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Dear friends of the TRAFIG project,

Last year's developments and exceptional circumstances have highlighted ever more the importance and necessity of contacts and mobility in all our lives – at the same time demonstrating the relatively privileged positions that many of us find ourselves in. For people affected by displacement, the past months have exacerbated already precarious living conditions. As early insights from our fieldwork in Africa, Asia and Europe demonstrate, their ability to ensure security for themselves and their families, to make a living, or to achieve their goals remains at risk. Thus, the need to find solutions that reflect the challenges, capacities and needs of persons affected by displacement remains the highest priority. We hope to be able to contribute to this aim with the findings and insights from our project.

Despite the need to adjust many of the plans for 2020, TRAFIG has been able to continue with many project activities in the field and beyond. 'Getting things done' under the very challenging conditions of the pandemic required, however, a lot of energy, perseverance, and flexibility of team members. We are very grateful to all colleagues – overall the TRAFIG family encompasses more than 60 people working in and for 12 partner organisations in 11 countries – who continuously demonstrate their commitment and dedication to the project, which is now entering its third year.

While a lot of conceptual and empirical work now lies behind us, 2021 will be a decisive year for TRAFIG. In the coming months, we will present our study results on protracted displacement and translocal mobilities in the Middle East, South Asia, East Africa, the Horn of Africa Southern and Western Europe through a large number or working papers, policy briefs and of course through our website. We also look very much forward to engaging with key stakeholders and the public – hopefully in person – in workshops, policy fora and through other outreach activities. For this we aim to synthesize our findings, make them easily accessible and bring them into a constructive dialogue with policy and practice communities. Stay tuned for our new publications and upcoming events via trafig.eu and our Twitter channel.

This edition of our Newletter presents an overview of TRAFIG developments from October 2020 to January 2021. Next to new outputs - including TRAFIG publications, new blog articles, and other publications from our TRAFIG partners - the newsletter provides an update of our project activities, both in the field as well as in events and international conferences, and shares the most recent announcements from our project and partners. Find out more about the TRAFIG team in our introduction of **Mulu Getachew Abebe** from <u>Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia,</u> and learn more about the Horizon 2020 sister project "MAGYC - Migration Governance and asYlum Crises" in a blog piece by **Lucia Ragazzi**.

We look forward to staying in touch with you – in person and/or virtually via mail, social media, webinars or other formats.

For any enquiries, comments or recommendations, please write to contact@trafig.eu.

Benjamin Etzold, Maarit Thiem and Gizem Güzelant on behalf of the TRAFIG team.

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Output and Publications from TRAFIG

TRAFIG Publications: Working Papers, Practice Notes, and Policy Briefs



TRAFIG working paper no. 4 • 11/2020

TRAFIG Working Paper No. 4: Figurations of Displacement in the DRC - Empirical findings and reflections on protracted displacement and translocal connections of Congolese IDPs

Working Paper No. 4 analyses translocal figurations of displacement in the Democratic Republic of Congo, focussing on internal displacement in the east of the country. Based on our empirical research, the paper explores TRAFIG's central question: "How are protractedness, dependency and vulnerability related to the factors of local and translocal connectivity and mobility?"

Find out more about the key dimensions of figurations of displacement in the DR Congo, as well as cross-cutting findings and emerging trends regarding, among others, gendered protractedness or Congo's culture of self-reliance.

TRAFIG Practice Note No. 4: Bolstering resilient connections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Taking TRAFIG Working Paper No. 4 as a basis, Practice Note No. 4 accentuates the importance strengthening resilient of connections in the context of internal displacement in the DR Congo.

By distinguishing between different qualities of connectivity, the Practice Note helps to identify which type of connections can help persons affected to move out of protracted displacement. Find out more.



