‘If you don’t migrate, you’re a nobody’: Migration recruitment networks and experiences of Nepalese farm workers in Portugal

Cláudia[a*] Pereira, Alexandra Pereira[a], Aashima Budal[a], Sanjeev Dahal[b], Joana Daniel-Wrabetz[d] Jacquelyn Meshelemiah[c], João Carvalho[a], Manuel João Ramos[e], Renato Miguel Carmo[a] and Rui Pena Pires[a1]

Highlights

- Aspirations for material gains through migration are coupled with a rise in social status in Nepal.
- By using migration networks the Nepalese resort to smuggling services and pay on average €9,600 to recruitment and travel agencies.
- Living conditions in Portugal are more precarious than anticipated, though the Nepalese simultaneously enjoy consuming ‘modernity’ in Portugal, new lifestyles and greater individual freedom.

Abstract

This paper analyses the networks, experiences and aspirations of Nepalese workers in Southern Portugal's farms and greenhouses. The main research objective is to analyse how recruitment networks, which supported the move of Nepalese to Portugal, were established and have rapidly consolidated. These networks impacted not only the increase of irregular migration flows but also the migration experience and vulnerability in the country of destination, including the

[1] [a] Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (ISCTE-IUL), Centro de Investigação e Estudos de Sociologia (CIES-IUL), Lisbon, Portugal

ISCTE, Av. das Forças Armadas, 1649-026 Lisbon, Portugal

[b] Boston College, USA

140 Commonwealth Avenue, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467, USA

[c] The Ohio State University, College of Social Work

225D Stillman Hall; 1947 College Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1162, USA

[d] *Ius Gentium Conimbrigae*, Human Rights Centre, Palácio dos Melos, Faculdade de Direito da Universidade de Coimbra, 3004-545 Coimbra, Portugal

[e] Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (ISCTE-IUL), Centro de Estudos Internacionais (CEI-IUL), Lisbon, Portugal

ISCTE, Av. das Forças Armadas, 1649-026 Lisbon, Portugal

passive acceptance of a certain degree of exploitation. By highlighting the perspective of the migrants themselves, we examine the impact on their lives, both of the migration experience and of paying large sums to smugglers, usually obtained through indebtment, to enter Portugal. We relate this impact to a context of immigration where the existence of a large informal labour market facilitates these workers being hired as irregular migrants. The study employed secondary data, in-depth interviews and participant observation. As well as migrants, greenhouse owners and recruiters were also interviewed for the study. The main finding is that the disposition of Nepalese to migrate, in which the pressure of the family plays a key role, tends to be reinforced by the action of the networks of recruiting agents. Secondly, the costs of migration and labour exploitation tend to be accepted by the migrants as a way to fulfil their social aspirations and economic necessities.

Keywords

Networks, undocumented migrants, recruitment, Nepalese, migration and agriculture, Portugal

1. Introduction

'How much did you pay to come to Portugal?' was a recurring question Nepalese agricultural workers posed the Nepalese interviewer-researcher at the beginning of the interviews. To the latter's reply, 'I didn't pay anything, I came here with a scholarship to study', they would ask, 'And they gave you a visa? Didn't you have to pay an agency for it?'. Surprised by a negative answer, they would eventually admit that they had to pay to intermediaries about 9,600 euros for a visa to come to Portugal to be able to work on its farms.

Nepalese migration to Portugal is a recent and rapidly expanding phenomenon. In 2011, there were 1,145 Nepalese residing in Portugal; in 2019 this number had risen sixteen-fold to 16,849 (SEF 2020). A significant proportion of them work in seasonal jobs in soft fruit agriculture, under precarious accommodation and labour conditions. On the one hand, they face insurmountable bureaucratic difficulties in obtaining a visa from the Portuguese authorities to enter the country to work legally, so they often arrive undocumented. On the other hand, greenhouses usually need a large number of seasonal workers only a few months per year. This often leads farm owners to hire undocumented migrant workers, given the absence of a regularised labour force. This trend fits the Southern European 'model of immigration' where the existence of a large informal labour market facilitates the hiring of irregular migrants (King and DeBono 2013). As the relationship between international migration and industrial

agriculture is relatively recent in Portugal, its dynamics remain understudied (however, see Morén-Alegret et al., 2018; Moreno et al., 2016; Pereira et al., 2016; Taboadela et al., 2018;).

The main objective of this paper is to analyse how networks, both formal, i.e. intermediary agencies, and informal, i.e. acquaintances, originating in Nepal and targeting rural Portugal, were established and have rapidly consolidated. The inquiries conducted revealed that even when the networks seemed to be primarily composed of 'acquaintances' they nonetheless revealed connections to structured recruitment networks. Thus, with a focus on recruitment networks, the study articulates also Nepalese migrants' aspirations and experiences before and after their journey to Portugal. Issues such as the debt migrants acquire to pay the network intermediaries, and the migration routes used to reach their destination in Portugal, are also taken into account, as well as the realities of their lives as seasonal farmworkers (namely underemployment and the constant risk of unemployment).

To study this topic comprehensively, a mix of methods was used. National and international statistical indicators on migration and remittances were analysed to contextualise the profiles of the Nepalese in Portugal. Participant observation techniques and semi-structured interviews with Nepalese farmworkers in Portugal were an important data collection element. Queries were extended to include Portuguese and Nepalese greenhouse owners, managers and recruiters to better cover the different sides of this social phenomenon. In total, 36 interviews were made in Portugal. To complement these perspectives, in-depth interviews and participant observation were conducted with one recruiter in Katmandu, Nepal, as well as with one agricultural worker who returned to Nepal from Portugal.

The main finding of the study is that the migrants' decision to migrate is strengthened by the role of formal recruitment networks. Secondly, the downsides and hardships of their migration experience included the fact that exploitative labour conditions were accepted and, up to a certain extent, naturalised as part of the migration process.

2. Contexts and concepts

Since the 1980s, Southern Europe has developed into a major global agricultural production enclave competing with California and Latin America (Kalantary et al., 2021, this issue). Like global enclaves in other productive sectors, Southern Europe has experienced exponential trade growth – in this case specifically agricultural trade – that has increasingly internationalised and financialised various entrepreneurial networks, along with visible trends towards business concentration (Martin, 2017; Taboadela et al., 2018). At the beginning of the 21st century in Southern Italy, Southern Spain and Greece (but not in Portugal), the use of immigrant labour

for seasonal harvesting as a replacement for national workers was a fundamental feature of the Mediterranean-type agriculture, which had been transformed by new business models and farming technologies (Reyneri, 2003: 123–124). In places where family and small-scale agriculture once predominated, a new industrialised Mediterranean agriculture appeared, based on extensive productive areas and requiring international investment. The use of immigrant labour became an integral part of this new agriculture characterised by seasonal work, imposing a continually precarious situation on the labourers: as they were in constant transit, they were unable to settle in local communities in a stable way (Giménez Romero, 1991; Hoggart and Mendoza, 2000; Kasimis, 2005).

In Portugal, family-based agriculture prevailed until the 1990s despite attempts by some international investment firms to establish intensive greenhouses in its southern region. It was only in the late 2000s that intensive agriculture was redirected towards the international market, and the consequent hiring of immigrants took off. A smaller first wave consisting mainly of East Europeans (e.g. Ukrainians) was superseded by the arrival of South Asians (e.g. Nepalese and Thais) more willing to accept the trying conditions of underpaid seasonal labour.

