Report 2018 “Bangladesh is not my country” (Human Rights Watch, 2018) states:

Another challenge facing Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh is the lack of recognized legal status, which puts them on precarious legal footing under domestic law. All the new arrivals are officially registered as “Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals,” a designation that denies their refugee status and any rights attached to that status. This makes them more vulnerable to denial of freedom of movement, access to public services, education, and livelihoods, as well as to arrest and exploitation. However, as a party to core international human rights treaties, Bangladesh is nevertheless obligated to ensure all persons within its jurisdiction, including refugees, retain access to fundamental rights.

Three examples from the region show the complexity of the situation:

- Pakistan, in 2020, had an international migrant stock of 3.3 million, and hosted some 1.4 million refugees (mostly from war-torn Afghanistan) while the total number of refugees from Pakistan measures 132,200 (Migration Data Portal, 2019). The Internal Displacement Monitoring

Center (IDMC) reports over 800,000 new displacements related to disasters in Pakistan in 2020 – these numbers have been as high as 11 million displacements in 2010 following the worst floods in the country’s history (IDMC, 2021).

- Bangladesh is “one of the world’s most disaster-prone countries in the world” (IDMC, 2021). In 2020, over four million people were newly displaced, “most of them pre-emptive evacuations” related to a cyclone. In 2009, the severe cyclonic storm Aila displaced millions of people and killed more than 200 (McDonnell, 2019).
- In Myanmar, 50,000 new displacements due to disaster were recorded in 2020 and 70,000 new displacements due to conflict. Here, too, displacements related to disaster skyrocketed in the past to almost 2.3 million when cyclone Nargis made landfall in 2008 (IDMC, 2021). Myanmar is frequently affected by monsoon rains and flooding, which also affects the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh around Cox Bazar, where flash flooding has impacted essential shelter-housings (UN News, 2019).

However, monsoon floodings are not solely responsible for internal displacements. There are also droughts: four of the ten countries where people are most at risk of displacement from conflict and sudden-onset weather disasters also regularly see large proportions of their populations impacted by drought (Oxfam, 2019). Pakistan has been hit for years by monsoon floodings and droughts. In 2019 water shortages and crop failure, caused by record-low rainfalls, have forced farming families to abandon their land (Shaikh, & Tunio, 2019).

On the other side, labour migration and brain drain are also increasingly topics in Asia. Asian out-migration in most cases is connected to the search for better working conditions. Labour migration from Asia to the Middle East increased from 17.3% in 1990 to 26.9% in 2017 (Kikkawa et al., 2019). The mobility for many people has also been facilitated by the rapid expansion of the media, mobile phones, the internet, diaspora networks, improved transport links and cheaper travel options.

Referring to this complex and disaster-risk situation for migrants and refugees, very often the media and access to media play important roles in the sharing experience, keeping family contacts, exchanging relevant information on health issues and other news. Especially domestic NGOs can interact by establishing for example community radios in refugee camps like Radio NAF in Bangladesh (Marshall et al., 2018). The reporters are refugees themselves who provide a different perspective from the inside by using media channels. According to their own experiences, the reporters of Radio NAF have sensitive approaches when reporting on refugees.

Such trained community reporters can spread important information directly on the spot in a professional way and increase the exchange among the reporters themselves and with the broader population as well. International media should take part in this human-centred process, using such existing opportunities and also transferring the messages abroad to a wider public. The German media development organization DW Akademie trains Rohingya refugees as radio reporters in the

most densely populated refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, giving space to over 860,000 Rohingya refugees in 2019 (UNHCR, 2020c). An estimated 70% of Rohingya refugees are illiterate. Radio NAF makes their voices heard and provides relevant information by its programmes about livelihood, help for arrivals, sanitary requirements, legal rights and health issues amongst others. The project trains in two directions: local radio journalists from Bangladesh as well as the Rohingya refugee volunteers are trained as dual partners in professional radio reporting (Marshall et al., 2018). Their stories and programmes are not only broadcast on the radio, but examples are also used for publication in the local media and on websites abroad. The experiences of the Rohingya refugee reporters and their colleagues from Bangladesh are also shared in joint training initiatives with universities in Bangladesh, which provide academic journalism training on community radio reporting (DW Akademie, 2019).