Bolstering resilient connections in the Democratic



Publications from TRAFIG Team Members

- Belloni, M., Fravega, E., Giudici, D. (2020). Fuori dal sistema di accoglienza: Insediamenti informali di rifugiati in Italia tra marginalità e autonomia. Politiche Sociali, N. 2/2020, 225-244. (in Italian)
- Boccagni, P., Murcia, L. E. P, Belloni, M. (2020). Thinking Home on the Move: A conversation across disciplines. Emerald Group Publishing.
- Etzold, B. (2020). In the shadow of the pandemic: Who has a right to mobility-and who doesn't? BICC (ed.). Annual Report 2020, 10-17.
- Jacobs, C., Kubiha S.L., Katembera, R.S. (2020). The Upward Spiral Towards Local Integration of IDPs: Agency and Economics in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Refugee Survey Quarterly 39(4), 537-543.
- Jacobs, C., Almeida, B. (2020). Government-led Resettlement after Natural Disasters as a <u>Durable Solution? The Case of Cyclone Idai.</u> Refugee Survey Quarterly (online).
- Katsiaficas, C. (2020). COVID-19 shines spotlight on need for strengthened mental health response for asylum seekers. Identities Blog Series - COVID-19.
- Pastore, F., Roman E. (2020). Migration Policies and Threat-based Extraversion. Analysing the Impact of European Externalisation Policies on African Polities. Revue européenne des migrations internationales 36(1), 133-152.
- Pastore, F., Ponzo I. (2020). Victims or resources? Migrants and shrinking areas in the post-Covid-19 society. Welcoming Spaces - Blog series on COVID-19.
- Ponzo, I. (2020). How to Turn Rural Europe into a Welcoming Space for Migrants. IAI Commentaries, no. 20/89.
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- Roman, E. (2020). The Burden of Being "Safe": How do Informal EU Migration Agreements Affect International Responsibility Sharing? Verfassungsblog.
- Schapendonck, J., Belloni, M. (2020). Constraints and transgressions in journeys of displacement, in: Bowstead J., Adey, P., Brickell, K., Desai, V., Dolton, M., Pinkerton, A., Siddiqi, A. (eds.). Handbook of Displacement, 297-311.
- Rudolf, M. (2020). "Who is caught in the crossfire of Ethiopia's recent conflict". D+C Development and Cooperation.

TRAFIG Blog Articles

- Caitlin Katsiaficas, Martin Wagner: <u>The New Pact: Supporting or constraining mobility</u> out of protracted displacement? November 2020.
- Shamin Asghari: Migrant or Asylum Seeker: Is the distinction still relevant? A view on the "Rapid Screening" phase of the New EU Pact on Migration and Asylum. November 2020.
- Simone Christ: <u>Insights from TRAFIG field work in Germany</u>. December 2020.
- Markus Rudolf: Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia—Caught between all fronts. January 2021.
- Eva Papatzani, Filyra Vlastou, Alexandra Siotou and Panos Hatziprokopiou. <u>Update of the TRAFIG fieldwork in Greece</u>. January 2021.

TRAFIG Project Activities

Stay informed about the project developments.

TRAFIG Activities: Events and Conferences

On 20 November 2020, TRAFIG team members Eva Papatzani, Filyra Vlastou, Alexandra Siotou and Panos Hatziprokopiou (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) presented a paper about "Inhabiting the permanently temporary: housing practices, mobilities and networks under conditions of precarity and restricted mobility" at a one-day web-conference organised by the Department of Planning & Regional Development, University of Thessaly, focussing on "The refugees' right to housing: state-run hospitality sites and practices of housing commons." The presentation drew comparatively on fieldwork material from the three TRAFIG field sites -Athens, Lesvos/Chios, and Thessaloniki - to reflect on aspects of displaced people's agency and relations and their making of (temporary) "homes" even in the direst of circumstances. ______ On 26 Novemver 2020, TRAFIG team member Panos Hatziprokopiou (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) gave a talk about "Facets of uneven development in the European border regime: The economic geographies of migrant camps in Greece" at the "Studies in National & International Development" (SNID) Seminar Series at Queens' University, Canada, based on his past work and insights from the TRAFIG fieldwork. On 17 November 2020, TRAFIG team member Fawwaz Momani (Yarmouk University), presented a joint paper about "Protracted Displacement for Syrian Refugees in Jordan: Future Intentions" at the "Protracted Displacement Conference: Hopes, Perspectives and Solutions? Governance - Social Dimension - Academia" (19-20 October 2020). The paper was co-authored by colleagues from TRAFIG's Jordan team: Sarah Tobin (CMI-Chr. Michelsen Institute), Are John Knudsen (CMI - Chr. Michelsen Institute), Benjamin Etzold (BICC), Tamara Al- Yakoub (Yarmouk University) and Rasheed Jarah (Yarmouk University). On 16 December 2020, Benjamin Etzold (BICC), presented the core concept and some key findings of the TRAFIG project in the online lecture series "Migration, Mobilities and Sustainable Futures" at Utrecht University.