The informal segments of the labour market have paved the way for irregular immigrants to access jobs in intensive farming enterprises. And the growing need for seasonal farmworkers became a pull factor towards work in the sector for an increasingly large number of irregular immigrants. Demand for a flexible labour force and Portugal's restrictive immigration policy led to a situation in which the needs of the labour market colluded (even if involuntarily) with irregular migration channels and networks, i.e. those run by smugglers (Peixoto, 2009). To these, seasonal labour in intensive agriculture was belatedly added in the late 2000s. In the Nordic countries, the same type of worker also earns higher wages than they did in their home countries and the nationals are not attracted to such jobs (Carmo and Hedberg 2019; Rye 2018; see also the papers by Hedberg, 2021; and Mešić and Wikström, 2021 is this special issue). The reliance on agricultural seasonal workers on agencies to get jobs in Portugal was confirmed in a study by the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA, 2019).

When studying migration, it is crucial to distinguish between initiation and reproduction of the migration flow (Massey et al., 1993). Initiation presupposes the existence of a potential for emigration due to socio-spatial inequality, but the realisation of this potential is counteracted by lack of information and the costs and risks of migration for potential migrants. As a rule, migration flows have three main types of origin: (i) the slow accumulation of individual migratory movements between societies with old historical ties (Massey et al., 1993: 431–433; Portes, 1999: 28); (ii) intensive and organised action to recruit migrants, overcoming the risks

of migration, despite the lack of information, as well as the economic and political constraints of displacement (Castles, 2000, 61–71; Piore, 1979: 19–25; Salt, 1987, 242); and (iii) the occurrence of episodes of extreme social disorganisation in the areas of departure following disasters, deep economic crises, wars or revolutions (Goldin et al., 2011).

Once the migration route is established, intra-migrant networks and those established between migrants and other agents in the societies of origin facilitate the self-sustained reproduction of the flows, especially when potential migrants have ties that, although weak at first, assure increased access to information on migratory opportunities (Granovetter, 1973). Emigration then operates according to a logic of self-sustaining cumulative causality (Massey et al., 1993; Portes, 1999: 27), reducing the initial lack of information, the migration risks and other costs, therefore enabling multiple causes for emigration. Once migratory flows are solidified, it is possible to build up family traditions of migration (Faist, 2000: 159–160).

Van Meeteren and Pereira (2016) reiterate that traditional social network actors (viz. family and friends) are key providers of assistance and information in migration. They found the family to be the key source of funding for most migrants, and that for all migrants except those who had family members in the destination country, friends were key helpers in finding housing, employment and information.

Family traditions of migration can be strengthened as the flows stabilise, thanks especially to the circulation of information through migratory networks that foster the over-representation of migrants' success in images disseminated among the societies of origin. The pull factors at the destination are thus subjectively magnified while the costs of integration tend to be neglected or omitted (Helweg, 1987: 173). An individual migration decision process, therefore, incorporates not only a rational instrumental assessment but also a number of normative obligations towards the collectivity and cognitive beliefs (Boudon, 2003) built on the representations of migration to which potential migrants have access and in which they have confidence.

The individual migration decision may be strengthened by the role of intermediaries in the migration process, including work agencies. The reliance of both client companies and job-seekers on agencies is increasing, although it is difficult to predict the development of the role of Temporary Work Agencies (Purcell et al., 2004). The role of the agencies is not set in stone nor is it always successful, and may also be questionable as in the case of Nepal. Despite the efforts of the Government of Nepal to scrutinise manpower agencies and protect migrant workers from harm through The Foreign Employment Act 2007, 'manpower agencies operate with relative impunity in Nepal, increasing the vulnerability of many Nepali men and women

travelling abroad for employment' (Taylor-Nicholson et al., 2014: 1). The shortcomings of the Government institutions in handling cases contribute to the impunity of manpower agencies.

In many countries, migration has become a huge business capitalising on 'migrants' desire to move or on the struggle governments face managing migratory flows' (Sørensen and Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2013: 2). There is a wide-ranging set of factors involved in this broad industry from 'small migrant entrepreneurs facilitating the transportation of people, to multinational companies carrying out deportations; and from individual migrants helping others make the journey, to organized criminal networks profiting from human smuggling and trafficking' (2013: 2). In several Asian regions the business for migration industry intermediaries 'seems to be as good as ever, and it has facilitated the proliferation instead of the elimination of intermediaries such as headhunters, law firms and consultants, while intensifying the government regulation of migrant mobility has had similar effects' (Lindquist et al., 2012: 19). Simultaneously, the long-held distinction between altruistic social networks and profit-oriented brokers calls for critical questioning. This is because 'profit, trust and empathy run hand-in-hand in the relationships between brokers and migrants, and distinctions between them are often impossible to sustain in practice' (Lindquist et al., 2019: 9).

Regarding networks and restrictive immigration policies in the countries of destination, the tightening of border controls and consequent disrupting of local migrant facilitation economies often contributes to the migration industry since the bureaucratic obstacles lead migrants who resort to formal-network intermediaries to become irregular, waiting for the documentation. This adds to the profits of the migrant industry by placing migrants in an even more vulnerable position and demanding larger sums of money for facilitating the migration process.

Migration flows tend to be selective at various levels. Firstly, there is a social dimension: these flows generally involve migrants of the same social origin, making it more likely for them to be interrelated (Blau, 1977). Secondly, there is a territorial dimension: the flow is often established between a restricted number of regions and localities of origin and a similarly small number of contingently-defined destinations (Faist, 2000). And finally, the selectivity of flows finds expression at the occupational level: the networks tend to channel the flow not only socially and geographically but also occupationally, thus creating 'occupational ethnic niches' born out of 'initiatives taken by those who are already employed to bring others, from the same origin [...] to work with them' (Portes, 1999: 34).

The creation of such ethnic occupational niches is facilitated by the dual labour market at the destination. This operates via segmentation processes through which migratory movements

are refracted through the status dynamics of existing employment hierarchies (Piore, 1979: 26–43). Low-paid, precarious and often seasonal or ephemeral jobs that are not attractive to local communities – not only in financial but also in status terms – tend to be accepted by immigrants. In fact, in the early stages of the migration path, immigrants are more likely to favour strategies of saving and remitting to the origin country, defining their jobs as a source of income rather than as a source of status. The value of the migrant's social position is tied to the prestige that the remittances generate in the societies of origin (Piore, 1979: 52–59).

However, the prolongation of the migratory experience alters this readiness to defer considerations of status both temporally and spatially. The progressive assessment of social position by reference to social hierarchies at the destination and not at the origin induces a transformation of migrants' orientation, especially in cases where they are overqualified for the job. Upward mobility aspirations that were crucial in the impulse to migrate (de Haas, 2019), but that had been suspended in the first years of settlement at the destination, start re-emerging or magnifying (Carling and Schewel, 2018). Migrants' aspirations are hence updated or changed during the migration process, their expectations of social mobility increase, and any experienced frustration of these new goals may be at the origin of negative evaluations of their overall experience. It has been known for a long time that individuals' feelings of success or failure depend more on the accomplishment of the objectives they set – i.e. on the achievement of their aspirations – than on the objective results attained (Lauwe, 1971).

In this study, we identify the events at the origin of the recent migratory flow from Nepal to Portugal; analyse the process of deciding to migrate at its instrumental, normative and cognitive levels; characterise the networks that sustain the flow as well as the functioning of the labour market that makes it possible; and document the evolution of migratory aspirations and projects according to the lived experiences of the interviewed migrants.

3. Background: Nepalese migration to Portugal

Nepal is the world's fifth most remittance-dependent country; remittances account for 28% of its total GDP (World Bank, 2019). It is largely a rural country, with most of its employment in low-productivity, often precarious agriculture (ILO Country Office for Nepal 2017).