The region has a high number of migrant workers, refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants seeking permanent residency or citizenship in other countries. Facebook is an important social media channel in order to stay connected or to stay informed. However, it is also misused as a channel for the distribution of hate speech against ethnic minorities, migrants and refugees, producing stereotypes and disseminating false and discriminatory information, like in the case of Rohingya in Myanmar. In 2018 Reuters analysed 1,000 examples attacking the Rohingya or other Myanmar Muslims in posts, comments, images and videos that were on Facebook.

Free access to information for professional journalists to areas of conflict is essential in order to produce professional and ethically correct reports. In 2018, 2019 and 2020 the situation due to armed conflicts in the Rakhine region was getting worse for local media reporters and journalists, who have been in most cases blocked by the government on reporting from affected areas. In 2019 and 2020 the situation in obtaining access to information reached the point of an internet shut-down in Myanmar in the areas of Rakhine, leaving the remained Rohingya in the war-torn region of Rakhine without internet or mobile communication channels. So far, despite the ongoing refugee and migration crises and rising numbers, the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (UNHCR, 2010) has only been ratified by 18 out of 47 Asian states (UNHCR, n.d.a). In Asia none of Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar or Pakistan have signed the treaty.

Since the problem is affecting most of the Asian countries, climate-change induced migration and disaster risks should be prominently covered by domestic media. Very often, however, the topic is not transferred by the domestic media in a proper way. Migration is currently not a standard subject in academic journalism study courses in Asia. Considering the huge migrant stock, forced displacement and refugees in the region, it would be of huge advantage to empower journalism educators, students and practicing journalists in their reporting. Some examples show how it can be implemented in journalism education. In Myanmar in 2016 for example, the Myanmar Journalism School in cooperation with the German Embassy established a Climate Change Reporting Award (German Embassy Yangon, 2017), which led to awareness on climate-change induced topics in different media.

PERSPECTIVES FROM PAKISTAN

by Sher Baz Khan

Migration is intertwined with the genesis and subsequent history of Pakistan. On August 14-15, 1947, British India was divided between a Muslim-majority Pakistan and a Hindu-majority India that caused one of the greatest movements in human history. Millions of Indian Muslims migrated to Pakistan that promised an Islamic welfare state based on democracy; protection against Hindu majoritarianism, socio-economic exploitation, and persecution; and an exclusive market for Muslim business families. Almost an equal number of Pakistani Hindus and Sikhs were, however, pushed to India as they feared for their lives, religious freedom, and future in the ideologically Islamic state of Pakistan. The partition also killed up to two million people, as Hindus and Sikhs on one side and Muslims on other attacked each other in a terrifying outbreak of sectarian violence and mutual genocide (Bharadwaj et al., 2008; Dalrymple, 2020). The division of India was followed by the partition of East Pakistan that became independent Bangladesh in the wake of the bloody 1971 civil war that forced 10 million people to migrate to India (Dutta, 2013). Later, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan prompted a series of waves in migration and forced displacement to Pakistan in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s: The UNHCR registered more than 3.5 million Afghans in various refugee camps in Pakistan as several millions more Afghans stayed illegally. Even after several phases of repatriation over the last two decades, Pakistan still hosts over 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees (Grandi, 2020; Migration Data Portal, 2019; UNHCR, 2021b).

Pakistan issued the Proof of Registration (PoR) cards to Afghan refugees, which require regular extensions by the federal government (Government of Pakistan, & UNHCR, 2007). In September 2018, the newly elected prime minister, Imran Khan, promised to offer Pakistani nationality to the third generation of Afghan (and Bengali) refugees as per Section 4 of the Citizenship Act of 1951 that allows Pakistani citizenship by birth (see Nazir, 2016, for analysis on Pakistan's citizenship law). Refugees who are finding it hard to integrate into the job market and formal economy welcomed the announcement, but it met ire at home as right-wing politicians and the military establishment opposed it (AFP, 2019). After 9/11, Pakistan's war against its own Taliban displaced millions of families internally from the tribal and semi-tribal areas until 2014. Pakistan has a population of over 221 million, while over 6.3 million Pakistani immigrants live abroad (Migration Data Portal, 2019; Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2017). In 2019, Pakistan's Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment indicated that 271,438 skilled Pakistanis emigrated abroad. According to the Bureau, member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) offer a better market for Pakistan's low-skilled labour. However, Pakistan has also witnessed brain drain over the last four decades as highly qualified Pakistani doctors, engineers, scientists, and other professionals move to North America, the EU, Australia, and some East Asian states (Ahmed, 2019). Remittances sent by over-

seas Pakistanis amounted to \$21.83 billion in the financial year 2019-20, an all-time high (Ahmed, 2020; Rizvi, 2019; World Bank, 2019).

A number of push factors are responsible for labour migration and the brain drain of highly skilled professionals and students: Insecurity in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Baluchistan, and Karachi; political instability; the economic crisis caused by low productivity in large-scale manufacturing and agriculture and a massive foreign debt burden; lack of better career opportunities and low respect for highly skilled labour; a high ratio of unemployment among qualified workers and educated youth; lack of academically progressive environment for scientific research; and a low standard of higher education (Sajjad, 2011). Other push factors for the brain drain include human rights violations, minority rights issues, sectarianism, curbs on freedom of expression, and natural disasters (Farooq & Ahmad, 2017; Sajjad, 2011). Over six million Pakistanis migrated to other countries in the last two decades despite the post 9/11 travel restrictions. Reversing the brain drain appears impossible, as many politicians, generals, and bureaucrats often prefer their children to study and settle abroad, a trend shared with the middle class (Ahmad, 2017). Other push factors include human rights violations, minority rights issues, gender identity, lack of freedom of expression, e.g., crack down on social media activists, and the quest for modern education. According to the Associated Press of Pakistan (2019), Pakistani students constituted the third largest group of foreign students in China after the latter started funding the \$60 billion plus China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects in Pakistan. The USA, Canada, UK, Germany, Australia, and some other European and East Asian countries are other major higher education destinations for Pakistani students. On the other side, Pakistan's welcoming culture, strong family values, a sizable informal economy, and easy renting and housing policies are important pull factors for migrants and refugees from Afghanistan and some other Muslim countries (Khan, 2011; Sayeed & Shah, 2017).

PERSPECTIVES FROM LATIN AMERICA

by Cilene Victor

Addressing the issue of migration and forced displacement in Latin America is a major challenge. Still, it presents an opportunity to identify and analyse to what extent the region's social, economic, cultural and political reality tends to inhibit, delay or favour the design of humanitarian public policies to address the impacts and life cycle of forced migration. Observing this reality, often used as an argument to harden migration policies, allows journalism to resort to narratives that lessen xenophobia.

Even though Latin American countries have advanced to improve human development rates in recent years, disconcerting statistics on social inequality, poverty and extreme poverty continue to challenge and unsettle governments and their social institutions. From the left or right wing, democratically elected governments face social upheavals motivated by the most diverse causes, such as those that have erupted in Ecuador (The Guardian, 2019), Chile (Esposito, 2019) and Bolivia (The BBC, 2019).

It is in this context of advances, stagnation and setbacks that the migration and forced displacement of more than 2.5 million Venezuelans continues to advance and impose itself as one of the most complex themes for the Latin American democracies. In addition, some of the top causes for internal and international migration and forced displacement – such as armed conflict, disasters, climate change and economic and political instability – present themselves in the region. This means that a migrant or refugee may cross the border of his or her country of origin, due to one of these causes, and find a scenario of equal or greater political, economic and social vulnerability on the other side.

The reality of migration and forced displacement in Latin America must also be analysed with attention to the influence of social media, which has been one of the main sources of information and public opinion formation, in many cases, blurred, disoriented and weakened by frequency, speed and breadth of disinformation and misinformation.

Journalism, by covering the massive movements of migration and forced displacement in the region, can play its part in contributing to forming a lucid public opinion capable of advancing humanitarian public policies to reduce the suffering of millions of women, men, the elderly and children. This role is added to the one that journalism has historically played in democracies: being the guardian of human and civil rights.

Migration debates in Latin American destination countries

According to international organizations, by the end of 2020, around four million Venezuelans were displaced abroad. Over 70% were concentrated in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNHCR, 2021a).

As flows of migrants and refugees grow, more host governments need to ensure their commitment to humanitarian policies to welcome migrants and refugees, avoiding giving in to the pressure and influence in some of press and social media who resort to social problems in their countries and in the region to argue against the reception of migrants and refugees. The more migratory policies harden, the more Venezuelans tend to resort to dangerous routes to enter neighbouring countries, increasing the risk of becoming the target of sexual exploitation and kidnapping (UNHCR, 2019d).

In this context, the combined work of international organizations, humanitarian agencies, NGOs, universities, academics, the media and journalists have contributed to the conception of public policies, studies and new ways of making the local population aware of the problem and the urgency of arousing solidarity and empathy. It can be noted that the polarization between left and right wings, a striking feature in Latin America today, within and beyond borders, has contributed to delay the recognition of the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela and, consequently, prolonging the suffering of millions of people. While part of Latin American public opinion debated whether there was, in fact, a humanitarian crisis in Venezuela that violated human and civil rights, another part discussed possible causes. All this was magnified and amplified by social media and their bubbles.

Although it is imperative that media discuss the root causes of humanitarian crises and emergencies, not limiting the approach to covering migration and forced displacement itself, this should occur simultaneously with covering the reality lived by migrants and refugees, their uncertainties, their helplessness, their potential and their struggle for peace, justice and dignity. Days, weeks, months and years went by and the number of Venezuelans in Latin American countries soared from 700,000 in 2015 to over 3 million in November 2018, one of the years when political polarization defined the way in which Venezuelan migration and forced displacement would be treated in some countries, such as Brazil – an example for this analysis.

As part of the media, political institutions and society sought to raise and understand the root cause of the crisis in Venezuela, a legitimate and necessary pursuit, social media fostered polarized discussions. Crossing the border into Brazil, Venezuelans faced the risks of perpetuating rights violations that motivated their displacement, as in the extreme cases of xenophobia.

The case of Brazil

At the opening of the 71st UN General Assembly in New York on 19 September 2016, Brazil's newly sworn-in President Michel Temer highlighted the commitment to humanitarian issues and the crisis of migration and forced displacement. To support his speech, President Temer said that the country had a population of 95,000 refugees (UN Web TV, 2016; Conectas Human Rights, 2016) when that year the number of refugees was 8,800 from 79 countries, but predominantly Syrians (2,300). Into the quantity, the president added 85,000 Haitians with humanitarian visas obtained due to the earthquake of 12 January 2010, which added to the political, economic and social crisis in Haiti. This population, which lives in concentrated cities such as São Paulo, the capital of the state that received 31,548 Haitians between 2004 and 2019, has faced xenophobic attacks (Santos, 2018).

As of December 2018, of the cumulative total of 25.9 million refugees worldwide, Brazil had a total of 11,231, of which only 6,554 remain active, because some people may have returned to their home country, died or opted for permanent residence. As for requests for refugee status, of the 3.5 million worldwide, the country accounted for 161,057 of this total, most of whom were 85,438 Venezuelans (Conare, 2019).

The exponential growth of asylum seekers coincides with the Venezuelan crisis, with applications rising from 3,375 in 2016 to 17,865 in 2017 and 61,681 in 2018 (Conare, 2019). During 2018, Brazil's National Refugee Committee (Conare, 2019), a body of the Brazilian Federal Police, analysed 1,384 refugee applications and recognized eligibility only in 777 of them, distributed among the following countries: Syria (476), Palestine (52), the DRC (50), Cuba (45), Pakistan (43) and only five from Venezuela. Conare (2018) announced on 14 June 2018 that there is a situation of "serious and widespread violation of human rights" in Venezuela based on item III of art. 1 of Law No. 9474 of 1997, hence, the country has applied its own legislation to welcome Venezuelans. In December 2019, Conare announced that "from now on it will recognize Venezuelan asylum-seekers as refugees on a prima facie basis". This decision "benefited immediately 21,000 of over 120,000 Venezuelan asylum-seekers registered in Brazil". According to Conare's estimate, 224,000 Venezuelans were living in the country in 2019 (UNHCR, 2019c).

Xenophobia

Between 25 January and 8 March 2018, the IOM conducted 3,516 Flow Monitoring interviews in two municipalities of the state of Roraima. Of this total, 97% were with Venezuelans and the remaining 3% were with Colombians, Chileans and Peruvians (IOM, 2018). Of the 3,516 respondents, 58% were men, 41% women and 1% transgender; age was distributed as follows: 71%

between 25 and 49 years old, 22% between 15 and 24 and 7% over 50. Of this total, 51% had secondary education, 26% had higher education and 2% had postgraduate education. 40% had migrated with the family group, 40% alone and 20% with another types of groups. As for the ethnicity, 82% were of mixed race or African descent. Among the reasons mentioned for leaving Venezuela were economic and labour factors (67%); lack of access to food and medical services (22%); insecurity and violence (7%); and persecution (1%). Faced with the question of what would happen if they returned to their country, 42% said they would starve and 32% would face unemployment (IOM, 2018).

The various data raised by the survey also helped to reveal the challenges to which migrants and refugees are exposed. Access to education, for example, is hampered by lack of documentation, a reason pointed out by 31% of respondents. Among the interviewed population, 37% do not have three meals a day and 28% said they had suffered some kind of violence in Brazilian territory, such as verbal (81%), physical (16%) and sexual (2%) (IOM, 2018). Pacaraima faced a xenophobic wave, as expected, considering the scenario in the city: lack of official information regarding the final destination of Venezuelans in the country; spread of disinformation and rumours involving Venezuelans, who were accused of bringing disease into the country and occupying the few existing jobs; prejudiced actions by the national press, which questioned the country's immigration policy and even suggested closing the border with Venezuela, and later the publication and repercussion in the local press of the supposed involvement of a Venezuelan group with a case of theft. After setting fire Venezuelan housing, residents of Pacaraima expelled 1,200 Venezuelans from the city while singing the Brazilian anthem, the ultimate symbol of nationalism.

The mass arrival of Venezuelan migrants and refugees coincided with the rise of the extreme right wing in the country, which, in the context of the crisis of migration and forced displacement, enhanced the speeches focused on national sovereignty and the urgency to protect the country from the "risks of communism". Believing that the presence of migrants and refugees would be another threat to the few advances in the social area, such as health, education, employment, housing and security, thousands of Brazilians began to use social media to demonstrate their discontent with the presence of Venezuelan migrants and refugees. A survey by the Public Policy Analysis Board of the Getúlio Vargas Foundation (FGV DAPP, 2018) identified 58,900 posts about Venezuelan migration in Brazil from 22 January to 19 February. Of this total, 2,000 originated from blogs, publishing news/information material (3.4%), 5,800 news sites (10%) and 51,000 posts on Twitter (86.6%). The study found that, by its content, there was a movement opposed to the reception of Venezuelans, highlighting the criticism of the Venezuelan government, and providing little space to the reality of migrants and refugees (FGV DAPP, 2018).

Despite press coverage regarding hunger, lack of housing and access to basic services, having reduced the focus of social media to the government of Venezuela, the left and right polarization set the tone for criticism. On the one hand, left-wing journalists, commentators and politicians

blamed the right for the xenophobic wave; on the other hand, the right blamed the Brazilian left for supporting a government that was now responsible for a humanitarian crisis. Disoriented Brazilians began to follow the speeches according to their political ideology, leaving the humanitarian issue in the background. If some media approaches can promote a wave of “moral panic” (Bauman, 2016), their indifference to the implications and consequences of a given humanitarian crisis may contribute to the inertia of the authorities and the superficiality of public debate, which, consequently, delays actions to tackle the problem, turning a crisis into a humanitarian emergency. This process, in turn, refers to the discussion above about the controversial securitization of humanitarian interventions, as in an uninterrupted cycle in which the media, acting late, in some cases, plays a leading role. There is no doubt that the two global compacts for Migration and on Refugees (UN, 2020) mark an important advance in the sharing of responsibilities among the UN member states, including Brazil. However, on the same day that the Brazilian government adopted the Compact for Migration in Marrakesh, Morocco, in 2018, a tweet from the future chancellor announced that the country would withdraw from the document due to understanding that the migration issue cannot be treated as a global issue, but respecting the reality of each country (Reuters, 2018). The Brazilian government since formalized that it would no longer adopt the Global Compact for Migration. In the press, the repercussion was modest.

HOW MEDIA IN THE US COVER MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

by Marcus Kreutler, Scott R. Maier, Layire Diop, Kaitlin Miller, and Rajeev Ravisankar

Matters of migration and forced displacement have become a major topic for media in the US in two different ways since 2015: The so-called ‘European refugee crisis’ emerged as an additional topic for a public that was already acutely aware of the increased migration pressure at its border to Mexico but also that it hosts the highest absolute number of international migrants (UN, 2019). The election of Donald Trump as president in 2016, with immigration into the US a defining topic of the successful campaign, was followed by controversial measures of the new president to limit migration (Schmidt, 2019).

A comparative study into the coverage of migration and refugees in 17 countries including the USA allows us to set coverage of the leading newspapers The New York Times and The Washington Post in relation to that of European media, and to identify distinct features related to topic selection, but also the style of reporting. Comparing the amount of coverage during six weeks between 2015 and 2018, The New York Times was among the newspapers that dedicated most articles to the topic (an average of 36 per study week), while The Washington Post’s output (15 per study week) was lower but still above the average of all analysed media and comparable to many of Europe’s more attentive media. It is only in comparison to the attention in Germany and particularly Hungary that the American coverage appears relatively modest, especially when considering the high numbers of migrants arriving in the US. The established self-perception of American institutions and the public as an immigration society may have played a role in limiting coverage to a moderately high level.

However, the content of American coverage was unique in a number of ways. Most strikingly, the American newspapers put more emphasis on migrants and refugees as persons than their European counterparts: Individual migrants feature as main actors almost twice as often in the American newspapers (in 11.1% of the articles), and individual migrants and refugees are both more visible and quoted more often throughout the American coverage. Almost a quarter of all individual migrants identified in all 33 news outlets featured in just the two American newspapers, and they also quoted these actors more regularly (65% of represented individuals were quoted in the US newspapers compared to 51% in European coverage). The New York Times was the only outlet that included an average of more than one individual migrant or refugee per article. These findings may in part be due to a preference for storytelling based on individual stories that is associated with Anglo-Saxon journalism, but it might also reflect adherence to professional norms, since the Society of Professional Journalist’s code of ethics specifically urges American journalists to give “a voice to the voiceless” (Society of Professional Journalists, 2014). In line with most other media,

a majority of the articles in the American newspapers were on political debates about migrant and refugee matters. Beyond politics and the focus on individual migrants' stories, they were also very alert to cover protests or even violent attacks against migrants and refugees. Economic aspects and cultural or religious backgrounds, on the other hand, were almost absent from the American coverage. The two newspapers were different in terms of their perspective on migration and forced displacement: The Washington Post focused more on immigration into the US and political discourse on the topic. By contrast, The New York Times assumed a global perspective with a stronger focus on migration in other regions and Europe in particular – a majority of 53% of its articles dealt with migration into other continents (Fengler & Kreutler, 2020).

Going beyond this particular comparative study, US media have been found to cover migration and forced displacement episodically, with peaks of coverage caused by events such as major migratory movements, elections, and also terrorist attacks (Mastro, 2018). In line with the findings presented above, Benson (2015) compared American and European – particularly French – narratives to find an emphasis on emotional stories about individual migrants in the American coverage over a more socio-analytical focus of the European journalists. Nevertheless, research shows a tendency to objectify migrants and refugees in both European and US media coverage, a form of representation that dehumanizes migrants and refugees (Arcimaviciene & Baglama, 2018; Markowitz & Slovic, 2020; Somaini, 2019).

The situation at the US border with Mexico is a prominent focus of coverage that has induced an estimated 200,000 articles in American newspapers between 2010 and 2014. Relying largely on official and specifically on police sources, this coverage was often focused on the complex of illegal immigration and organized crime (Davis, 2016). Stories framed episodically by the US press were found to provide less negative representation of migrants than stories that framed thematically (Somaini, 2019). Representation of Muslim migrants and refugees in three major networks (CBS, Fox and NBC) was especially negative, with a focus on terrorism and conflict in 75% of the coverage (Stone, 2017).

The general tone of US coverage appears to be considerably more positive when covering the so-called “Dreamers”. The term refers to migrants who were brought into the US when they were children and who benefit from specific regulations implemented by President Barack Obama in 2012, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) programme. This policy, as well as the migrants themselves, were found to be portrayed more positively in English and Spanish-language newspapers (Rendon et al., 2019). Patler & Gonzales (2015) came to the conclusion that even though the press prides itself on impartiality, news media accentuate division among migrants and their supporters. Coverage that reinforces the idea that there are ‘good’ and ‘bad’, or ‘deserving’, and “undeserving” migrants can drive a wedge between migrants and non-migrants, as well as among advocates, lawmakers and pro-migrant organizations.

Even when migrants and refugees were cast in a positive light, coverage tended to reinforce the mythical perception of the US as a compassionate country vigorously looking out for those from less fortunate countries, when in fact the nation has accepted relatively few refugees in recent years (Hickerson & Dunsmore, 2015). In line with the relative lack of background coverage mentioned earlier, Hickerson & Dunsmore also note that refugees are often portrayed without reference to the reasons and circumstances that brought them to the US. Consequently, Hoewe (2018) criticizes misuse of the term “immigrant” instead of “refugee”, which she reports is more common in the US than in selected international media.

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TABLE

Table 1: Definition of “refugee” according to the Refugee Convention versus Definition of “Palestinian refugee” according to UNRWA.....5

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Source:
TU Dortmund.

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Source:
Leon Pollock.

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All sources: Private.

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