Zooming in on Migration and Asylum - H2020 Webinar Series

In the webinar series "Zooming In On Migration and Asylum", the Horizon 2020 sister projects TRAFIG, ADMIGOV, MAGYC, and MIGNEX join forces to expand their collective knowledge base on some of today's most pressing dynamics, including protracted displacement, the notion of crisis in the field of migration and asylum, internal displacement, refugee-driven solutions, and alternatives to current migration governance.



Starting in June 2020, the team has been organising monthly webinars based on findings from the different projects, which have been supported by experts' insights as well as lively discussions with the audience of currenlty more than 800 registered participants.

Find out more about the <u>webinar series and all sessions so far</u> on our website, or watch the recordings on the <u>TRAFIG YouTube channel</u>.

On 15 December 2020, TRAFIG organised webinar #6 on "Refugee responses to ongoing displacement." Based on our research in Ethiopia and Jordan, the webinar focused on different strategies that refugees and internally displaced persons are using in response to displacement-related challenges. The webinar was moderated by Sarah Tobin (CMI - Chr. Michelsen Institute), with Fekadu Adugna Tufa, Mulu Getachew (both Addis Ababa University) and Markus Rudolf (BICC) presenting insights from Ethiopia, and Fawwaz Momani, together with Tamara Adel Al Yakoub (both Yarmouk University), sharing findings from Jordan.

Roger Zetter (Professor Emeritus, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford) supported the webinar with his insights.

(Re-)watch the webinar on Youtube!

TRAFIG has just released an <u>introductory video</u>, presenting the core of our research, our aims, and our framework - and sharing glances from our work so far.

Find it on our new Youtube Channel.

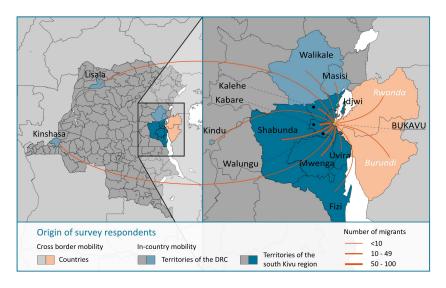


TRAFIG Fieldwork

Africa

The TRAFIG Team in the **DR Congo** has completed all empirical research in March 2020. During their fieldwork activities, the team was able to speak with almost 500 persons, including persons affected by internal displacement and other types of migrants, members of the receiving communities as well as stakeholders.

In December 2020, the team finalised <u>Working Paper No.4.</u>, which - based on this research - analyses the empirical findings and reflections on protracted displacement and translocal connections of internally displaced persons in the DR Congo. Additionally, in the context of TRAFIG's <u>Practice Note No. 4.</u>, the findings have been used to highlight the importance of connectivity for persons affected, and to demonstrate how resilient connections can be strengthened.



The TRAFIG fieldwork in **Ethiopia** had intensified until March 2020, before the acitivities had to be haltered and adjusted due to impact of the pandemic. Despite the restrictions and difficult circumstances, the TRAFIG team in Ethiopia was able to finalize their research activities by the end of September 2020.

An analysis of the figurations of displacement in the case of Ethiopia based on this research will be shared in TRAFIG's upcoming Working Paper No.5. <u>Subscribe to our Newsletter in order to stay updated about our newest publications</u>.



In his new article on the TRAFIG Blog, Markus Rudolf (BICC) describes the situation of Eritrean refugees, as well as future prospects, in the context of the current developments in Ethiopia: Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia—Caught between all fronts.

Picture by Markus Rudolf.

Asia

In Jordan, all of the qualitative research had already been finalized by the research team in the beginning of 2020. As in all other focus countries, the research activities in Jordan were

interrupted due to the pandemic, and had to be adjusted according to the changing circumstances over the course of the last year. However, the team managed to finalize the implementation of the quantitative research until the end of September.

The TRAFIG colleagues in the Jordan team are currently analysing the findings from both the qualitative and the quantitative research, which will be shared in an upcoming Working Paper on Transnational Figurations of Displacement in the Middle East. Stay updated on our newest publications by subscribing to the Newsletter.

In Pakistan, the research team was engaged in intense fieldwork managed by TRAFIG partner organisation SHARP-Pakistan. Overall, the team was able to conduct 61 qualitative interviews with displaced persons from Afghanistan, as well as 15 interviews with experts. As the research team faced several difficulties due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic – such as multiple lockdowns and office closures – the fieldwork activities could not be conducted as initially planned. Nevertheless, the team was also able to continue implementing the TRAFIG survey in November, with 225 respondents in Lahore, Karachi, and Peshawar so far.