With 2 million citizens living abroad out of a total population of 28 million, Nepal is one of the top 30 countries in terms of absolute numbers of emigrants. The main destination countries are India, the Gulf countries, the USA, Malaysia, and the UK (World Bank, 2016: 3, 192). Among these emigrants, a significant proportion (39%) living in OECD countries is

tertiary-educated. Higher-educated migrants reside mainly in the USA and Western Europe, while the poorer and less educated move mainly to the Gulf countries and India (Gurung, 2000).

Recent research has ascertained that aspiring Nepalese migrants pay approximately US$1400 to migrate to Qatar (Donini, 2019); and an average of €13,600 to work in Japanese restaurants (Kharel, 2016; Martin, 2017). We found that €9,600 is the average cost of a journey from Nepal to Portugal through various routes. The trafficking networks sometimes come into the radar of the authorities: in 2018, one Portuguese and two Nepalese citizens were convicted for human trafficking in Portugal and 23 Nepalese victims were rescued (OTSH, 2018). Irregular immigrants also face a major obstacle to attaining their goal of family reunification in Portugal due to their undocumented status (Budal, 2018). Although a few Master dissertations and PhD theses have been written about the migration of Nepalese in Portugal (Pereira, 2019, among others), given the social, economic and humanitarian impacts of this recent phenomenon, the present paper makes a significant contribution to a better and more detailed understanding of their situation.

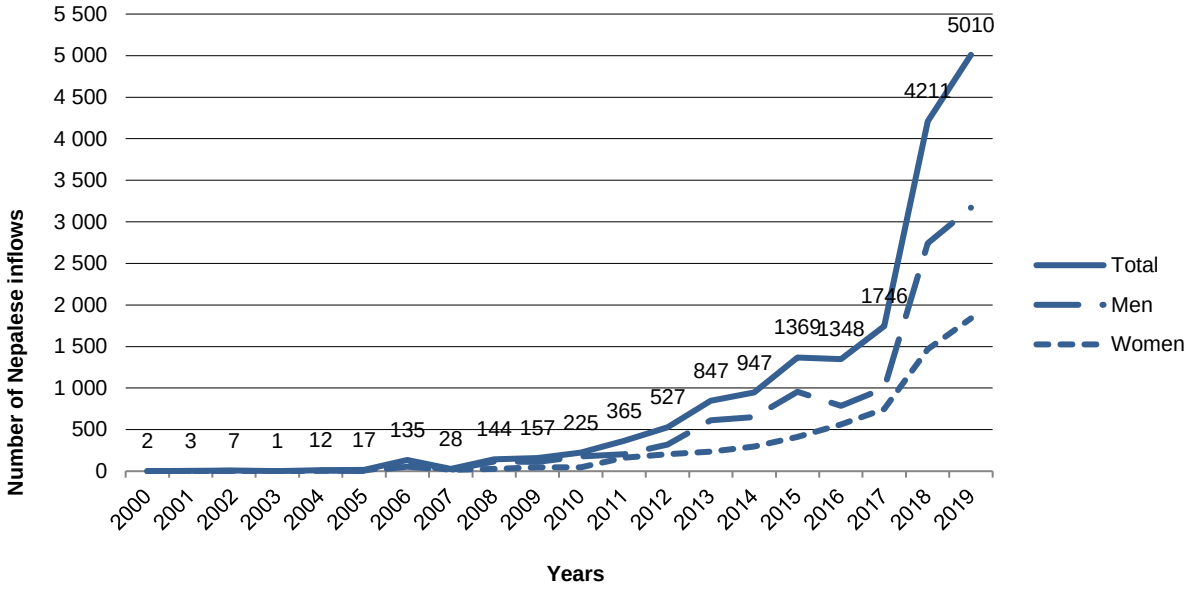
Reinforcing the decision of many Nepalese to migrate is the well-established existence of formal networks. More than 85% of Nepalese migrants who have left the country since 2012 used the services of recruitment agencies to reach their destination (Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2018). Nearly all the Nepalese migrants interviewed for this research used recruitment agencies to migrate to Portugal.

The inflow of immigrants in Portugal, in general terms, is tuned to the country's employment rate. With the rise of the employment rate during a period of economic expansion, the number of immigrants coming to Portugal increased (Pires, 2019: 36). After the decrease in job offers following the financial crisis in 2008 and the consequent reduction in entries of immigrants, the rate of employment started to increase again in 2011. This increase was especially marked in the intensive berry-producing greenhouse farms, which had not been significantly affected by the crisis and saw a substantial rise in the number of immigrants after 2013. The growth of Nepalese migration to Portugal coincides with this general trend: it has been increasing since 2011, and accelerating from 2013 onwards.

In the specific case of the Nepalese, we are faced with a recent immigration phenomenon from a country whose bilateral relations with Portugal are almost non-existent. The number of documented Nepalese residents in Portugal (in statistical terminology, the cumulative 'stock') increased sixteen-fold in eight years: from 1,145 in 2011 to 16,849 by 2019 (SEF, 2020). Nepalese immigration is male-dominated (see Figure 1), although the number of women involved is becoming progressively significant.

[Please insert figure 1 near here]

Figure 1 Inflow of Nepalese to Portugal by sex, 2000 to 2019



Source: Figure by the authors, based on data obtained from SEF (2020).

Once arrived, Nepalese immigrants concentrate mostly in Lisbon, the country's capital, followed by the *distritos* (regions) of Faro (in the Algarve, Portugal's southernmost region) and Beja (in Alentejo, towards the South). In Lisbon, they are now the third-largest foreign nationality, after Brazilians and Chinese (SEF, 2020).

In the Beja region, intensive greenhouse production of raspberries and blueberries is concentrated in the coastal municipality of Odemira. Due to hefty international and Portuguese firms' investment, Odemira was responsible in 2014 for the production of circa 90% of all Portuguese raspberries, the country's second-most exported fruit, valued at 64 million euros (Dias, 2015). There was a massive growth of small fruits' exports, and of raspberries in particular, which in 2018 were worth 153 million euros (Vieira, 2019). The expansion of intensive farms, especially greenhouses dependent on international and Portuguese investment that required cheap and flexible labour, profoundly changed Odemira's rural landscape.

Of the 1,868 Nepalese residing in the coastal area of the Alentejo region, 95% (1,776) live in Odemira (PORDATA, 2020). Of all foreigners living in this region, the Nepalese are currently the third most numerous. The top nationality are Romanians, followed by Bulgarians, and then Nepalese, Thais and Indians (SEF, 2020). The proportion of foreigners with

regularised status among the total population (24,681) in Odemira was 25% in 2018 (Oliveira and Gomes, 2019, 59).

5. Materials and methods

The present study is based on a combination of approaches and methods, namely the collection and analysis of secondary statistical data on migration, together with participant observation and semi-structured interviews. A qualitative and interpretative approach allowed access to the deeper meanings related to immigrants' experiences and aspirations, thus helping to better understand and characterise their migration processes (cf. Bryman, 2015).

A total of 38 interviews, including 32 Nepalese (29 Nepalese agricultural workers and 3 recruiters), and 6 Portuguese nationals (greenhouse owners, managers and recruiters) were conducted, through non-probabilistic (snowball) sampling, a method appropriate for access to hard-to-reach or hidden populations (Noy, 2008). Workers, recruiters, managers and owners of the greenhouses were interviewed to access mutually complementary perspectives on the migration networks established between Nepal and Portugal. The interviews were with individuals and typically lasted from one to one-and-a-half hours, and most of them led to around three follow-up interviews. They were carried out by a Portuguese researcher – the second-named author of the paper – in English and Portuguese, and by Nepalese researchers in Nepalese – the third and fourth-named authors. All the participants in this study are anonymised in order to protect their identities.

The interviews and participant observation were carried out in two periods: March and April 2017, and February to June 2018. Each participant in the study signed a written consent form, guaranteeing the anonymity and confidentiality of the testimonies. The interviews were coded into themes and analysed using NVivo software for thematic analysis. Extensive fieldnotes were taken during participant observation, both inside and outside the greenhouses – in houses and flats, in shipping containers serving as dorms, and in cafes and other public places during social gatherings. During fieldwork, the Nepalese workers often voiced concerns to the Portuguese researcher about the difficulty of Portugal's legalisation process, as well as their psychological suffering due to accommodation issues.

The interviewed Nepalese farm workers (28 males and 1 female) were mostly young adults (average age 29 years) with 12 to 15 years of formal education (having completed secondary school and sometimes also a bachelor's degree). Only one female worker could be interviewed, a clear indicator of the gender imbalance in this particular migrant work set-up.

The total number of Nepalese women in Portugal is less than half that of men. Few Nepalese women work in agriculture, since the majority work in restaurants in the cities, where they find better conditions.

About half the Nepalese farmworkers interviewed were undocumented in Portugal and, as noted, had paid on average €9,600 to reach Portugal. The workers interviewed earned on average €521 gross revenue per month, which means they are formally underpaid since the Portuguese legal minimum monthly wage at the time of the interviews was €600. Table 1 sets out some characteristics of the Nepalese interview sample.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the Nepalese workers

Characteristics		**Nepalese agricultural workers (N=29)**
Sex	Female	1
	Male	28
Age	21-30 years old	17
	31-40 years old	10
	41-50 years old	2
Formal education level	Secondary	19
	Bachelor	7
	Master	3
Money paid to migrate	4001 - 6000 euros	2
	6001 - 8000 euros	3
	8001 - 10,000 euros	15
	10,001 - 12,000 euros	6
	12,001 - 14,000 euros	3
Influence in the decision to migrate, according to interviewee's responses	Recruitment organisation	20
	Friends	11
	Smugglers	2
	Family	1
	Documented	16

Documentation status	Undocumented	13
Average monthly wage in Portugal	201 - 400 euros	6
	401 - 600 euros	20
	601 - 800 euros	3
Average monthly wage in Nepal	0 - 50 euros	7
	51 - 100 euros	6
	101 - 150 euros	9
	151 - 200 euros	5
	201 - 250 euros	2

Source: Table by the authors, based on the interviews sample.

All three labour recruiters interviewed (both Nepalese and Portuguese) were males with a medium to a high level of education. Based on the data collected, they were personally responsible for the recruitment of between 100 and 300 Nepalese workers in recent years. The managers and owners of the greenhouses interviewed were all Portuguese (three males and three females). They all had a medium to a high level of education. The companies' size varied widely, reflecting the number of Nepalese workers employed.

6. Findings and discussion

As previously stated, this paper analyses the networks, experiences and, to a certain extent, the aspirations of the Nepalese workers in Southern Portugal's farms and greenhouses. In this section, we first discuss our findings related to the recruitment networks. This is done through subjective data, i.e. the migrants' perspectives and interpretations, as well as those of three recruiters. Then the discussion focuses on the migrants' aspirations and unexpected experiences.

6.1 'My "friends" told me to come here': migration recruitment networks and routes

Analysing the so-called meso level of the migration decision-making process (Faist, 1997) means considering the role of formal (institutional) networks and organisations in the creation and development of the migration flow from Nepal. 'State-supported or private labour

recruiters help to initiate migrant flows by spreading (often limited) information about the destination country and offering jobs, accommodation, and support for potential migrants' (Goldin et al., 2011: 105, our emphasis). The study found that the Nepalese migrants' decision to leave their home country was reinforced by the meso-dynamic role of the formal networks.

Nepalese migrants payed an average of €9,600 to recruitment and travel agencies, and resorted to smuggling. As few Nepalese can afford to pay this kind of money up-front, the norm is to contract loans and mortgage property. As Janak, a farmworker in Odemira puts it:

> Sometimes it's just the richest guy in the village, he lends money or gets fields and houses as a guarantee, so that other people can move abroad… many times it's like that (male, 21).

Janak paid €11,000 for his journey to Portugal. Like many others, he comes from a rural middle-class family and offered guarantees in properties to repay the debt incurred in the migration process. Upon arrival in Portugal, Janak filed his request at the SEF for residency and work documentation but after many months he is still waiting for an answer. Janak earns a monthly salary of €580 but at the time of the interview, the Portuguese-owned company owed him three months' back pay, a situation that added to the cycle of vulnerability he found himself in.

Relating to the 'migration industry', most of the Nepalese workers interviewed had made the journey to Portugal through contracting organisations – intermediary recruitment agencies. To be able to pay the intermediaries, many had to sell family properties or secured loans to raise the money needed to come to Portugal. They were motivated by success stories heard or read from other migrants. The payment usually covered food and lodging along the route, acquiring a temporary work visa either in Portugal or another EU-member country, flight expenses, and early housing costs in Portugal.

> People from the agencies go door to door in Pokhara and Baglung… You know, many people from Baglung are away, in Japan, right? So they are okay and have money, and agency people try to get their fields and houses, in exchange for help to go abroad, visa and all that (Dinesh, 25, male).

Social networks, therefore, sustain their migration trajectories and tend to be selective. First, at the social level, concerning migrants of the same social origin (cf. Blau, 1977) – those with properties to guarantee the loans. Secondly, at the territorial level, moving between a

restrictive number of regions of origin and of destination (cf. Faist, 2000) – as from Pokhara, Nepal, to the south of Portugal. Thirdly, at the occupational level, in some specific 'niches' (cf. Portes, 1999) – in this case, agriculture.

> I have a wife and one son back in Nepal. My family is a joint family type where my mother, father, brother, sister-in-law, wife and son live together in the same house. […] *It was my own decision supported by my wife*. She was also my motivation to go abroad, so that we, as a family, could have a better life. I arrived in Portugal in 2015. […] I was sponsored by another Nepali, in the Netherlands. But I didn't know the guy who sent me the sponsorship as it was arranged with the help of my agent (Davendra, 32, male; our italics).

What some interviewees described as 'friends' frequently turned out to be agencies recommended to them by acquaintances – the 'weak ties' that become 'strong ties' that facilitate mobility, in the words of Granovetter (1973). Then, migrants usually borrow money informally, either from intermediaries or from family and 'friends', the loans being frequently subject to high interest rates. In this process, the traditional social network actors, as family and friends, play a key role in supplying vital information during the migration process (cf. Van Meeteren and Pereira, 2016). By reducing the initial lack of information, migratory risks and extra costs, these social networks enable emigration to develop in a framework of self-sustaining multiple causes (cf. Massey et al., 1993; Portes, 1999, 27).

Many Nepalese migrants who come to Portugal expect farm work to be an opportunity for easy legalisation, but labour exploitation is the norm for them.

> I knew nothing about the country when I arrived… We just know it is the place in Europe to get the papers, that's what they tell us [before coming] (Raju, male, 25).

Migration to Europe is viewed as an opportunity for a better life. The choice of Portugal as the destination country is due to the perception that it offers migrants easy access to a documented status. The reality that immigrants face after arrival turns out to be very different from their expectations, especially because it often takes a long time to become fully documented, and because the costs of accommodation and food are too high for the salary they receive.