The team has continuously adapted the fieldwork according to the changing circumstances. <u>SHARP</u> has developed a COVID-19 strategy to continue the work in a safe environment, following the government's instructions and prioritising the health and security of displaced persons and researchers. Activities were organised virtually as well as physically and implemented in a regulated order and timeline.

As the pandemic has been progressing, the team has stayed in close connection with displaced persons and communities through a helpline and messaging services used to share updates and give support regarding measures and regulations. As key partner for UNHCR in Pakistan, SHARP has also become responsible for monitoring the impacts of the pandemic on Afghan migrants and for supporting cash-assistance to most vulnerable Afghan communities.



Picture from the fieldwork in Pakistan, taken by SHARP-Pakistan.

Update:

The TRAFIG team is now being supported by Shamin Asghari, a PhD researcher at the <u>Van Vollenhoven Institute for Law at Leiden University</u>. Shamin will conduct expert interviews and biographic interviews with Afghan migrants in <u>Iran</u>.

Europe

Over the last months, fieldwork in **Italy** has also progressed despite intensifiying difficulties due to the pandemic. In September 2020, the pandemic situation in the country was seemingly under control and restrictions to mobility and daily life activities were limited. This allowed the team to both progress with the qualitative and ethnographic part of the research and launch the quantitative survey.

During the month of September, the researchers could finally conduct in-site fieldwork in the urban context of Rome focusing on the Eritrean community, as well as continue in-site fieldwork in the rural area around Saluzzo (Piedmont) with a focus on West Africans, and in the city of Torino with a focus on Afghans. In the same month, the interviewers in the Italy team could start with the implementation of the survey in three main geographical areas (the north-west and north-east of Italy and the city of Rome).

However, in October, the pandemic situation became more and more serious and with the second wave, restrictions to mobility and activities were restored. Certain measures applied nationally, while others were implemented at a regional level depending on the epidemiological situation across the country. These developments have impacted, once again, the team's research activities, especially the qualitative and ethnographic ones, which require longer and more intense interactions with respondents. The team members are currently engaged in trying to resume insite fieldwork and face-to-face interviews in some contexts, where the conditions allow for the safety of both researchers and interviewees. This is always combined with online interviews, virtual meetings and the online methodologies developed in the past months.

Since October, major difficulties have emerged in connection with the implementation of the survey as well. Nevertheless, the team decided to avoid stopping the survey and rather to adapt their work according to the Covid-related restrictions and the continuously evolving epidemiological situation. Several adaptations were needed: For instance, since mobility across regions and municipalities is severely limited, interviews are mainly concentrated in urban contexts (especially Rome and Torino), while interviews in rural areas are more limited. In addition, since access to respondents during a pandemic is even more difficult than usual, in Torino the team was able to establish a fruitful cooperation with local organizations supporting migrants, which agreed to host the interviewer and respondents in their premises, offering a safe and trusted environment. The team also introduced the possibility to conduct the survey via phone or video-call to avoid face-to-face interactions when it was not possible to guarantee the necessary safety requirements. However, conducting a quantitative interview at a distance is more complex compared to qualitative interviews, and the interviewers had to find creative ways to engage with potential respondents (such as recording a short video to explain in simple words what the TRAFIG survey is about).

Notwithstanding the obstacles on their way, the survey in Italy has progressed unexpectedly well and (hopefully) the target of 300 respondents will shortly be achieved. This would not have been possible without the enormous efforts, patience and dedication of the team's three interviewers – Floriana Russo, Giulia Gonzales and Yonas Sium.

In **Greece**, the fieldwork had to be adapted in response to the aggravating circumstances and various developments in the course of the pandemic, as well. In a new article on the TRAFIG Blog, Eva Papatzani, Filyra Vlastou, Alexandra Siotou and Panos Hatziprokopiou from the TRAFIG Team in Greece report on their activities and share their insights from the fieldwork in Athens, Lesvos and Chios, and Thessaloniki since September 2020.

<u>Find out more</u> about the impacts of the pandemic and the experiences of displaced persons in the different field sites.



Interview in Athens, September 2020. Photo by Benjamin Etzold.

The TRAFIG fieldwork in **Germany** particularly focuses on displaced persons' own trajectories and transnational networks.