> I was a veterinary technician back in Nepal and had worked for over six years. […] I got help from a consultancy [agent] and came to Poland on a student visa. Then the opportunities and future in Poland were not as promising as I thought. I wanted not only to study but was also looking for work and to become established in a country. It seemed like an impossible dream and then I heard a lot about Portugal. I finally decided to come to Portugal (Udip, male, 35).

The migration trajectories followed by the Nepalese workers are diverse and the migratory strategies chosen are varied – from safer air and land options to riskier ones, such as paying local smugglers in Libya to cross the Mediterranean in rubber dinghies or small wooden boats. Migrants resort to different travel schemes, frequently jumping to options based on hearsay rooted in the stories of previous migrants. Although they are cheating the system, they are nevertheless vulnerable to being cheated themselves, namely by unscrupulous smugglers:

> Many people are coming through Poland because it's the easiest way now… but also others from Israel, Dubai…. Denmark, as we have many students there, in northern Europe… (Ram male 32)

> I got help from an agent. I came on a tourist visa and he charged me around 8,000 euros. But I had been scammed before by a different agency and I lost 5,000 Euros in my first attempt. […] The only job the agents had to do was to get me to Europe no matter how. They created documentation and situations which were helpful for me to obtain a visa. I was supposed to attend a seminar in France. That is how I entered Europe (Shyam, 40, male).

According to the interview data, Nepalese migrants used five main routes to reach Europe and arrive in Portugal. We could not succeed in triangulating these data on routes with other sources, because Portuguese official statistics count only the country of arrival. The five main routes are the following: through the Gulf and Turkey; through Central Europe (mainly Poland and Latvia, usually resorting to the assistance of smugglers and work agencies); via Libya – crossing the Mediterranean to Italy (resorting to local smugglers); from West European countries (the Netherlands, Denmark, the UK or Italy) normally after visas and work permits expired or were dismissed as non-valid; or flying directly from Nepal (with a short stop-over in

the Emirates, and/or in Turkey). Figure 2 shows the main routes used by the Nepalese to enter Portugal.

Figure 2 Routes of the Nepalese from Nepal to Portugal

Note: The lines with circles represent the routes taken by the Nepalese, with the size of the circles corresponding to the frequency of the use of the route.

Source: Map by the authors, based on interview data.

The Polish route (including a stint working there before onward travel) was the most frequently reported in the fieldwork. A Portuguese recruiter highlighted this and hypothesised about the reasons for the migrants to move to Portugal:

> Maybe one of the easiest countries to get into now, in Europe, is Portugal… and, I don't know… some northern countries… like Poland. I can tell you that many workers are arriving here with Polish visas. Lots of them entered through Poland and then did not adapt there – due to climatic or cultural reasons, perhaps… (António, 48, male).

The ‘migration industry’ consists of several actors in the country of origin and destination. The recruiters in Portugal who hire workers for the farms receive several offers from the intermediary agents who brought the Nepalese to Portugal, to get them a job. António continues:

> We have people knocking on our door to offer workers every week, and they pay for us to accept them…!! I must say, it’s very tempting!

António’s company is owned by a Nepalese businessman who has contacts with authorities in Nepal; they employ a marketing person in Lisbon who is well-informed about expected migrants’ arrivals. This employee contacts the migrants during transit or upon arrival in Portugal and refers them to farm owners and managers in the South.

In the greenhouses, dozens of discarded business cards, offered by intermediaries from recruiting companies to the Nepalese farmworkers were collected. These recruiters usually started by creating an agency, registered as a ‘service provider company’ (and not as a ‘temporary work agency’), and after a couple of years closed the first company to open a new one, with a different name, with the obvious purpose of deluding the authorities and avoiding payment of due fees or taxes.

6.2 ‘Families love it if we go abroad’: migration aspirations of the Nepalese

Responding to a question about their motivation for coming to Portugal, one of the interviewees, Janak, said: ‘Almost everyone from my [home] region is abroad. Mostly in Japan. *If you don’t migrate you’re a nobody*’. Another interviewee, Raju, similarly said: ‘You know, our culture is an *emigration culture;* if you don’t migrate, you’re a nobody’. Both the ensuing conversations revealed that a combination of economic and cultural reasons motivated them to migrate. Although a better salary in Portugal than Nepal was important for them – i.e. an *economic reason* – these and other interviewees mostly had a middle-class background with few difficulties living and raising a family in Nepal.[2] Therefore, they migrated because this was perceived as an opportunity to raise their social status given the respect that narratives of success related to emigration inspire – i.e. a *cultural reason.*

[2] The middle classes in Nepal are defined relationally as those people situated between the top and bottom of society – in terms of salary, for example – who are also consumers of products such as Western fashion items advertised on TV and social networks (Liechty, 2003). Interviewees in this study declared they had earned twice or three times the national average wage when they were in Nepal and all had secondary or higher education.

Secondly, the decision to migrate was not only based on individual choice; *family pressure* also played a key role, since the receipt of remittances by migrants' families is equated with a higher social status. Thirdly, Europe is represented as a 'dream destination', with Portugal portrayed as a country where it is comparatively 'easier' to obtain the necessary documentation to become a *regular migrant*. Nonetheless, it is only after arrival that immigrants become aware of the difficulties in the legalisation process and the risk of remaining in an irregular limbo for long periods.

Aspirations, or the desire to migrate based on economic and cultural reasons, came up frequently in the interviews, for instance in the words of Subedi:

> My father and mother don't work, they are too old. My wife doesn't work…. So, I have to help them. […] Families love it if we go abroad because that means we can help them. *Our status also rises and people respect us more* if we live abroad (Subedi, male, 43; our italics).

Subedi migrated to India, then to Denmark and later to Portugal. He paid 7,000 euros for his visa, resident permit and flight tickets by selling properties and taking loans from extended family members. In Nepal, he was a farmer earning €110 a month – nearly double the average monthly wage in Nepal (according to ILO, 2016 the average monthly salary in Nepal is €59). In Portugal, as a farmworker, he earns between 300 euros and 500 euros a month (depending on the season) – well below the official minimum salary – and he is undocumented. While he made it explicit that he was expected to 'help the family', Subedi also let it be understood that his decision to migrate was related to the expectation of success and consequently a rise in his social status at home. This ambivalence was common to most interviewees. It reveals how the economic motivation to migrate is socially oriented, in the sense that it relates to the need for approval and affirmation of status and power in addition to material gains, both of which depend on the opinion of others (Portes, 1999, 8).

As Judith Hellman (2008) posits, cultural reasons play a key role alongside economic reasons in the decision to migrate. This co-occurrence was observed among male Mexican migrants in the USA who are both sponsored financially and encouraged culturally by their family because emigration plays such a significant structural role in the country – a situation that parallels that of young Nepalese males migrating to Portugal.

Related to the fact that economic, social and cultural motivations all play key roles in the decision to migrate is the interplay between structure and agency in migrants' aspirations – in

other words, in the desire to migrate and the ability to fulfil this desire. The decision may certainly be one involving individual agency but, according to Carling and Schewel (2018), when it is taken in an environment where everyone wants to leave – i.e., where emigration is structural – a given individual's decision is simultaneously an outcome of other individuals' attitudes and actions.

The decision to migrate can also be motivated by the desire to escape the traditional family structure in Nepal. This motivation is especially pertinent for Nepalese women. After marriage, the wife moves to the house of the husband's parents and lives in an extended family along with the brothers-in-law and their respective wives. In Portugal, they can be 'modern': they can wear European clothes, wives are allowed to work, and enjoy freedom from the extended family.

> I want my wife to come because when she comes here, she can work… there, she doesn't work, and I have to feed five, six people, alone… so, for us, it's better if they [wives] come (Subedi, male, 43).

6.3 'We never expected these conditions': experiences of Nepalese migrants working in Portuguese agriculture

A major finding of our study relates to the unexpected experiences of the Nepalese rural workers interviewed in Portugal, as almost all confirmed that they had not expected so many difficulties. The exploitative working conditions, the precarious employment and the appalling housing conditions were found to be very much worse than they had imagined. Besides, the labyrinthine legalisation process, the onerous process of debt repayment and the path towards family reunification were all taking much longer than they had anticipated.

> To be honest, the conditions are very bad. I didn't even get 1% of my expectations, like a *European life, respectable job and everything*. It is nothing like that and the conditions are worse. When it comes to working, I worked in the field when it was 45 degrees during summer. Normally, I worked for 12-13 hours a day… *I have spent 15,000 euros in total*, 12,000 to come to Poland, then 2000-3000 to come to Portugal (Udip, male, 35; our italics).

Nonetheless, their experience as immigrant workers in Portugal is not solely negative and grim. As Hellman (2008) found with Mexicans in the USA, the experiences of Nepalese migrants in Portugal are also a mixture of good and bad, and this is why the flow continues. Among the positive aspects the Nepalese interviewees highlighted was enjoying freedom away from the family, the opportunity to try new haircuts and, whenever possible, strolling in town and visiting tourist sites. They looked forward to bringing their wives and children to Portugal so that they too could experience the Portuguese way of life and have a job, since in Nepal the wives usually stay at home and dedicate themselves to domestic chores, without external employment, meaning not receiving an extra salary.

> We want our wives to come because here they can work…. In Nepal, they just stay at home and one person has to feed everyone, pay the children's school fees, and give everything to… another five people. Here, no – we share the bank account, if she needs or if I need anything, we make money, no problem, we share everything – but she earns money too. (Ram, 32, male).

> The facilities here are good, everything is more or less new, if I need a bus to go to Faro, I can get one, it is not like that in Nepal… My wife went to the hospital in Cascais to have our first daughter, and the hospital there, it's like a hotel. […] I like the beaches here in the south and the football…. (Aadit, 37, male).

For the Nepalese and other immigrants, in general, it is very difficult to enter with a valid visa to work, due to bureaucratic difficulties. They usually enter the country with a tourist visa and then start working because there is a demand for a cheap labour force from the employers (cf. King et al., 2021; Scott and Rye, 2021, both in this issue). Then, after being in the country with a valid contract work it is possible to apply for legal documents and regularise their status. Compared to other countries in Europe, salaries in Portugal are lower but the living costs are also lower. These two characteristics play a role in the choice to migrate to Portugal, but Nepalese migrants are not informed by the intermediary agencies or their acquaintances about the difficulties they will have to go through since the moment they leave Nepal.

The typical procedure in Portugal for acquiring a resident authorisation tends to be excruciatingly slow: after submitting the initial request, applicants are likely to experience an extended waiting period (from an ideal minimum of five months up to three years), punctuated by multiple appointments and interviews at the SEF's Immigration Offices, during which the

applicant is usually required to produce several additional documents. They must provide proof of work or a job contract as well as proof of legal entry into Portugal. About half of our interviewees were non-documented until the end of the fieldwork period. This led to constant feelings of frustration:

> When I arrived in Portugal, I had to pay 27 euros in three months to the company, after working for them for three months! So embarrassing! (…) I got my residence card only in December 2016, when it had already been sent in October 2016. I had given the address of this [employer] guy, but he didn't receive it for me (Dinesh, 25 male).

The workers described to us their multiple worries relating to job and housing conditions and with their work environment. Housing conditions and the monthly cost of a single bunk bed (frequently inside a metal container) were one of the interviewees' main complaints. We witnessed various situations of crowded housing, such as up to 40 people sharing a three-bedroom house, overcrowded containers and crowded interior bedrooms into which 18 Nepalese workers – usually resorting to rotating bedtimes – were packed. Sleeping inside the containers during the summer was described as being particularly difficult, as the miniature barred windows did not allow for air circulation. Drinking water and sewage systems were frequently unavailable.

> We are like dogs here: a dog's life. Nobody cares. (…) I worked in Évora, Beja, Comporta. We lived not in containers there, but where they put the cattle [stables] (Chetan, 28, male)

Both the workers and their families have an idealised view of Europe, where there are good salaries that enable the workers to send remittances and their families to have a good standard of life. As in other European countries, the Nepalese in Portugal feed a string of success stories to their families back in Nepal that omit the difficulties and failures, thus contributing to influencing other potential migrants in Nepal to move out of the country. They are moved by two main motives: (i) to keep their family social status in Nepal, and (ii) out of shame for not getting the success aspired to before migrating. As already theorised (Portes, 1999), the idealisation of success in the countries of destination is common among international immigrants, for whom the decision to migrate has far more weight on the gains, based on the

success stories, than on the expenses and what is truly gained after accounting for expenditure on housing, bills and food.

> The work I am involved in is entirely different than I thought. I had never done any agricultural work in my life before. In Nepal, only uneducated and poor people get involved in farm work unless it is on their farms. *I hide my current job position from my family and only my wife knows that I work on a farm.* I never imagined a life like this. It is a matter of shame and I don't tell my family that I am working in agriculture (Davendra, 32, male).

> I had great positive expectations about my life in Europe but the reality was completely different and I only learnt that when I was here. I thought I would do better than in Nepal, have more income and be settled. But as I said, the reality is really different (Udipi, 35, male).

Still, the Nepalese workers and recruiters we interviewed reported a diversity of experiences and profiles which account for important variations in their perception of the migratory process and how success is measured. Such multiple realities contradict the outside perception that Nepalese migrants share a monolithic view of their life in Europe, and provide evidence for various levels of exploitation in the dynamic panorama of intensive agriculture in Southern Portugal. Nevertheless, we should stress that the 'institutionalisation' of exploitation – be it at the origin, in intermediary countries or at the destination – as well as the social capital involved (migrant 'networks' and 'contacts') play a major role in the international recruitment of migrant rural workers. Furthermore, our data reveals how this exploitation is accepted by these workers. This acceptance is a way for migrants to cope with the harsh conditions they face, and helps in building their resilience, allowing them to deal psychologically with the transformation of their initial aspirations and to adapt (cf. Graeber, 2018). It also facilitates the acceptance of persistent exploitation and abusive realities perceived by the immigrants as the unquestionable 'necessary steps' in the long ordeal to acquire a residence permit in Europe and eventually achieve the long-term goal of family reunification.

7. Conclusions

This study on the unexplored migration–agriculture nexus for the Nepalese draws scholarly attention to the understudied migrant population in rural Portugal, far less often researched than

the parallel cases of Southern Spain and Southern Italy (see Kalantaryan et al., 2021; Melossi, 2021, both in this special issue). Nepalese migration to Portugal originates from a country with high outflow rates, consolidated family emigration traditions and an intense dependence on remittance transfers. Portugal has four comparative advantages as a destination: 1) a demand for migrant work that is low-skilled and therefore not very demanding in terms of communication; 2) greater ease in working undocumented due to the persistence of feebly regulated sectors of the labour market; 3) a legal framework that facilitates the regularisation of undocumented migrant workers; 4) lower living costs than in alternative destinations, which partially compensate for low wages. The expansion of agro-industry based upon the production of berry fruits is dependent on the employment of low-skilled labour of foreign origin, as the Nepalese emigration demonstrates. The high intensity of Nepalese workers' inflows into Portugal reflects the integration of both countries in the global networks of migration.