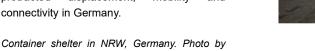
Simone Christ (BICC), who organises the german fieldwork, reports on how the research activities had to be adjusted due to the pandemic:

"After the postponement of fieldwork due to the COVID-19 pandemic, empirical fieldwork started in August. Even though we were able to resume field research face-to-face from summer onwards, this is now very different from our usual fieldwork experience. Whereas previously, when conducting field research with refugees in Germany, we got to know refugees in welcome cafés in the shelters or accompanied them to their appointments at different agencies; in a nutshell, we were able to immerse ourselves into the field. With COVID-19, all this is no longer possible. Our concern now is to ensure that we do not put our respondents and ourselves at risk and to strictly follow the hygiene standards. Access to the field is thus proving to be much more difficult than it was before. Nevertheless, the German team was able to conduct a major number of interviews during the last months.

Apart from semi-structured interviews, we also conducted expert interviews online. At the end of November, the whole team engaged in a training on trauma sensitive interviewing, which we were able to implement during the following online interviews. We are confident to finish our empirical fieldwork on time, even though this fieldwork turned out to be very different from the one we planned."

Read **Simone**'s article on "Insights from TRAFIG field work in Germany." on our TRAFIG Blog and find out more about the research team, fieldwork activities in times of the pandemic, and preliminary findings on protracted displacement, mobility and connectivity in Germany.

Simone Christ.





Meet the TRAFIG Team

Get to know the people who are part of the international TRAFIG team and find out about their personal motivations and perspectives.

The TRAFIG team counts 69 members affiliated with the <u>Consortium of 12 partner organisations</u> from 11 countries. The Consortium is supported by local researchers that make the fieldwork possible.

Meet Mulu Getachew Abebe from the TRAFIG Team at Addis Ababa University, Ehtiopia.



"My interest in Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia dates back to 2011 when I visited Eritrean refugees in the Mai Aini refugee camp to research their experiences inside the camp. During the fieldwork and the following years, I had the chance to meet many different refugees. This introduced me to the precariousness and uncertainty that refugees face at different stages of their flight, both inside and outside of refugee camps. I have been curious ever since to understand the uncertainty that these refugees experience and the way in which people cope with it."

Mulu is a member of the TRAFIG Team at the <u>Addis Ababa University</u>, <u>Ehtiopia</u>. In the context of TRAFIG, she supports the fieldwork in Ethiopia, focussing in particular on Eritrean refugees in camps and cities in Tigray, Afar and Addis Ababa.

Learn more about Mulu's background, her experience and motivation in her introduction on our TRAFIG Blog.

Horizon 2020 Sister Projects

Get to know related Horizon 2020 projects and their innovative approaches.



The Horizon 2020 project MAGYC - Migration Governance and asYlum Crises seeks to assess how migration governance has been influenced by the recent 'refugee crises' and how crises at large shape policy responses on migration. Overall, the project aims to appraise policy responses in light of the 'crisis' and assess their efficiency for the long-term governance of migration.

Coordinated by the <u>Hugo Observatory</u> of the <u>University of Liège</u>, the project brings together <u>12</u> <u>international partner organisations from 2018 until 2022.</u>

Find out more about <u>MAGYC</u> - including the project's aims, its unique approach and methodology, its work plan and most recent publications- in our <u>new blog article</u> by <u>Lucia Ragazzi</u>, Project Manager for <u>MAGYC</u> at <u>The Hugo Observatory.</u>

Find the most recent announcement from TRAFIG and related projects!

TRAFIG team member **Milena Belloni**, who is one of the <u>FIERI</u> researchers involved in the qualitative and ethnographic research in Italy, has recently launched the website of her ongoing project "<u>Exiled and separated</u>" focusing on refugees' right to family life and family reunification in Europe.

The project is funded by the **Flemish Research Foundation** and hosted by the <u>University of Antwerp (CRESC)</u> and the <u>Human Rights Centre of Gent University.</u>

On **31.05.2021** - with the support of **Susanne Heinke** (BICC) - **Simone Christ** and **Benjamin Etzold** (both BICC) will present key findings and results from the TRAFIG fieldwork in Germany at an event titled "We'll stay in contact - How displaced persons in Germany maintain connections", organised by the VHS Bonn (in German).

Subscribe here to recieve our newsletter automatically. It will be published every four months until March 2022.



Staying Connected 01/2021 - TRAFIG Newsletter No. 4































The TRAFIG Consortium



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