The presence of Nepalese immigrant farmworkers in the coastal rural regions of Southern Portugal is a new and understudied phenomenon. Their presence is frequently acknowledged in the national and local media, and news about the dire conditions they experience in intensive berry greenhouse farms is often shared. Their emigration contributed to the rapid transformation of the towns and cities located in the coastal rural regions of Southern Portugal, traditionally low-density residential areas. To appease the seasonal demand for labour from greenhouse production, these areas absorbed intense inflows of Nepalese migrants in the context of a growing local depopulation of national citizens. The locals – apart from the farm owners, managers and co-workers, and people working in cafés, supermarkets and administrative offices (namely, immigration and social security) – have little knowledge and few opinions about them. Since the Nepalese migrants seldom leave the greenhouse environments and very few of them speak Portuguese, they are viewed as untroublesome foreigners; there is no reason to empathise or interact with them.

Although the Nepalese migrants interviewed in this study have diverse profiles, a significant number belong to the middle class in Nepal with good educational qualifications. The majority are undocumented and do not speak Portuguese – thus lacking the two basic criteria for integration. Nepalese migrants in Portugal have experienced downward professional mobility given that the majority previously worked in services, but are now relegated to agriculture in Portugal. Simultaneously, despite the stated challenges, the Nepalese migrants do enjoy consuming 'modernity' in Portugal to some degree (e.g. in the way of dressing and new lifestyles and greater freedom than in Nepal).

A final major conclusion of our study relates to the dissonance that results in having and sharing information in these networks. Almost all of our interviewees confirmed that they did not expect such outcomes, which were significantly different from those they had been promised by those in their networks. In their experience, legalisation, the repayment of debts and family reunification take much longer than expected; and work, income and housing conditions are considerably more precarious than they were told by trusted friends and family members. So, although migrants in this study rely and trust in the networks that provide access to emigration out of Nepal and immigration to Portugal, it is quite apparent that the many networks in Portugal that facilitate irregular migration are not credible nor honest, based on the plight of the Nepalese in Portugal and the perpetual misinformation shared among the Nepalese while still in Nepal. As a result, on the one hand, Nepalese migrants continue to be marginalised as Portuguese agricultural workers. On the other hand, the observed 'institutionalisation of exploitation' in Europe – associated with high migration costs and extended high-interest loan repayment periods – is generally accepted by the vast majority of our Nepalese interviewees. In the absence of channels for documented labour migration, the migrants become vulnerable to the abuses imposed by migration networks and they tend to see it as part of the process. In the meantime, their contribution to the national economy is indispensable and their employment in the agro-industry supports the economic growth of this sector. Consequently, the expansion of agro-industry at the national level is correlated with the proliferation of migrant networks and the arrival of further Nepalese migrants.

Acknowledgements

We thank CNAI Lisbon, CNAI Faro, CLAI Odemira, Caritas Faro, the Red Cross, APAV Faro and Tavira, the Consulate of Nepal in Lisbon, the Embassy of Bangladesh in Portugal, and the Association Solidariedade Imigrante for their support. We thank Josh Booth for proofreading the paper. We also thank the reviewers for their insightful comments. Most importantly, we thank all the interviewees for their cooperation.

Funding

This work was supported by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund through the *Alto Comissariado para as Migrações* (National High Commissioner for Migration). The research was carried out in the Entrepreneurship Centre, AUDAX-IUL (grant number PT/2017/FAMI/158). The revision of this text was funded by the *Fundação para a Ciência e*

a Tecnologia through the Strategic Financing of the R&D Unit UID/SOC/03126/2019, of the research centre CIES-IUL.

References

Blau, M., 1977. Inequality and Heterogeneity: A Primitive Theory of Social Structure. The Free Press, New York.

Boudon, R., 2003. Raison, Bonnes Raisons. PUF, Paris.

Bryman, A., 2015. Social Research Methods. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Budal, A., 2018. Paperless Reality: Transnational Parenthood and Undocumented Nepalese Immigrants in Portugal. Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, Portugal.

Carling, J. and Schewel. K., 2018. Revisiting aspiration and ability in international migration. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 44, pp. 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1384146.

Carmo, R. M. and Hedberg, C., 2019. Translocal mobility systems: Social inequalities and flows in the wild berry industry. Geoforum 99, pp. 102–110. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2018.12.002.

Castles, S., 2000. Ethnicity and Globalization: From Migrant Worker to Transnational Citizen. Sage, London.

de Haas, H., 2019. Paradoxes of Migration and Development (IMI Working Papers Series, no. 157), University of Amsterdam's Institute for Social Science Research, International Migration Institute. https://www.migrationinstitute.org/publications/paradoxes-of-migration-and-development.

Dias, C., 2015. Cerca de 90% da produção nacional de framboesa concentra-se na zona de Odemira. Público, June 30.

Donini, A., 2019. Social suffering and structural violence: Nepali workers in Qatar. International Development Policy. Revue Internationale de Politique de Développement 11, pp. 178-199.

Faist, T., 1997. The crucial meso-level. In Hammar, T., Brochmann, G., Tamas, K., and Faist, T. Editors, International Migration, Immobility and Development. Berg, Oxford.

Faist, T., 2000. The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration and Transnational Social Spaces. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

FRA, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. 2019. Protecting Migrant Workers

from Exploitation in the EU : Boosting Workplace Inspections. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. https://doi.org/10.2811/93816.

Giménez Romero, C., 1991. Trabajadores extranjeros en la agricultura española: Enclaves e implicaciones. Revista de Estudios Regionales 31, pp.127–148.

Goldin, I., Cameron, G. and Balarajan, M., 2011. Leaving home: Migration decisions and processes. In: Goldin, I., Cameron, G. and Balarajan, M., Editors, 2011. Exceptional People. How Migration Shaped Our World and Will Define Our Future. Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Graeber, D., 2018. Bullshit Jobs: A Theory. Simon and Schuster, New York.

Granovetter, M., 1973. The strength of weak ties. American Journal of Sociology 78(6), pp. 1360–1380. https://doi.org/10.1086/225469.

Gurung, G., 2000. Patterns in Foreign Employment and Vulnerability of Migrant Workers. Nepal Institute of Development Studies, Kathmandu.

Hedberg, C., 2021. Entwined ruralities: Seasonality, simultaneity and precarity among transnational migrant workers in the wild berry industry. Journal of Rural Studies, this issue.

Hellman, J., 2008. The World of Mexican Migrants: The Rock and the Hard Place. The New Press, New York.

Helweg, A.W., 1987. Why leave India for America? A case study approach to understanding migrant behaviour. International Migration 25(2), pp. 165–178. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2435.1987.tb00578.x.

Hoggart, K. and Mendoza, C., 2000. African Immigrant Workers in Spanish Agriculture. Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, San Diego. CCIS Working Paper no. 2. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9523.00123.

ILO Country Office for Nepal., 2017. Nepal Labour Market Update. International Labour Organisation (ILO), Kathmandu.

ILO., 2016. Average Monthly Earnings of Employees (Local Currency). Countries. Key Statistics, International Labour Organisation.

Kalantaryan, S., Scipioni, M., Natale, F., and Alessandrini, A., 2021. Immigration and integration in rural areas and the agricutlural sector: An EU perspective. Journal of Rural Studies, this issue.

Kasimis, C., 2005. Migrants in the Rural Economies of Greece and Southern Europe. Migration Information Source. https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/migrants-rural-economies-greece-and-southern-europe.

Kharel, D., 2016. From Lahures to global cooks: Network migration from the Western Hills of Nepal to Japan. Social Science Japan Journal 19(2), pp. 173–192. https://doi.org/10.1093/ssjj/jyw033.

King, R. and DeBono, D., 2013. Irregular migration and the 'Southern European model' of migration. Journal of Mediterranean Studies 22(1), pp. 1–31.

King, R., Lulle, A. and Melossi, E., 2021. New perspectives on the agriculture–migration nexus. Journal of Rural Studies, this issue.

Lauwe, P.H. C., 1971. Pour une Sociologie des Aspirations. Gonthier, Paris.

Liechty, M., 2003. Suitably Modern: Making Middle-Class Culture in a New Consumer Society. Princeton University Press, New Jersey.

Lindquist, J., Xiang, B. and Yeoh, B. S., 2012. Opening the black box of migration: Brokers, the organization of transnational mobility and the changing political economy in Asia. Pacific Affairs 85(1), pp. 7-19.

Martin, P., 2017. Merchants of Labor – Recruiters and International Labor Migration. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Massey, D. S., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A. and Taylor, J. E., 1993. Theories of international migration: A review and appraisal. Population and Development Review 19(3), pp. 431–466.

Melossi, E., 2021. 'Ghetto tomatoes' and 'taxi drivers': The exploitation and control of Sub-Sahran African migrant tomato pickers in Puglia, Southern Italy. Journal of Rural Studies, this issue.

Mešić, N. and Wikström, E., 2021. Ruptures and acts of citizenship in the Swedish berry-picking industry. Journal of Rural Studies, this issue.

Ministry of Labour and Employment., 2018. Labour Migration for Employment. A Status Report for Nepal: 2015/2016-2016/2017. Government of Nepal, Kathmandu.

Morén-Alegret, R., Fatorić, S., Wladyka, D., Mas-Palacios, A. and Fonseca, M. L., 2018. Challenges in achieving sustainability in Iberian rural areas and small towns: Exploring immigrant stakeholders' perceptions in Alentejo, Portugal, and Empordà, Spain. Journal of Rural Studies 64, pp. 253–266. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2018.05.005.

Moreno, L., Esteves, A. and Fonseca, M. L., 2016. Opções empresariais, agricultura e contingências laborais no Sul de Portugal: o caso de Odemira no contexto da mundialização. In: L. Madureira, P.G. Silva, O. Sacramento, A. Marta-Costa, and T. Koehnen, Editors, 2016. *Smart and Inclusive Development in Rural Areas: Book of Proceedings of the 11th Iberian Conference on Rural Studies*. Universidade de Trás-os-

Montes e Alto Douro, Vila Real. http://hdl.handle.net/10451/38905

Noy, C., 2008. Sampling knowledge: The hermeneutics of snowball sampling in qualitative research. International Journal of Social Research Methodology 11(4), pp. 327–344. https://doi.org/10.1080/13645570701401305.

Oliveira, C. R. and Gomes, N., 2019. Indicadores de Integração de Imigrantes. Relatório Estatístico Anual 2019. Observatório das Migrações, Lisbon. https://doi.org/10.1080/09612025.2015.1007639.

OTSH., 2018. Tráfico De Seres Humanos. Relatório de 2017. Ministério da Administração Interna, Observatório do Tráfico de Seres Humanos (OTSH), Barcarena.

Peixoto, J., 2009. New migrations in Portugal: Labour markets, smuggling and gender segmentation. International Migration 47(3), pp. 185–210. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2435.2009.00528.x.

Pereira, A., 2019. Transborder Himalaya: Processos de Transnacionalismo nos Empresários e Trabalhadores Nepaleses em Lisboa. ISEG, OpenSoc Programa de Doutoramento Inter-universitário, Portugal. http://hdl.handle.net/10400.5/18150.

Pereira, S., Moreno, L., Estevens, A., Esteves, A. and Malheiros, J., 2016. Reconfiguración de áreas rurales y explotación de mano de obra inmigrante: el caso de Odemira, Portugal. Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos 30(81), pp. 227–250.

Piore, M. J., 1979. Birds of Passage. Migrant Labor and Industrial Society. Cambridge University Press, New York. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511572210.

Pires, R. P., 2019. Portuguese emigration today. In: Pereira, C. and Azevedo, J., Editors, 2019. *New and Old Routes of Portuguese Emigration: Uncertain Futures at the Periphery of Europe*. Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-15134-8_2.

PORDATA, INE/SEF/MAI., 2020. População estrangeira com estatuto legal de residente: total e por algumas nacionalidades - 2019. PORDATA Base de Dados de Portugal Contemporâneo. https://www.pordata.pt/Portugal/Popula%C3%A7%C3%A3o+estrangeira+com+estatuto+legal+de+residente+total+e+por+algumas+nacionalidades-24

Portes, A., 1999. Migrações Internacionais: Origens, Tipos e Modos de Incorporação. Celta Editora, Oeiras.

Purcell, J., Purcell, K. and Tailby, S., 2004. Temporary work agencies: Here today, gone tomorrow?. British Journal of Industrial Relations 42(4), pp. 705–725.

Reyneri, E., 2003. Immigration and the underground economy in new receiving South

European countries: Manifold negative effects, manifold deep-rooted causes. International Review of Sociology 13(1), pp. 117–143. https://doi.org/10.1080/0390670032000087023.

Rye, J. F., 2018. Labour migrants and rural change: The 'mobility transformation' of Hitra/Frøya, Norway, 2005–2015. Journal of Rural Studies 64, pp. 189–199. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2017.12.003.

Salt, J., 1987. Comparative trends in international migration study. International Migration 25(3), pp. 241–50.

Scott, S. and Rye, J.F., 2021. Praised, prized, yet pnalised: A critical examination of low-wage hiring queues in the global strawberry industry. Journal of Rural Studies, this issue.

SEF., 2020. Relatório de Imigração, Fronteiras e Asilo 2019. Oeiras: Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras (SEF).

Sørensen, N. N., Gammeltoft-Hansen, T., 2013. Introduction. In: Gammeltoft-Hansen, T., Nyberg Sørensen, N., Editors, 2013. *The Migration Industry and the Commercialization of International Migration*, Routledge, New York.

Taboadela, O., Maril, M. and Lamela, C., 2018. La superdiversidad migratoria en el medio rural: Odemira, Alentejo, un estudio de caso. Finisterra 53(107), pp. 87–105. https://doi.org/10.18055/finis11935.

Taylor-Nicholson, E., Paoletti, S., Sijapati, B. and Farbenblum, B., 2014. A Risky Business: Accountability of Manpower Agencies in Nepal. Centre for the Study of Labour and Mobility, Policy Brief, No 3, June 2014, Kathmandu.

van Meeteren, M., Pereira, S., 2016. New roles for social networks in migration? Assistance in Brazilian migration to Portugal and the Netherlands. In: Bakewell, O., Engbersen, G., Fonseca, M.L., Horst, C., Editors, 2016. *Beyond Networks: Feedback in International Migration*, Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Vieira, L. M., 2019. Exportações: os pequenos frutos são os maiores. Frutas, Legumes e Flores. 2019. https://www.flfrevista.pt/2019/06/exportacoes-os-pequenos-frutos-sao-os-maiores/.

World Bank, 2016. Migration and Remittances Factbook 2016. World Bank, Washington, DC.

———. 2019. Personal Remittances, Received (% of GDP). Estimates Based on IMF Balance of Payments Data, and World Bank and OECD GDP estimates. World Bank. https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS