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Imagined Futures: The Onward Migration of Nigerians in Europe

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Summary of Thesis

Dynamic mobility and migration patterns, including forced migration, have always formed part of the complex social, cultural and economic relationships between Africa and Europe. Like other Africans, Nigerian migrants live in countless locations around the world and are connected to their homeland through contingent transnational networks. This thesis explores the onward migration of Nigerian migrants towards, within and beyond Europe and analyses the motivations, patterns and outcomes of their multiple movements.

Six cities in Germany, the UK and Spain are the main research locations for the fieldwork that took place over 17 months. The three countries are important destinations for Nigerian migrants in Europe and also the principal destinations of intra-European onward migrants. The cities included in this study are the capital cities Berlin, London and Madrid, as well as Cologne, Manchester and Málaga. The multi-sited fieldwork comprised ethnographic research techniques involving in-depth interviews (to gather information about the motivations and experiences of onward migrants) and participant observation (to understand the contexts in which mobility practices were embedded), which were complemented with analysis of the 2011 Census data and other secondary statistical data (to explore general migration patterns and socio-demographic data).

Onward migration is conceptualised as a function of aspirations and capabilities, thus highlighting how evolving structures of opportunities and constraints can influence social and geographical trajectories. The findings suggest that migrant decision-making and trajectories are open-ended and unfold across the life course and the migration project. Furthermore, onward migrants engage in sustained multi-sited transnationalism which influences their complex mobility patterns and identity formation. Rather than focusing on migrants' integration at a destination or their contribution to development in their origin country, as is common in migration studies, this study uses the wellbeing approach to holistically explore how migrants and their families experience onward migration in different places and countries. Their perceptions of wellbeing are multi-dimensional and relational, shaped both by previous, present and anticipated future states of wellbeing.

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List of Abbreviations

APS	British Annual Population Survey
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EEA	European Economic Area
EU	European Union
IOM	International Organization of Migration
JAMB	Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIDO	Nigerians in Diaspora Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ONS	Office of National Statistics
UN	United Nations
Unesco	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UTME	University Tertiary Matriculation Examination

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 A chance encounter

My interest in onward migration dates back to a chance encounter with Harrison in North London during the autumn of 2009. I was working as an associate researcher on the Migrations between Africa and Europe (MAFE) survey. Around Seven Sisters underground station in North London I was looking for a Ghanaian restaurant, where I had arranged to meet a potential survey respondent. Seeing that I was having difficulty locating the place, I entered an internet café on West Green Road to ask for directions. Harrison was busy chatting to the owner, but he recognised the name of the restaurant I was asking for and offered to show me the way. We stepped outside onto the road, and he indicated in which direction I should head. He instructed me to 'Walk straight down road and then go *rechts* at the *Ampel*... ehh... traffic lights'. I was a little confused at first why Harrison was using German words, but did not say anything. When Harrison continued to speak and interspersed more German words into our conversation, I became curious. Being bilingual in German and English, I could understand Harrison's instructions without any difficulty. But rather self-consciously at this point I was trying to assess whether I had inadvertently said anything in German myself or was wearing something that marked me out as German. I was all too aware how difficult it was to make a complete switch between languages, and knew the feeling of not remembering certain words. Still slightly confused, I decided to just politely ask Harrison if he spoke German.

Harrison initially was puzzled, because he must not have noticed his slippage into German. Then he responded with a smile that he was from Ghana but had lived in Hamburg for over 10 years before coming to London. I told him how happy I was to meet a fellow *Hamburger*, seeing that this was the city I was born in. I also mentioned that I had travelled to Ghana and really liked the country. We both laughed about our chance encounter and continued chatting for a while. Harrison now told me in German about the neighbourhood he used to live in and where he used to work in Hamburg. He also mentioned his two children who had stayed living in Hamburg with their mother. Harrison told me that he worked for a big company in Germany. A few years after he and his wife had separated,

Harrison asked if the company could offer him employment in one of their branches in the UK. When his company indicated that they would be willing to hire him in East London, Harrison decided to relocate. At the beginning, he was doing a job that was below his skill-level and previous pay grade in Germany. Harrison also did not like the shift pattern, which changed from week to week. He said that it was challenging to share accommodation with several other people. But Harrison also explained how he had become used to the lifestyle. At the time he was considering to move to Milton Keynes, because a lot of his German-Ghanaian friends were calling to say that there was more affordable housing there and he could easily find a job. Harrison still went back to Hamburg frequently to visit his children. Seeing that I had to head off to my appointment, I asked Harrison if we could exchange telephone numbers and said that I would like to stay in touch with him. Harrison agreed and we joked that we might even bump into each other in Hamburg.

1.2 Onward migration: defining the term

Onward migration is a migration trajectory that spans multiple places, remains open-ended and continuously evolves over time. The encounter with Harrison sparked my interest to explore the topic for my doctoral research. On a theoretical level, onward migration poses several challenges to scholarship within Migration Studies. International migration used to be mainly conceptualised as a linear move from a country of origin to a particular destination – country A to country B. Drawing attention to the possible reversibility of these flows, other studies have considered moves that occur in the opposite direction, when migrants eventually decide to return to their country of origin (for a review see King 2000; also Cassarino 2004). Thus international migration has been spatially fixed between two geographical nodes in order to analyse and interpret it (Cresswell 2006). Recent research into transit migration and stepwise migration has emphasised more complex migration trajectories and contributed insights about the ‘journeys’ and possible ‘in-between’ stages of the migration process (Andersson 2013; Paul 2011; Suter 2012; Vogt 2013). Nevertheless, the overarching framing, that international migration occurs between two main geographic nodes, has remained largely unchallenged (Collyer and de Haas 2012).

When people decide to move again after settling at an initial destination, their migration trajectories encompass further geographic nodes, located in country C and country D. Indeed, the migration trajectories of onward migrants can unfold over a whole series of different localities, involving both internal and international migration. This constitutes an important conceptual broadening of migration trajectories as dynamic and

potentially open-ended processes. Furthermore, onward migration is not linear, because it can involve complex multi-directional moves and visits – to new places or previous places of settlement – and therefore problematises notions of 'origin', 'destination', 'home' and 'return'. Onward migrants associate different life stages with particular places. Similar to other key life events – such as the completion of education, a new job, marriage or the birth of children – migration can mark an important life transition. Moving to another place can be the start of another chapter in life – a step back to recapture, a continuation of the life story or a rupture that signals new beginnings. Throughout the life course migrants' biographies become enmeshed with their winding migration paths and the places they settle (Fangen 2012).

Migration can transform the ways in which individuals see the world, their place within it and how they are perceived. Discourses and practices relating to contemporary identities and ideas of nationhood are thus affected and challenged by mobility (Brah 1996). Migrants who move between 'here' and 'there' gain novel perspectives on their 'home' and 'host' society. This led to the acknowledgement that migrants can form 'hyphenated' national identities as a way of expressing their varying degrees of identification with two nations, two political systems and two ways of being (Çaglar 1997). Nonetheless, these hyphenated identifications are commonly expected to fall on a pre-defined binary spectrum. Migrants who continue to move and consecutively settle in different countries, step outside of this supposed duality of being and belonging. The question then becomes how onward migrants perceive and perform their identities. It is possible that this complexity, which is difficult to explain, might result in onward migrants presenting stable and simplistic self-definitions. Others might favour ambivalent 'hybrid' and plural identities – religious, political and social (Ifekwunigwe 2002; St. Louis 2009; Vertovec and Cohen 2002).

The 'transnational turn' in the social sciences has drawn attention to the various ties and exchanges that connect migrants with family members, kin and institutions across national borders (Basch *et al.* 1994). Yet transnationalism has been criticised for its deterritorialised conceptualisation of space, which does not acknowledge how everyday practices and transnational flows situate people and places in contingent ways (Mitchell 2007). Onward migrants in particular draw our attention to an explicitly multi-sited and multi-directional form of transnationalism, as they maintain ties and are involved in activities across their origin country, former places of residence and other places they visit. Thus, onward migration may represent a migration strategy through which migrants use the 'situatedness' of particular places for differentiated access to particular resources and opportunity structures.

Migrants hope that the places they reach and decide to settle will enable them to realise their imagined future. Thus migration aspirations represent powerful claims to where migrants envisage themselves – both in terms of place and wellbeing. For (aspirant) migrants, (im)mobility is therefore closely linked to the realisation of social mobility and other life endeavours (Pelican 2013). The continued movement of migrants can be driven by particular aspirations, dreams, hopes and desires that were formed in the origin countries, but remained unfulfilled. While for others, the decision to move multiple times may also be the result of new aspirations that were formed due to the experience of migration and new surroundings. The act of migration often enables individuals to gain new perspectives and accumulate further resources, including social, economic and cultural capital. Migrants might attain new mobility rights, learn new skills and accumulate economic resources, which in turn increase the likelihood of further moves (Massey 1990; Myrdal 1957). Onward migrants learn to envision their lives in other places and how this might influence their wellbeing. Importantly, they also develop the emotional capacity to make a new home for themselves and feel settled in a new place. Ultimately, further moves might allow individuals to reach places and states of wellbeing which did not form part of their initial horizon of possibilities, while others forever are ‘seeking greener pastures’.

1.3 Diverse global onward mobilities

The scale of global onward migration is difficult to quantify, however, several studies suggest that these trajectories constitute a sizable part of migration patterns in several destinations (Bratsberg *et al.* 2007; Hugo 2008). In Sweden, Nekby (2006) found that on leaving the country 72 per cent of migrants intended to return to their country of birth, meaning that 28 per cent relocated to another destination. For the USA, Artuç and Özden (2016) estimate that 9 per cent of recent immigrants in the USA arrived via a country other than their country of birth. Interestingly, the authors’ findings indicate that amongst immigrants in the USA who had previously resided in a high-income country the rate of onward migration was even higher, namely 30 per cent (Artuç and Özden 2016). On the whole, Canada, the USA and New Zealand are better at retaining migrants for extended periods of time, whereas in Europe higher shares of migrants leave again within five years – either to their origin country or another destination (Dumont and Spielvogel 2008). Thus current European migration dynamics include multi-directional onward mobilities, which occur towards, within and beyond the region.

Despite the evidence of these more complex migration processes, onward migration remains under-studied relative to other trajectories, such as one-step migration or return migration. Whilst some earlier research has focused on repeat internal migrations (Newbold and Bell 2001; da Vanzo 1983), much less is known about international onward migration. The relative dearth of research on international onward migration is not because this migration trajectory is a new phenomenon – it is likely that onward and circular mobilities always formed part of migration patterns (Bratsberg *et al.* 2007; Voigt-Graf 2004). For some migrants continuous migration even represents a way of life (Sinatti 2011; Walker 2011). Yet, current immigration statistics do not readily lend themselves to the study of onward migration and even qualitative studies have tended to portray international migration as a simple linear trajectory. Growing awareness about international onward migration and the availability of large-scale migration surveys,¹ however, have contributed to an increase of research on this topic over the recent decade (Biao 2006; Lindley and Van Hear 2007; Nekby 2006; Ossman 2013; Toma and Castagnone 2015).

As regards the drivers of multiple migration, some scholars interpret more complex trajectories as a planned 'stepwise' strategy that enables migrants to navigate and overcome barriers to reach their desired destination (Biao 2006; Konadu-Agyemang 1999; Paul 2011; De Voretz and Zhang 2004). People from low-income countries are confronted with a mobility paradox. Although the media and other means of communication provide information about out what it means to live well in other parts of the world, many face considerable restrictions to move to these places (Kleist and Thorsen 2017). Increasing inequality and the implementation of more selective immigration policies in high-income countries since the 1990s, make it necessary for aspirant migrants to find alternative routes to reach particular places, which in turn may have contributed to a rise in transit and stepwise migration (Collyer and de Haas 2012; de Haas *et al.* 2016). Meanwhile other scholars believe that onward mobilities are a result of migrants' ongoing evaluations of their migration project, during which they weigh up the evolving opportunities and constraints in different places (Kelly 2013; Ossman 2013; Schapendonk 2012). Throughout their migration project individuals may find new ways, or re-consider how to, create 'better lives' for themselves and their families. When analysing migrant decision-making, however, the boundaries between 'planned strategies', 'ongoing adjustments' and 'fortuitous coincidences' often become blurred. This is because migrants may retrospectively

¹ The most relevant migration surveys in this respect are the Mexican Migration Project and the Migrations between Africa and Europe (MAFE) dataset.

'rationalise' coincidences, discount failed itineraries or forget details when they recall their migration histories. Researchers have sought to address this issue by employing various methods, including life histories, detailed surveys or ethnographic methods (Carling 2012; Collyer and de Haas 2012; Fangen 2012; Findlay *et al.* 2015).

Much uncertainty still exists about the socio-demographic profile of onward migrants. The limited amount of studies conducted with this migrant group thus far, indicate that onward migrants are more likely than one-step migrants to have attained higher education credentials (Artuç and Özden 2016; Kelly 2013; Takenaka 2007). In addition, onward migrants experience higher unemployment and lower income prior to their relocation, compared to migrants who opted to stay at their first destination (Kelly 2013; Mas Giralt 2016; Nekby 2006). Overall, these sources characterise onward migrants as having relatively high levels of formal education, but nonetheless they often struggle to find work commensurate with their skills. Onward migrants also reported that their decision to relocate was influenced by the discrimination and racism they experienced in their previous country of residence (Ahrens *et al.* 2016; van Liempt 2011). It remains unclear to what extent gender, age and other social categories may shape onward mobility patterns.

As regards the onward migrants residing in high-income countries, African migrants appear to have a particularly high propensity to engage in onward mobility (Ahrens *et al.* 2016; Artuç and Özden 2017; Nekby 2006; Takenaka 2007; van Heelsum and Hessels 2006). Recent qualitative studies also suggest that the intra-continental migration routes of African migrants are characterised by increasing fluidity and complexity (Collyer 2007; Haandrikman and Hassanen 2014; Schapendonk 2010; van Liempt 2011; van Nieuwenhuyze 2009). In particular, the irregular moves of transit migrants, who traverse several African countries and the Mediterranean, have received media and policy attention in Europe (Andersson 2013; Collyer and de Haas 2012; İçduygu 2005; Schapendonk 2010; Suter 2012). Yet, much less is known about the continued mobilities of African migrants who arrive via other migration channels – as family members, business people or students.

1.4 Research focus and aims

This study is concerned with the onward migration of Nigerian migrants towards, within and beyond Europe. Before outlining the research questions which inform the thesis, let me elaborate on the relevance of this study. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the issue of onward migration is of important theoretical value, because it problematises the simplistic

mapping of migrant trajectories restricted to two nodes – one located in the origin country, region or place and another node at the destination. Further developing the theoretical conceptualisation of onward migration, thus in turn can help to conceive of international migration as a potentially stepwise, multi-directional and open-ended process. The acknowledgment of more complex and multiple migration patterns, of course, also has implications for how we approach and analyse related topics, such as citizenship, transnational families, livelihoods, wellbeing and belonging.

With this study I also wish to contribute to a broader understanding of the diversity and complexity of African mobilities and their protagonists' lifeworlds in Europe. I decided to focus on Nigerian migrants because they are a highly mobile population and relative to the size of their migrant communities in Europe, Nigerians remain an extremely understudied migrant group (Carling 2006). Even though several studies have analysed the onward mobilities of African migrants in Europe, on the whole they have focused on migrant groups who arrived as asylum seekers or irregular migrants (Haandrikman and Hassanen 2014; van Liempt 2011; Lindley and Van Hear 2007; Moret *et al.* 2005; Schapendonk 2012; Stewart and Shaffer 2015). Seeing that Nigerian migrants came to Europe via various migration channels and continue to be mobile for numerous reasons, I therefore further our understanding about the diverse profile and motivations of onward migrants.

As there are already several studies about onward migrants in Europe, there is a risk that this study could be perceived as yet another study about onward migration. However, there are several features of my research which make it innovative. Firstly, through the multi-sited fieldwork design that includes several cities across Germany, the UK and Spain, I highlight a diverse range of (onward) mobility patterns. While Nigerians have long-standing connections with the UK through colonial ties, trade and cultural exchange, Germany and Spain represent more recent destinations for Nigerian migrants. On the whole, studies about intra-European onward mobilities have focused on the UK as a destination (della Puppa 2016; Kelly 2013; Mas Giralt 2016; van Liempt 2011). The fieldwork in Germany and Spain therefore generates novel insights about the onward mobility patterns of Nigerians in the Schengen Area. Furthermore, this multi-sited research enhances our understanding of the structuring forces within particular contexts, thereby shedding light on the ways in which 'diaspora space' is multiply situated and differently inhabited (Brah 1996: 209). At the same time, studying the multiple (im)mobilities of Nigerian migrants illustrates actors' particular 'strategies of space formation and space appropriation' (Amelina and Faist 2012).

Secondly, this research tries to fill a methodological gap. There is a need for more contextualised studies about onward migration; current research on onward migration

overwhelmingly relies either on statistical data or ethnographic methods. The methodological approach taken in this study is a mixed-methods approach based on in-depth interviews and other ethnographic methods, set alongside the analysis of statistical secondary data. Extensive ethnographic fieldwork allowed me to better understand the situated and embodied experiences of (im)mobility across different research settings. By staying in touch with informants after the completion of fieldwork, I was also able to observe how migration and settlement intentions evolved over time. Through the analysis of 2011 Census data I explored the socio-demographic characteristics of onward migrants, while at the same time being acutely aware of the limitations of this data in terms of the lived experiences and mobility patterns it does not capture. Taken together, these mixed strategies give the findings of my research enhanced value. They can advance our understanding of onward migration, by unpacking and challenging some of the well-established assumptions concerning migration, belonging, home and return. Overall, this thesis aims to provide an holistic analysis of Nigerian onward mobilities by way of a multi-sited ethnographic study that also takes into account varied statistical data.

1.5 Research questions

This thesis aims to address the questions listed below. The questions will be expanded throughout the following seven chapters and in particular in the three main results chapters. The questions refer to onward migration, comprising both regular and irregular migrations, as well as multi-directional temporary and circular movements and other forms of non-migratory mobility.

What are the drivers that influence Nigerian intra-European onward migration?

- How is onward migration linked to immigration and settlement opportunities and strategies in different destination countries?
- How are intra-European (im)mobilities linked to different types of legal status?
- What role do networks play in the process of onward migration?
- How do aspirations and capabilities influence migrants' trajectories?
- How does migrant decision-making evolve during the life course and the migration project?

What are the patterns of intra-European onward migration?

- Which spatial dynamics characterise the intra-European onward mobilities of Nigerians?
- What role do age, gender and generation play in mobility patterns?
- How does the process of onward migration impact on migrants' situated and transnational practices?
- And how does this in turn influence onward migrants' transnational identities?

What are the outcomes of intra-European onward migration?

- What did migrants hope to achieve by onward migrating?
- How do migrants evaluate their migration project?
- How is onward migration connected to the wellbeing of migrants and their families?
- Which policies and measures have an impact on the experience of onward migrants?

1.6 Thesis outline

Chapter 2 provides a *detailed overview* of the available data on onward migration. It also outlines some of the main literature that has informed this thesis. It particularly focuses on research that provides insights about the socio-demographic profile of onward migrants, as well as the patterns and the outcomes of onward migration. The second part of the chapter contains the theoretical and conceptual framework that forms the basis for the critical analytical approach in this thesis.

Chapter 3 presents the *methodology*. It illustrates the multi-sited and mixed-method approach of the study. Furthermore the chapter describes the various research methods that were used to elicit data: in-depth interviews, participant observation, visual methods and analysis of secondary statistical data. The relational positionalities of a researcher conducting multi-sited fieldwork and the ways in which ethical concerns were addressed are tackled in the latter part of the chapter.

Chapter 4 sets out the *historical background* regarding the multi-faceted migration dynamics between Nigeria and Europe. It draws on a variety of sources, such as academic texts, international migration and census data, key informant interviews and literary accounts of migration. The portrayal of Nigeria's main post-colonial migration phases is critically discussed in light of the overlooked patterns of onward migration. The migration

and settlement patterns of Nigerians in Europe are embedded within various networks and broader processes of social transformation. In addition, this chapter provides more detailed information about the socio-demographic characteristics of the Nigerian migrant community in Europe.

Chapter 5 analyses the various *policies* that structure migration dynamics between Africa and Europe. By taking a multi-scalar approach it also provides a detailed account of how the more recent policy developments affect migrant projects at different stages. In addition, it outlines the general dynamics of intra-European mobilities based on the 2011 Census round and uncovers the overlooked mobility patterns onward migrants.

Chapter 6 is the first of set of three main empirical chapters. It focuses on the *drivers* of Nigerian onward migration. The aspirations and capabilities of Nigerian migrants are analysed to explain how emigration and intra-European (im)mobilities are shaped. It highlights how migration decision-making is influenced by particular life stage concerns and shifts in contextual conditions.

Chapter 7 illustrates the manifestation of several onward mobility *patterns*. It focuses the *multi-sited transnational practices* and *translocal geographies* of onward migrants and those migrants who stayed put in a destination. Particular gendered and generational differences in the practice of onward migration are highlighted. The question of transnational identity is approached in terms of how understandings of belonging are challenged and re-negotiated throughout the migration project.

Chapter 8 evaluates the *outcomes* of onward migration in terms of *human wellbeing*. Typically, migration outcomes are either assessed with regard to the integration or to the development efforts that migrants make using state-centred measures. This chapter provides an actor-orientated view and highlights the multi-dimensional ways in which migrants construct and experience wellbeing across time-space, as well as the barriers that frustrate their ambitions.

The final chapter is the *conclusion*. It draws together the main themes that this study has addressed. The main findings are summarised. Then follows a brief discussion about the drawbacks of this study and some avenues for future research.

Chapter 2

Geographies and Theories of Multiple and Onward Migrations

This chapter opens with a review of the extant literature on migration trajectories that span multiple places and destinations. The recent flurry of different terms used to describe these multiple migrations is indicative of the growing research interests concerning this topic. Even though the labels, at times, are used interchangeably, I demonstrate that the socio-demographic profile of different types of multiple migrants, as well as their motivations and trajectories are remarkably diverse. In the next section, I consider how established theories of migration might help inform a deeper understanding of onward migration, especially in relation to the intra-EU onward migration of Nigerians. Although, there is no single theory or model which can explain the complexities of the onward migration process, I argue that a theoretical framework that draws on several approaches and key concepts allows us to unpack the *drivers*, *patterns* and *outcomes* of onward migration. To this end, I discuss an adaptation of Carling's (2002) aspiration/ability model; an explicitly multi-sited conceptualisation of transnationalism and the human wellbeing approach.

2.1 Multiple migrations in the migration literature

Within migration studies, there is a growing body of literature that looks at migration trajectories that span several destination countries. Nevertheless, this research field remains rather disparate and difficult to circumscribe. This is partly due to the countless terms used to label this type of migration, such as: transit migration, fragmented migration, secondary migration, stepwise migration, indirect migration, twice migration, re-emigration, triangular migration, sequential migration, onward migration, third country migration and serial migration (Bhachu 1985; Biao 2007; Collyer and de Haas 2012; DeVoretz *et al.* 2003; Hugo 2008; Konadu-Agyemang 1999; Ossman 2015). These terms all refer to migration trajectories that involve stays in at least two or more destination countries, including irregular and legal migration.

Several scholars have studied the multiple historical displacements and mobilities of diasporas. Cohen (2008) defined the classical 'victim' diasporas – Jews, Africans, Armenians, Irish, and the Palestinians – as being scattered to different parts of the world

following a tragic event or a series of events that forced them into exile. But the definition and categorisation of diasporas has expanded to also include other types of diasporas. In her definitive study of onward migration, Bhachu (1985) documents the *twice migration* of East African Asians to the UK. They first left South Asia as indentured workers to build the Kenya-Uganda rail lines and their descendants were expelled in 1972 as part of the Africanisation policies that were implemented in the newly independent nation states. At the time of their expulsion Commonwealth subjects already faced more immigration restrictions to enter the UK. For some families this twice migration therefore took place across several generations.

Aside from forced migrants, the multiple moves of highly-skilled migrants also have prominently featured in the academic literature. In line with neoclassical economic theories, these studies often emphasise the rational choices migrants make concerning higher salaries, which are regarded as the principal motivations for *indirect migration* (Artuç and Özden 2016; Aydemir and Robinson 2008; DeVoretz and Zhang 2004; King and Newbold 2007). DeVoretz and Zhang (2004) introduced a model for *triangular migration* in order to describe migration trajectories which are first directed at what they call an 'entrepôt' country where migrants can acquire further subsidised resources (i.e. a passport, university degree, language skills etc.), to then move to a third country (such as the USA). DeVoretz and Zhang (2004) analysed census data for international migrants born in Hong Kong. They compared the characteristics of those migrants who stayed abroad in Canada with those who returned from various destination countries back to Hong Kong. 'Triangular migrants' returning from the USA were more likely to hold an overseas degree, be married and have a high salary.

More recently *stepwise migration* has been studied as a migration strategy amongst individuals who do not have all the necessary resources to reach their desired destination (even though some may well have completed university-level education). Drawing on insights from internal rural-urban migration, Konadu-Agyemang (1999) suggested that migrants who face visa barriers and do not have all the required resources for a direct migration are likely to opt for what he conceptualised as international stepwise migration. In his research with Ghanaian migrants in Canada, Konadu-Agyemang (1999) found that 33 per cent of his survey respondents had stayed in one other country before reaching Toronto, while another 34 per cent had lived in two or more countries. Amongst the respondents, more men engaged in stepwise migration than women. In her multi-sited research Paul (2011) found that 'capital-constrained' Filipino women often followed established stepwise migration patterns. Through recruitment agencies the Filipino women sought employment as migrant domestic workers in Singapore, Italy, Saudi Arabia or the United Arab Emirates.

The high fees charged by the recruitment agencies covered the contractual procedures, visa costs and flights, and the women re-paid this sum once they started working. Through this work experience and savings, the women then hoped to secure a special visa as a live-in caregiver in Canada or the USA and later also bring their families.

Meanwhile *transit migrants* are individuals who usually have fewer financial resources and they view travelling 'by road' as their only feasible option. Transit migrants heading in the direction of Europe or North America have received considerable attention from the media, policy-makers and academics (Barros *et al.* 2002; Collyer 2007; Collyer and de Haas 2012; İçduygu 2005; Vogt 2013). Transit migration involves 'mixed flows' of both refugees and purported 'economic' migrants who travel overland to reach their desired final destination. In Central America, increasing levels of violence related to gangs and the narcotics trade have compelled even young children to head North to reach Mexico and eventually enter the USA (Vogt 2013). Transit migrants often stop at places along the way to rest, work and gather information for the next leg of their journey (Collyer 2007; Kastner 2010; Schapendonk 2012). Some transit migrants struggle to realise their migration plans and become 'stranded' for extended periods of time, settle permanently in the transit country or decide to return to their origin country. During the so-called 'migrant and refugee crisis' Syrians, Eritreans and Iraqis followed transit routes through Libya or Turkey to reach North-Western Europe (Crawley *et al.* 2016; King and Collyer 2016). In order to evade border controls, transit migrants often pay smugglers along the route and many lose their lives on the perilous journeys.

There are similarities between transit migration and stepwise migration, seeing that both involve migrants who cannot easily secure visas and need to acquire further resources along the way to reach their destination. Nevertheless, there are two important differences regarding the means of travel and the legal status of the migrants. First, transit migrants generally are undocumented or irregular migrants, whereas stepwise migrants in the majority of the cases have (been able to borrow money to cover the cost of) the required visas to enter their destination countries (even though some subsequently 'overstay'). Second, transit migration usually involves dangerous journeys by land and sea across geographically neighbouring countries, whereas stepwise migrants typically have enough resources to pay for visas and air travel.

Once migrants have reached high-income countries new labels are attached to their ongoing trajectories. For instance, asylum-seekers are accused of having engaged in *secondary movement* when they travel via other European countries before claiming asylum. Collyer (2005) conducted research with Algerians who traversed France in order to reach the UK where some subsequently sought asylum. Secondary movement is regarded

as suspicious by policy-makers and often is labelled 'asylum shopping', seeing that the Dublin II regulation requires asylum-seekers to apply for asylum in the 'first safe country' they reach (Collyer 2005; Legomsky 2003). When refugees exercise a degree of choice as to where to seek asylum, their asylum claim generally is viewed as less legitimate and may be rejected simply on the grounds that they have travelled via another 'safe' country. This occurs despite the fact that it is not always clear whether refugees in practice can realise all their rights in the first country of asylum.

The foregoing descriptions of multiple migrations mostly conceptualise the migration process as a strategic itinerary that migrants conceived in their origin country (with the exception of 'twice migration'). Now we turn to multiple migrants whose trajectories unfolded more organically over an extended period of time. *Serial migrants* described by Ossman (2015) do not move for financial gains but rather see ongoing mobility as a lifestyle choice. The trajectories of serial migrants are unplanned and malleable to suit various life endeavours. Most serial migrants in Ossman's study do not face financial constraints or mobility barriers, which is indicative of their privileged social class position. Overall, they are mainly interested in acquiring new cultural resources, i.e. learning languages, experiencing new cultures, etc. Other scholars have mapped the mobility patterns of Brazilian and Polish migrants who are 'settled in mobility' or 'living in mobility' (Morokvasic 2004; Schrooten *et al.* 2016). In order to improve their lives at home, and not have to emigrate permanently, they remain mobile and continuously seek out new destinations. For the Polish migrants this type of ongoing mobility became possible through Poland's accession to the European Union, which allowed them to work in any of the member states. Although the Brazilian informants in the study by Schrooten and colleagues (2016) experience greater barriers to their movement and frequent changes in legal status, they also desire to stay mobile as long as they can.

Onward migrants often move because the situation in their country of residence changes or they see better opportunities to lead self-sufficient and fulfilled lives elsewhere (della Puppa 2016; Kelly 2013; Mas Giral 2016; McGarrigle and Ascensão 2016; van Liempt 2011; Toma and Castagnone 2015). This was the case when an estimated 10,000 Somali *onward migrants* relocated to Leicester from various EU member states (Lindley and Van Hear 2007). In her research, van Liempt (2011) conducted interviews with Dutch-Somali onward migrants in London and Leicester. She found that her informants left the Netherlands because of increasing levels of Islamophobia and the isolation they experienced due to the compulsory housing dispersal policies for refugees. The Dutch-Somalis were attracted to Leicester because of the possibility of living close to other Somalis and bringing up their children in the Muslim faith. Another factor that fundamentally

changed the condition for migrants in destination countries was the global financial crisis. Especially in Southern Europe, the economic downturn induced large-scale out-migration. There were many Latin American migrants who accepted the voluntary return programmes to go back to their countries of origin, but others decided to move onward to new destinations (Mas Giralt 2016; McIlwaine 2012). Mas Giralt (2016) conducted research with Latino onward migrants in the UK who experienced difficulty learning English, while working in several low-paid and precarious jobs in the British service sector. Recent policy changes brought in to restrict access to all public services for newly-arrived migrants in Britain made their onward migration more difficult.

Even though studies regarding multiple migrants often focus on the trajectories of single migrants, there is evidence that migrant families also follow complex migration trajectories (Ahrens *et al.* 2016; Das Gupta 2015; Ong 1999; Siu 2005). However, it is not always possible for transnational families to reconcile the needs of all family members at the same time and in the same place, which can result in a temporally lagged migration of different family members. Das Gupta (2015) found that some professional South Asian families had lived in the Gulf States before deciding to relocate to Canada to provide their children with an English-language education. Owing to their skills and educational qualifications, the men were granted 'highly-skilled knowledge worker' visas and could sponsor their family members as 'dependants'. Some men acquired citizenship in Canada within three years, but due to racism, professional downgrading in the Canadian labour market and considerably lower salaries, in many instances the fathers later decided to 'return' to the Gulf. This led to the formation of many multi-local households. In fact, this pattern is so common that the area of Mississauga in Ontario is informally known as *Begumpura*, which translates to 'city of wives' (Das Gupta 2015: 27). This migration pattern in many ways is similar to the 'flexible citizenship' practices that Ong (1999) describes amongst wealthy Chinese 'astronaut families' that use the fluid 'comparative advantages' of multiple sites to their advantage. They send their children to study in North America and at times are accompanied by their mother, while the father moves back and forth with the long-term plan of establishing a family business in North America.

Thus, multiple migration trajectories are not necessarily linear, but also involve circular mobilities and return moves. All international migrants can weigh up various possibilities in determining their trajectory: staying put, relocating to a new country or returning to their country of origin. However, multiple migrants have a further possibility of returning to a *previous* country of residence. In his ethnographic study with Indian IT workers, Biao (2007) found that Australia was regarded as a good destination to secure permanent residency and then move to the USA. Interestingly, Australia was not only

perceived as a 'stepping stone' to reach the USA, it also was regarded as a type of 'insurance policy' should the migration to the USA be unsuccessful or the American IT industry change recruitment practices. Furthermore, Zweig (2007) illustrates another possible 'return' trajectory. In his study about Chinese academics, lawyers and financial analysts who had lived in the USA and Canada, he argues that rather than returning to mainland China they opted to 'park on the doorstep' in Hong Kong. Again, this is not a return in the statistical sense, but rather the closest possible return to mainland China. On the one hand, this allowed the migrants to enjoy proximity to family and home, while on the other hand they were also benefiting from higher salaries, better job conditions, business opportunities and cultural comfort (Zweig 2007). Some informants appear to have also followed the patriotic message from Chinese consulates abroad that 'returning' to Hong Kong was equivalent to returning to China, whereas others expressed that this option allowed them to combine the 'best of both worlds'.

In sum, the current literature on multiple migrations includes numerous distinct migration trajectories that involve diverse migration motivations and migrant types. For some migrants from the outset this trajectory is a deliberate and planned migration strategy to reach a particular destination (Biao 2007; Collyer 2007; Konadu-Agyemang 1999; Paul 2011), whereas for others their migration pathways unfold progressively (Das Gupta 2015; Mas Giralta 2016; Ossman 2015; van Liempt 2011). The extant literature identifies several factors that influence the strategies aspirant migrants use to leave their origin country. For 'transit migrants' or 'stepwise migrants' their complex trajectories are a *means* of accumulating further necessary resources, which can facilitate their progression to their desired destination (Collyer 2007; Konadu-Agyemang 1999). These migrants often pay for part of their journey by accumulating debt with recruitment agencies, migration brokers, smugglers or traffickers, while others borrow money from family members. By contrast, for 'serial migrants' their continued moves across several countries represent an *end in itself*. Living in different countries throughout their lives denotes a lifestyle choice.

Fewer studies discuss other possible reasons for multiple migration, such as changing circumstances in the destination countries (Mas Giralta 2016; van Liempt 2011), changing wellbeing needs over the life course (Das Gupta 2015), new aspirations that are formed in the destination countries, as well as unforeseen opportunities to relocate. Further research is also needed on institutionalised and everyday discrimination that migrants experience due to their embodied characteristics such as gender, 'race', religion or sexuality which may compel them to relocate to places where they feel more welcome and at ease to live their lives (Ahrens *et al.* 2016; Das Gupta 2015). Finally, the outcome of multiple migrations is frequently analysed in terms of the financial gains that migrants have achieved

by moving to another destination. Further research is needed on other possible outcomes of multiple migrations as regards social relations, wellbeing needs and feelings of transnational identities and belonging.

2.2 Assessing Nigerian (onward) migration through migration theory

Based on the foregoing overview of multiple migrations, it is unreasonable to expect that these diverse and evolving migration trajectories can be explained with a single theory. Migration scholars even have gone as far as to argue that there will never be a one-size-fits-all migration theory that can explain the complexity and diversity of all migration processes (Castles *et al.* 2014). Nevertheless, it is possible to discern spatial patterns and social structures that have an impact on migration processes. Early theorisations of migration were rather rigid and developed in isolation of each other; more recent attempts to integrate a variety of approaches enable researchers to more fully account for the complex realities of migration. Due to restrictions of space, I am not able to explain the various theories in great detail nor will I attempt to evaluate them in relation to all the different types of migration they could be applied to. Instead, in this section my aim is to assess what insights can be garnered from the major migration theories for the study of Nigerian migration and onward mobilities.

Early migration theory already identified multiple migration patterns. In his 'laws of migration' Ravenstein described 'migration by stages' (Ravenstein 1885; 1889). Writing at the time of large-scale population movement following the Industrial Revolution, Ravenstein gives the example of Irish migrants living in London. He argues that they are unlikely to have travelled directly from their hometown, but instead first arrived in Liverpool and then worked in several other English counties before settling in the British capital. The 'push factors' in this model are unemployment, rapid population growth, low social status and poverty, and the 'pull factors' are defined as better income prospects, good living conditions, access to education and welfare systems. Thus, Ravenstein's laws situated the rational choices of individuals within the broader context of rural-urban and social inequalities. Lee (1966) amended this model by including 'intervening obstacles', i.e. geographical distance, cost of the journey, language differences and immigration restrictions, which needed to be overcome in order for aspirant migrants to leave their origin country. Lee also emphasised the importance of 'personal factors', arguing that individuals respond to various pushes and pulls in different ways depending on their personality, life stage and social status. The main criticism of these *push-pull models* is that,

although they take into account a variety of factors, they remain largely descriptive and do not consider wider social processes (Afolayan 1999). Skeldon (1990: 125-6) has critiqued that there is no framework to bring these various factors together in an explanatory system. However, Paul (2011) has applied an amended version of Lee's (1966) push-pull model to Filipino stepwise migration, arguing that the different levels of 'intervening obstacles' that migrants encounter when wanting to reach particular destinations, can help explain the migration paths that migrants favour. This insight is worth considering when analysing Nigerian onward migration.

Neoclassical economic theory states that migration is prompted by geographical differences in the supply and demand of labour. Initially absolute wage differentials between labour-surplus and labour-scarce regions were identified as the main reason why migrants decide to move. Later refinements of neoclassical economic theory, however, clarified that it is the *expected* wage gap that is most pertinent, as it considers the real earnings multiplied by the likelihood of obtaining employment in a given country (Todaro 1976). Migrants are depicted as rational actors, who analyse the costs and benefits of different opportunities in terms of the returns on the investment in their human capital a migration project might offer (Sjastaad 1962). Migrants are said to move where they will be paid the highest salaries. There are, however, several shortcomings in the main assumptions of neoclassical economic theory. First, when applying the theory to long-distance migration it seems improbable that migrants would have 'perfect information' concerning the expected costs and benefits of their migration while still residing in the origin country. Having said that, it is likely that aspirant intra-European onward migrants have access to more accurate information about wage differentials and a clearer picture of living costs in other member states. Second, this theory does not explain intra-European onward mobilities between countries where there is no expected international wage gap. Finally, it ignores non-economic reasons that influence migration decision, such as immigration policies, family relations, love and the desire for adventure.²

The *New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM)* provides a more nuanced analysis of migration decision-making by including other household members into the process. According to NELM, it is not the migrant as an individual but rather the household as a whole that decides about a migration project. One additional consideration in this theory is

² According to the 2011 Census, only 23 per cent of female Nigerian nationals and 34 per cent of male Nigerian nationals had a job in the formal sector in Spain at the height of the economic crisis when I was conducting fieldwork. It does not explain why so few Nigerians permanently relocated to elsewhere in North-Western Europe, because it does not account for difficulties that migrants may encounter when trying to enter foreign labour markets.

that households do not necessarily seek to maximise their household income, but they endeavour to minimise the risks to their livelihood (Goss and Lindquist 1995; Massey *et al.* 1993). The household's objective is to diversify its income streams by having family members employed in different sectors and places. In addition, NELM theorists argue that it is not absolute poverty levels that induce migration; households also consider supporting the migration of a family member if it eases their perceived *relative* poverty to other households at the local level. Some scholars have critiqued the insufficient consideration given to the gendered dynamics within the household; therefore it is important to also pay attention to sources of disagreement and power struggles within the household (de Haas and Fokkema 2010). Given the extraordinarily high remittances that Nigeria receives – around US\$20.77 billion in 2015 – this could be taken as evidence that migration represents an important livelihood strategy, especially in the context of rising income inequality (World Bank 2016). Although there is a detailed study about remittance mechanisms between the UK and Nigeria, it contains no information about the remittances uses (Hernández-Coss and Bun 2007). In another study about remittances, Osili (2007) conducted a matched household survey in the USA and Nigeria. Her findings indicate that poorer family members received larger transfers, and other remittances were used to support family businesses and community development projects. With regard to intra-European onward mobilities, there is evidence that particularly the moves of Nigerians in Spain during the economic crisis helped to diversify the income avenues within the migrants' households abroad (Ahrens 2013).

We now turn to the theoretical models that are grouped together as *historical-structural approaches*. They see historical macro-structural forces as the determinants of international migration and are inspired by Marxist interpretations of political economy. Historical-structuralists argue that migration is the result of capitalist expansion and unfair terms of trade between rich and poor countries (Massey *et al.* 2008: 35). Seeing that economic and political power are regarded as unequally distributed between developed and developing countries, access to resources is also unequal amongst different groups and classes within countries, and capitalist structures reinforce these inequalities over time (Castles and Kosack 1973; Cohen 1987). The Latin American *dependency school* sees the under-development of poor countries as the result of the exploitation of resources and workers during colonialism. In the post-colonial period, unfair terms of trade and migration to rich countries contributed to further under-development. Later these ideas were picked up and explored further by Wallerstein (1979) when he formulated *world systems theory*. The main proposition of world systems theory is that the world is one single capitalist system, where the 'peripheral' regions have been drawn in and are controlled by the 'core'

capitalist states. While in the past the penetration was facilitated by colonial administrations, it is today made possible by multinational firms. Migration therefore is seen as the result of interventions and disruptions that occur due to capitalist development.

Historical-structuralist theories share in common that they regard migration as 'demand-led', thus the business cycles of high-income countries are seen as the main determinants of migration. A critique of the historical-structuralist approaches is that they are too deterministic and that migrants are stripped of all agency to decide whether they want to move. Even though it is true that many migrants are exploited, underpaid and discriminated in destination countries, it is important to also acknowledge that other migrants make active choices to leave their origin country and eventually manage to improve their livelihoods through migration. Besides, the assertion that all migrants are being forcibly displaced from their land and community reflects a sedentary bias that sees immobility as the natural state (Bakewell 2008a: 1342). In Nigeria, just as in other African countries, various types of voluntary and forced migration within the country and the wider region have always formed part of the country's history. Nevertheless, there is evidence that migration patterns between Nigeria and Europe have waxed and waned due to exogenous factors like economic business cycles in Europe. For instance, Nigerian emigration to Germany and Spain intensified in the early 1990s and early 2000s, respectively, which were periods when these destination countries experienced high economic growth rates. Historical-structural approaches, however, do not sufficiently consider endogenous factors such as corruption, clientelism and political instability, even though these factors also influence emigration and return migration decision-making.

Meanwhile, the *dual (or segmented) labour market approaches* claim that it is the existence of dual labour markets in high-income countries that drive emigration. In reference to the post-Fordist era, Piore (1979) argued that high-income countries also need low-skilled workers, because not all of these jobs can be outsourced, especially those in the service sector and construction. Native workers are concentrated in the 'primary sector', where they benefit from higher wages and more stable working conditions. By contrast, the 'secondary sector' is dominated by migrant workers who are employed in low-paid jobs and are faced with more precarious working conditions. The presence of migrants in the secondary sector makes these jobs even less desirable and natives shun this sector. This theory takes into account the role of institutional factors, as well as 'race' and gender in producing segmented labour markets.

In line with some of the aforementioned arguments, Sassen (1991) later put forward the *global city hypothesis*. Sassen opines that growth in 'global cities' has been mainly generated through the concentration of multinational headquarters and related 'producer

services' (i.e. accounting, law firms, IT services etc.) in these locations. This clustering of headquarters created a demand for highly-skilled workers, but also for low-income workers to cater for the needs of its high-income residents. Sassen (1991) suggests that multinational companies often make direct investments in developing countries, which results in certain counter-flows of goods, people and services. Migrant workers usually move from the periphery to the core along paths of these capital flows and in the direction of particular 'global cities'. Given Britain's colonial links and long-standing investments in the country, it might not come as a surprise that London is the most important Nigerian diaspora hub in Europe. In 2001, around 40 per cent out of all Nigerian migrants in Europe lived in the British capital. Although this figure dropped to 30 per cent by 2011 after many Nigerians moved outside of London, it is clear that the British capital remains a prominent diaspora hub for Nigerians.

One major criticism is that segmented labour market theory and its link to the 'global cities' ideas is too simplistic, seeing that migration is not only generated by labour-demand but also by other institutions, networks and policies. In some cases migrant networks and policies might even reinforce segmentation and concentration in certain industries and professions. On the whole, the proportions of Black African men working in different industries was fairly equally spread in England and Wales, but there was some notable clustering. For instance, research with low-paid workers in London, found that Black African men (especially from Ghana and Nigeria) made up three quarters of the surveyed workforce in cleaning on the London Underground (Evans *et al.* 2005). By contrast, Black African women were highly concentrated in 'human health and social work activities' in England and Wales: 39 per cent of the Nigerian women workforce was employed in this sector (ONS 2011). Amongst the different ethnic groups, 54 per cent of Black African men (59 per cent Black African women) worked in low-skilled professions, compared to 37 per cent of the general male population and 58 per cent in the general female population (Aspinall and Chinouya 2016: 148). This point is often over-looked, but it is equally important to highlight, that 28 per cent of the male and 31 per cent of the female Black African population held managerial or professional positions (ONS 2011). For Black Africans at least, these figures do not suggest an 'hour-glass' shape of income and social structures (Sassen 1991).

Nonetheless, the UK might still be a relatively attractive destination for intra-European onward movers, because highly-skilled Nigerians perceive there to be a greater likelihood of obtaining professional and managerial jobs than elsewhere in Europe. It remains difficult, however, to operationalise segmented labour market approaches, especially in a cross-national context, because of the current lack of disaggregated labour

market data regarding ethnicity, 'race' or country of birth in other parts of Europe (Simon 2012). Moreover, the contingent ways in which individuals and societies assign jobs to either the 'primary' or 'secondary' sector does not readily lend itself to comparative research. For instance, informants repeatedly pointed out how in Germany and Spain a job such as working as a 'security guard' was dominated by native-born workers, whereas in the UK the same job was considered a migrant job.

While the previous theories mainly outline the determinants that set a migration process into motion, the following theories on migrant networks, migration systems and transnationalism are meso-level theories that seek to explain how migration is perpetuated over time. Insights gained from research on 'chain migration' flows (MacDonald and MacDonald 1964) formed the basis for later research on *network theories* in migration studies (Boyd 1989; Fawcett 1989). The successive arrivals of migrants from the same point of origin to the same destination was conceptualised as chain migration. The rationale was that migrants 'follow' well-trodden paths which lead them to places with established migrant communities. Network theory provided further insights about the practices that sustain migration processes over generations, even when the original migration drivers no longer exist. The functions of networks have been analysed in relation to the different stages of the migration process. Networks are relevant in determining who is enabled to migrate, given that people with family members abroad will be more likely to migrate themselves (Grasmuck and Pessar 1991; Massey 1988). Networks can help migrants lower the costs of their journeys and also make their trips safer when they are informed about potential risks (Palloni *et al.* 2001). After migrants' arrival at their destination, another proposition of network theories is that social ties can also provide assistance with regard to housing, jobs, local information and emotional support (Waldinger 1996). Seeing that every new migrant is connected to non-migrants in the origin country 'through networks of reciprocal obligations based on shared understandings of kinship and friendship', migration is thereby perpetuated over time (Massey 1990). Although in general there has been a focus on co-ethnic networks in the destination countries to explain emigration, in the case of African migration, visa brokers, smuggling and trafficking networks or other 'weak ties' are often crucial to the facilitation of the initial emigration (Alpes 2011; Plambech 2016). The prevalence of trafficking networks that bring Nigerian women to Europe can be seen as one example of how networks can become highly organised, or even institutionalised. By contrast, onward migrants engaging in intra-European moves are less likely to require the assistance of networks to relocate, given that the costs of these short-distance moves are lower and onward movers often have some mobility rights.

In contrast to migration networks that emphasise the role of social capital, *migration systems theory* focuses on the ways in which certain flows and exchanges of goods, ideas and money between origin and destination countries influence the conditions of migration. Therefore, migration is seen as embedded within wider processes of social transformation and development. The Nigerian geographer Mabogunje (1970) was the first to develop a more comprehensive migration system theory. In his detailed depiction of rural-urban migration, Mabogunje conceptualised the emigration environment as comprised by economic and social conditions, government policies, transportation and communication infrastructures and inheritance law. In addition, the general level of technological progress and development were taken into account as further determinants of migration. A novel feature was the incorporation of flows of information and feedback mechanisms to explain why migration continued and subsided. Other scholars applied migration systems theory to international migration and argued that migration systems usually consolidate prior links between countries that were forged through colonialism, trade, investments or cultural exchanges (Portes and Rumbaut 2006). Similarly, the theory of *circular and cumulative causation* argues that migration processes change the social and economic context in which migrants and households make decisions and this increases the chances of further migration. This was a process first identified by Myrdal (1957) and then later reintroduced by Massey (1990). The drivers of migration are regarded as cumulative, because each act of migration creates social structures and networks that sustain further migrations. Over time migration opportunities that were confined to certain parts of society become available to broader segments of society as more people have network connections abroad (Massey 1990). If migration becomes strongly linked to the idea of 'success' in a society, then migration can create a 'culture of migration', whereby there are social pressures and expectations that people will migrate and those who stay are regarded as a 'failure'.

The model proposed by Mabogunje (1970) has been critiqued for being rather mechanistic and that people in the rural areas are depicted as a pool of readily available labour. The introduction of information feedback mechanisms, however, does provide some explanation as to why migration might not continue *ad infinitum*, as migrants also inform their kin when opportunities in certain destinations are no longer attractive. Moreover, migration systems theory is innovative in that it helps to explain non-linear and multi-directional moves. Even though particular routes and facilitating mechanisms have become very established in Nigerian post-colonial migration, and certain feedback mechanisms are also continuously directing migration to new destinations, it might have been over-stated to speak of a Europe-Nigeria migration system in the past. However, given the growing

importance of Europe as a destination for Nigerians, this may be about to change. At the individual level, cumulative causation could be one factor that stimulates onward migration, as migrants who move multiple times certainly acquire the confidence and tacit knowledge about how to move again more easily (Massey 1986). Nevertheless, this latter theory does not explain why some individuals would decide *not* to onward migrate and prefer to stay put in their current country of residence.

Theories of *transnationalism* and *diaspora* emphasise how globalisation has enabled migrants to maintain network ties over long distances and how this has stimulated new identity formations. Through modern means of communication and travel, migrants are able to remain in touch with their friends and relatives who stayed behind in the origin countries. Furthermore, migrants can more easily keep up with the news in their region of origin, contribute to debates in online fora or campaign for political parties. Money transfer agencies allow migrants to remit money even to very remote small towns and in some countries pay school fees for their 'left-behind' children via mobile phone. Often the exchange of information and communication is instantaneous, fostering a sense of 'virtual' transnational community. Being able to feel embedded 'simultaneously' in their destination country and their origin country has also changed the ways in which migrants experience migration and how they construct their identity and belonging (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004). In their pioneering volume Basch *et al.* (1994: 7) defined transnationalism 'as the process by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement'. The focus is on transnational communities that involve 'local communities' in the origin and destination countries, as well as the globe-spanning diasporas that have become implanted in several destinations (Glick Schiller *et al.* 1992). Research has highlighted the practices within transnational social networks and the agentic capacity of migrants to move back and forth between their origin country and country of residence. Yet, Smith (2005: 238) argues that even though migrants and their household members might cross borders and practice spatial mobility, migrants are still 'classed, raced and gendered bodies in motion and in specific historical contexts, within certain political formations and spaces'. Thereby Smith was echoing the wider criticism of transnationalism that it was too de-territorialised and therefore did not account for more context-specific and 'grounded' processes (Mitchell 2007). Nevertheless, transnationalism and other network theories are adequate frameworks to explain why Nigerian migration to Europe has continued and even increased in the years since more stringent visa policies were introduced. In some European destination countries like Spain and Germany, for instance, most of the recent visas were issued in the family category, thus confirming the strong social ties that exist between migrants and the family members that stayed behind.

One more general shortcoming of the aforementioned meso-level theories on migrant networks, migration systems and transnationalism is that they mainly provide explanations as to why migration continues via established pathways. They do not provide reasons why migration starts or why ‘spontaneous’ migration might occur in the direction of new destinations (de Haas 2010c). Furthermore, they do not account for instances when settled migrants are hesitant or reluctant to assist aspirant migrants to move (Collyer 2005). Overall, these approaches often over-emphasise the role of co-ethnic and kinship networks in migration processes, but do not pay sufficient attention to other types of networks.

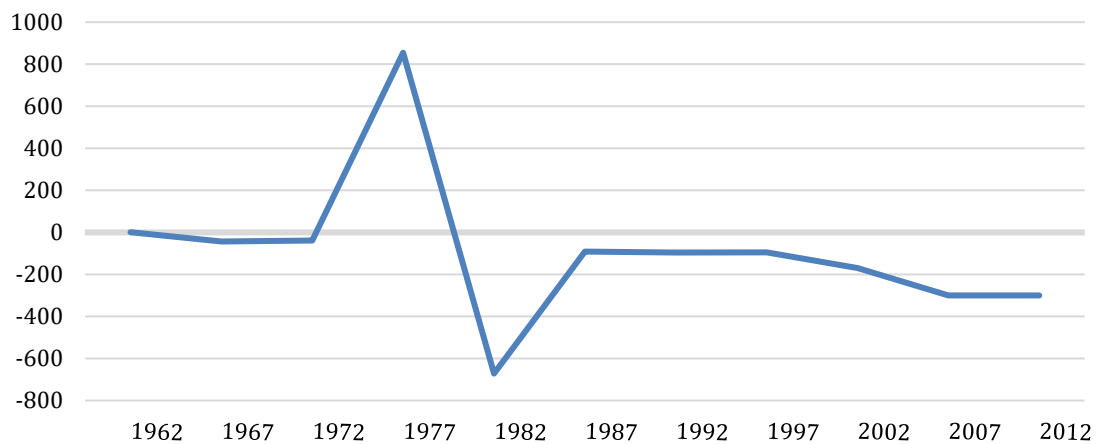


Figure 2.1 Nigerian net migration rate, 1960-2012 (five year moving average)

Source: UN Population Division 2015

Especially in relation to African migration, the media and policy discussion often suggest that migration can be solved by addressing the underlying ‘root causes’ which are identified as inequality and under-development (Bakewell 2008b). However, empirical research has provided evidence that, as countries become more developed, emigration often increases (Skeldon 2014). This is because the poorest people lack the necessary resources in order to embark on long-distance journeys. Therefore, *migration transition theories* argue that migration is part and parcel of broader processes of development, social transformation and globalisation. Transition theories also highlight that migration patterns are associated with different levels of development. Influenced by modernisation theory, Zelinsky (1971) conceptualised a series of sequential stages in the ‘mobility transition’. In early transitional societies, emigration rises due to population growth, a decline in rural employment opportunities and swift technological development. Meanwhile in later transitional societies, emigration then decreases due to higher levels of industrialisation,

slower population growth and higher wages. Finally in 'advanced societies', Zelinsky claims that low population growth, urban-to-urban migration and circular mobilities increase and countries transform into net immigration countries. The problem with transition theory is that it portrays development and demographic change as linear and irreversible processes. Social and economic development in Nigeria, at least, has been highly volatile and therefore early post-independence emigration patterns do not conform with this model. The available data (see Figure 2.1) indicate that Nigeria experienced a 'reverse migration transition', with net immigration reaching a historical peak of 854,649 in 1977 followed by an equally unprecedented net emigration of -671,640 in 1982 (Black et al. 2004; UN Population Division 2015). The initial net migration peak was due to rising oil revenue and expanding public service provision in the post-colonial period, which placed Nigeria amongst the 20 most prosperous countries in the world in the 1970s. It made the country an attractive destination for migrant workers from other parts of West Africa, and the Nigerians who studied abroad at that time generally returned to Nigeria upon graduation. Later the falling oil prices and dramatic economic decline of the country, however, were used to justify an expulsion policy due to which an estimated 2 million migrant workers in 1983 and 1985 were forced to leave the country (Van Hear 1998: 78). The slowly rising net emigration since the 1990s can more readily be explained with transition theory, as it coincided with rising GDP per capita growth. Migration transition theory sees development as the main driver of migration. Societies with a medium level of development generally experience higher levels of migration, and eventually emigration rates taper off when high levels of development

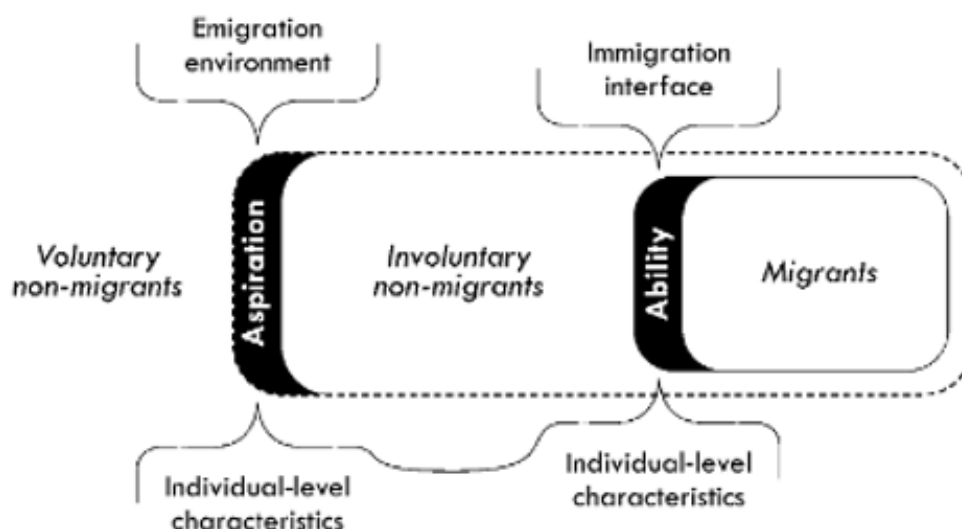


Figure 2.2 The aspiration/ability model Carling (2002)

have been reached. Therefore, emigration intensities are linked to the general level of economic and social development of the country. However, transition theory does not explain how development processes influence the migration propensity of individuals.

The final approach to consider is the *aspiration/ability model*. In order to offer an alternative to neoclassical micro-level explanation as to why individuals leave their origin countries, Carling (2002) and de Haas (2003) suggest the 'behavioural' explanation of migration as a function of *aspirations* and *abilities* to move. Figure 2.2 illustrates how Carling (2002) conceptualised the aspiration-ability model, which not only explained why people emigrated but also why many were *not* able to move despite having aspirations of doing so. Carling argues that the 'immigration interface' is a filter that only migrants with certain 'abilities' will be able to pass through or circumvent. The majority of aspirant migrants simply do not have the requisite resources to leave their origin countries and therefore remain 'involuntarily immobile'. Amartya Sen's definition of '*capabilities*' is broader, seeing that he regards this as the ability of human beings to lead the lives they have reason to value and to expand their 'freedoms' (Sen 1999: 1959). Sen emphasised that freedom is an essential part of development processes given that income growth, better education, improved communication, as well as transport links can increase people's capability to migrate. Furthermore, these factors are also likely to raise the awareness of individuals about the opportunities that might be available in other countries, which in turn can raise aspirations. This approach also takes into account how society and culture may influence aspirant migrants, seeing that these factors shape the context in which transnational aspirations and sensibilities are formed (Afolayan 1998). Research that falls within the migration-development nexus has been criticised for an incomplete application of the capabilities approach. The concrete issue is that the migration policies implemented as part of the migration-development nexus primarily aim to enhance development in the origin countries through an increase in remittances (Ratha *et al.* 2011). Overall, there is too much focus on how economic remittances might lead to more development in poor countries. According to the so-called 'pragmatic' approach of 'managed' migration (Ruhs 2013), diminished civic rights for migrants are seen as necessary trade-offs for accessing higher wages – which ultimately are supposed to engender development (Preibisch *et al.* 2016). An advantage of the aspiration/ability model is that it can be applied to migrant decision-making in different geographic contexts and by different migrant types. Furthermore, it can be used to account for a wide variety of migration motivations and other determinants, which makes it potentially suitable for the analysis of onward migration.

In sum, this long section has reviewed several migration theories. The challenge to understanding migration processes lies in finding a way of integrating approaches that

consider the interactions of various processes occurring at the micro-, meso- and macro-level. Furthermore, it is difficult to find migration theories that can be applied simultaneously to different migrant types, such as permanent and temporary migrant or forced and voluntary migrants.

2.3 Conceptualising the process of onward migration

Based on the insights gained from the foregoing discussion about different migration theories, in Figure 2.3 I now introduce a conceptualisation of the onward migration decision-making process. This conceptualisation is inspired by Carling's (2002) aspiration/ability model, but it contains several modifications to account for the specificity of onward migration. At the micro-level, migrants are influenced by the aspirations they form in relation to their individual characteristics and emigration environment. These often are not only aspirations for personal wellbeing, but also concerns for the wellbeing of the wider kinship network (Jackson 2013). These aspirations are influenced by individual characteristics such as gender, age, family status, etc. Importantly, consideration is given to how these factors change over the life course and throughout the migration project, thus potentially creating new aspirations linked to particular life stage transitions. Furthermore, the micro-level is also shaped by the different resources that migrants have at their disposal, and whether these resources can be utilised, activated or exchanged in specific contexts.

At the meso-level, migrants are influenced by societal norms and expectations with regard to their social positioning; their current country of residence can foster new aspirations due to exposure to new societal norms or other consumption patterns. This can also refer to a possible 'culture of onward migration', should it be common in particular locations. Furthermore, this level also comprises facilitating factors such as transnational networks or particular services that can make migration easier. If migrants cannot fulfil their aspirations locally this can negatively impact on their wellbeing. At the macro-level, migrants weigh up the evolving constraints and opportunities in their current country of residence, their origin country and other possible new destinations and the likelihood of achieving their aspirations. At the macro-level, onward migrants also consider the requirements which they have to comply with in relation to immigration and labour market conditions in different contexts. Whether or not migrants decide to onward migrate to a particular place is dependent on their capabilities to overcome certain barriers. Migrants who lack resources are not able to onward migrate or might only be able to do so semi-legally, which is a less sustainable, short-term and often precarious form of onward

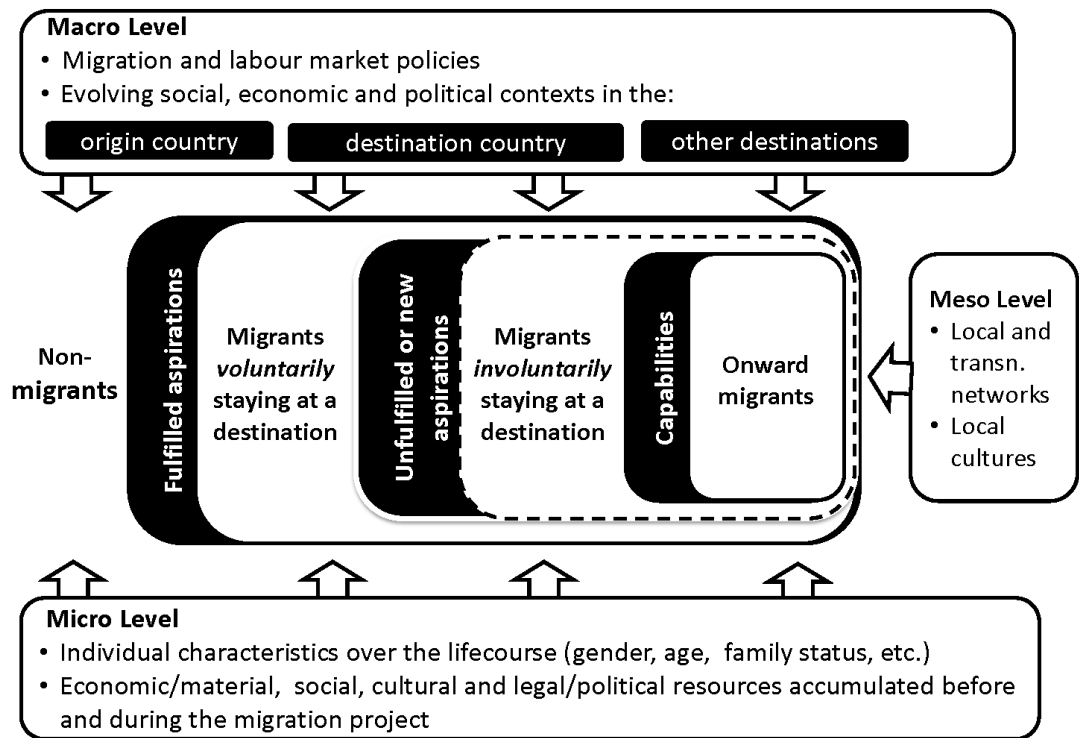


Figure 2.3 The aspiration-capability approach for onward migration

Source: Author's adaptation of Carling's aspiration/ability model (2002)

mobility. Those who manage to onward migrate are generally those who have the appropriate resources or can mobilise missing resources.

In the remaining part of this section, I will discuss some issues in relation to this aspiration-capability approach for onward migration in more detail. The following subsections explain how the aspirations and capabilities of migrants continuously evolve, how transnational networks can perpetuate onward migration, and why wellbeing is a suitable framework to assess the outcomes of onward migration.

2.3.1 Evolving aspirations and capabilities

Research concerning international migration typically focuses on the beginning and (presumed) end points of the trajectory (Halfacree 2012). Thereby the analysis of migrant trajectories has been limited to two geographic nodes – one located in the origin country and another node in a destination country. Studies regarding the migration decision-making process tend to be conducted in the origin countries, thus migrants' individual characteristics before departure and the emigration environment are often highlighted as factors that influence the realisation and direction of migration trajectories. Even though recent research into 'transit migration' (Collyer 2007; Collyer and de Haas 2012) and

'stepwise migration' (Paul 2011) has shed light on the obstacles and dangers that migrants face in the 'in-between places' they pass through, these studies still suggest that migrants usually set off on their journeys with a desired destination in mind. Yet in order to understand the factors that can shape multiple migrations, it is necessary to also consider how migration decision-making can evolve throughout the trajectory. By conceptualising the trajectories of onward migrants as open-ended, non-linear and multi-directional, migrants are placed at the crossroads of several possible pathways. Multiple migrants can either *stay* at their current place of residence or *return* to their origin country, they may also decide to *move on* to a new destination or *move back* to a previous destination.

In my view, the aspiration-capability approach is particularly well suited for the study of multiple migrations (see Chapter 6). In terms of the motivations for migration this approach does not solely focus on material considerations and the 'rational choices' of migrants, because 'aspirations' also signify dreams, wishes, hopes and other perspectives (Appadurai 2004; Carling 2002). Furthermore, research on migration aspirations emphasises the agency of migrants, an aspect not sufficiently addressed in other neoclassical and historical-structural theories of migration. Complimentary to this is the consideration given to the effects of structural constraints, such as immigration controls and access to resources, which determine migrants' 'capability' to accomplish their aspirations (de Haas 2010b). The aspiration-capability model was originally conceived to analyse the determinants of emigration, therefore some aspects need to be adapted to operationalise it for the analysis of multiple migrations. In the following I will elaborate how migrant decision-making is a process that takes place across space and over time.

Different life stages can affect the way in which individuals view their migration project. This is often linked to a re-constellation of aspirations and capabilities throughout the life course. Research on migrant decision-making typically centres on particular age cohorts. The majority of aspirant migrants in origin countries are young adults; we therefore know less about the aspirations of migrants at other life stages. Seeing that migrants acquire skills and information before and throughout their migration project, some might be in a position to fulfil their initial ambitions. Especially migrants who have resided for extended periods in a destination country, are likely to develop a greater sense of belonging, gain citizenship or find better-paid employment. Other migrants, however, can be spurred on to pursue unfulfilled aspirations in other countries and places. Older migrants, for instance, might develop new ambitions regarding career progression, family formation or lifestyle improvement. To understand how migration aspirations are embedded in individuals' lives and are contingent on their experiences over time, it

therefore is useful to adopt a 'life-course approach' or 'biographical approach' (Halfacree and Boyle 1993).

The conditions in destination countries are often portrayed as 'static' and newly arrived migrants are expected to simply 'fit in' or 'integrate' into rigid contexts. Yet in reality structural constraints and opportunities in different places are constantly evolving. Given that some onward migrants may stay in one destination country for long periods of time, it is possible that certain macro-structural conditions undergo considerable shifts. Destination countries' policies concerning immigrants may become more restrictive and destination societies can become less welcoming towards foreigners. Migrants who previously felt settled, therefore can feel more excluded and might decide to relocate elsewhere. Similarly, the favourable economic conditions and living standards that attracted migrants to certain destinations, can also rapidly deteriorate due to economic downturns or policy changes. Thus, it is important to understand how the particular contexts of the emigration and destination countries can frustrate or facilitate the ambitions and trajectories of migrants. Migrants who compare the evolving conditions in their origin country with the opportunities in their current country of residence and other possible destinations, might change their mind as to where they would prefer to live.

In addition to the temporal and geographical dimensions, there are important social aspects inherent in migration aspirations. The emigration environment, including societal and media discourses, influences how migration is regarded in particular origin countries (de Haas 2010a). For some individuals, migration holds intrinsic value, in other words, migration itself is something worthwhile pursuing as a 'rite of passage' or 'adventure'. For others, however, migration represents an instrumental value; meaning that migration is seen as a way to achieve other life aspirations relating to work, study, family, investments and lifestyle. Therefore, the formation of aspirations ultimately is also a reflection of the values and norms of wider society in the origin country. It is worthwhile considering to what extent, and indeed if at all, the aspirations that motivated the initial emigration from Nigeria are connected to the subsequent moves. When migrants embark on their journeys, they form new social connections and are exposed to other value systems. Therefore onward migration may also be the result of new aspirations formed at other stages of the migration project – influenced by destination societies, fellow migrants and other diasporic groups in new geographical contexts.

2.3.2 *Multi-sited transnationalism and translocalities*

The 'transnational turn' in the social sciences has drawn researchers' attention to the interactions of migrants with other individuals, kin and institutions across geographic borders (Basch *et al.* 1994). These studies challenge previously held understandings about nation states as bounded geographical units, and describe a variety of cross-border connections (Goss and Lindquist 1995). Furthermore, the study of transnational communities has been useful in challenging the linearity of international migration trajectories by illustrating how migrants move between 'here' and 'there' at various points in time. Yet, overall empirical research on transnationalism often reflects the assumption that migrants solely forge transnational connections with family members and communities located in their country of origin.

Theoretical conceptualisations of transnationalism, however, have repeatedly emphasised the multi-locality of migrants' practices, identifications and connections. In their seminal work *Nations Unbound* Basch and her colleagues (1994: 8 emphasis added) define 'transmigrants' as individuals who 'take actions, make decisions and develop subjectivities and identities embedded in networks of relationships that connect them to two *or more* nation-states'. Likewise, Castles (2002: 1146 emphasis added) points out that migrants do not necessarily need to *settle* at one destination country or *stay* there before eventually returning to their country of origin; they may instead 'orient their lives to two *or more* societies and develop transnational communities and consciousness'. Moreover, the study of diasporas fosters an awareness regarding the forced displacement of communities to several destinations, not least because the word diaspora itself is derived from the Ancient Greek meaning to 'scatter' (as in seeds) (Clifford 1994; Safran 1991). Nevertheless, studies within this field usually involve comparisons of the varying degrees of 'homeland orientation' of diasporans in different destinations – often disregarding evidence of migrants' and non-migrants' *multi-sited* transnational connections across several countries. Onward migrants stay in touch with friends and family through various multi-directional 'enfolded mobilities', these include 'return' visits to their previous country of residence, as well as other destinations (Williams *et al.* 2011).

An explicitly multi-sited conceptualisation of transnationalism, I argue, facilitates a broader understanding of migrants' transnational practices (see Chapter 7). Furthermore, it is also valuable for analysing how onward migration is facilitated and perpetuated. Due to growing emigrant communities abroad and the diversification of migration patterns to new destinations, even non-migrants are part of 'transnational social fields' that comprise geographical nodes located in several destination countries (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004).

The mobility and frictions resulting from the movement of people, goods, capital and ideas, however, create specific 'translocalities' reflecting particular power relationships (Brickell and Datta 2011). I concur with other scholars' work on space (see Harvey 2006; Massey 1993) that it is useful to understand 'emplacement' as an ongoing and constantly negotiated process which focuses our attention to the interactions of space, place and power. Moreover, we need to pay attention to the connections between emplacement and mobility in order to understand how individuals are situated in differentiated ways in transnational space and experience wellbeing.

Transnational connections can increase migrants' capabilities to leave the origin country and realise their migration project. Even aspirant migrants who can mobilise the funds to pay for air travel need to know someone abroad who is willing to act as a sponsor for their visa application. In addition, migrants form new social ties throughout their migration trajectory. 'Transit migrants' join spontaneous networks with fellow nationals and other people they encounter in the 'in-between places' of their trajectory; these relationships can be strategic, mutually supportive or exploitative (Collyer 2007; Kastner 2010). Intra-European onward migrants wishing to relocate may also make use of their evolving transnational connections in order to visit and familiarise themselves with new destinations. This allows them to make necessary preparations for their next move.

Multi-sited transnationalism also draws attention to the ways in which migrants maintain social ties with people in a variety of places, including former places of residence. Onward migrants do not only 'live dual lives' across 'two countries', their transnational practices are more complex and difficult to pin down (Portes *et al.* 1999: 217). Onward migrants usually speak *numerous* languages, have feelings of (non-)belonging for a *number* of countries, and some make a living through continuous and regular contact across *several* national borders. Onward migrants also need to re-negotiate their 'hybrid' ways of being and belonging in new social contexts. The experiences and identifications of onward migrants are shaped by their manifold cultural repertoires. The degree of transnational home orientation may differ between first and second-generation migrants. The second generation often feel a greater belonging to their European country of birth or the current country of residence, but identify much less with their parents 'ancestral homeland'.

2.3.3 *Social inequality and wellbeing*

Intra-European mobilities have been described as 'liquid' migrations, because native-born Europeans can move flexibly and are often 'invisible' (Engbersen and Snel 2013). This group predominantly includes the so-called young 'Eurostars' who are pursuing high-flying

careers (Favell 2008), as well as the often highly-skilled but low-paid East-West migrants who gained the right to free movement after the accession of new member states in 2004 and 2007 (Black *et al.* 2010). These migrants often adopt a cosmopolitan way of life that generally lets them live comfortably and improve their situation over time. Yet, recent studies have suggested that migrants from low-income countries outside Europe, and especially People of Colour, can experience greater impediments to their mobility and settlement as they face considerable discrimination (Ahrens *et al.* 2016; della Puppa 2016; Mas Giralt 2016). The outcomes of their mobility are oftentimes multi-dimensional, given that some individuals do not possess all the requisite resources that facilitate smooth mobility and settlement. Prospective onward migrants generally try to prepare their relocations to avoid situations where their living standards are negatively affected. Nonetheless, some onward migrants encounter problems when they move to another place or country and go through a period of adjustment. In some instances, onward migration can be just as difficult as the initial migration and settlement, especially where migrants lack agency, face unexpected situations or cannot count on support from others.

The flourishing of multi-sited research as part of the transnationalism approach in migration studies has generated new insights about international migrants and the impact of their transnational activities, such as remittance sending, political participation, religious practices and ethnic entrepreneurship (Basch *et al.* 1994; Mohan and Zack Williams 2007; Østergaard-Nielsen 2003). Several studies have highlighted that stark differences persist between migrants' social position in their origin and destination countries (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004). Due to the material status symbols migrants can accumulate and the remittances they send from abroad, migrants are able to enhance their own social position in their origin communities. However, in order to obtain these resources migrants are usually required to do demeaning and low-paid jobs in destination countries. These incongruent and complex social status positions have been described as a 'status paradox' (Nieswand 2011), because the transnational perspective challenges the discourse that a person has a stable social status related to only one national society. The question then is how further geographical mobility affects the social position and the aspirations of onward migrants.

Usually migration outcomes are analysed either in terms of *integration* in the destination country or *development* impacts in the origin country. But given that onward migration emphasises the open-ended nature of migration trajectories and multiple emplacements of migrants, these two common measures at best reflect only part of migrants' life worlds. As I have argued in previous sections, onward migration is driven by peoples' desire to find a place where they can lead a life that they value and with a sense of

purpose. Therefore, I propose to utilise the ‘wellbeing approach’ as a lens to unpack the outcomes of onward migration (see Chapter 8). First and foremost, this way of analysing migration outcomes provides a subjective understanding of what ‘quality of life’ and ‘social progress’ mean and how individuals believe this can be achieved. This approach enables individuals to enrich our understanding of how they experience their situation in terms of ‘a state of being with others, where human needs are met, where one can act meaningfully to pursue one’s goals and where one enjoys satisfactory quality of life’ (Gough and McGregor 2007: 34).

Within migration studies the framework of wellbeing has been used by scholars studying the vulnerability and livelihoods of (‘left-behind’) non-migrants in poorer countries (see Nguyen *et al.* 2006). Fewer academic studies (e.g. Chase 2013; Warnes *et al.* 1999; Wright 2012) and international reports (IOM 2013) have focused on the perceptions of wellbeing amongst migrants in destination countries. Although the wellbeing approach takes inspiration from the capabilities approach developed by Amartya Sen and others, it differs in the methods used and its focus on the interactions between three different dimensions of human wellbeing (Gough and McGregor 2007; Sumner and Mallet 2011). The first is that of material wellbeing, which is shaped by conditions, such as accommodation and employment, which may affect individuals’ standard of living. Second, relational wellbeing is influenced by intimate relationships, as well as connections with family members and the wider community. Finally, perceptual wellbeing (also referred to as subjective wellbeing) reflects a person’s individual assessment of the aforementioned conditions, together with values, perceptions and mental health. Instead of considering material, relational and perceptual wellbeing as categories that operate separately, special attention needs to be paid to the continuous interplay of these dimensions (Sumner and Mallet 2011).

A particular advantage for the study of onward migration is that wellbeing ‘travels’ with the migrant (Wright 2012: 471). In her study Wright investigates how migrants construct wellbeing following their migration from Peru to either London or Madrid, thus in her study migration trajectories are fixed between two geographical nodes. However, I argue that the wellbeing approach allows us to compare migrants’ wellbeing across time and in a variety of places that formed part of their migration trajectory. Wellbeing allows us to analyse how migrants’ current state of wellbeing is related to their emplaced and embodied experiences within several societal and spatial structures. For instance, Kobayashi and Peake (2000) argue that racism is a highly contextualised and place-specific process. Feminist scholars have proposed an ‘intersectional’ approach to draw attention to the ways in which social inequalities (and privileges) based on gender, ‘race’ and class as

interdependent are interconnected, interdependent and 'interlocked' (Crenshaw 1991; Riaño 2011). Moreover, the wellbeing approach is dynamic in that it acknowledges how migrants' capabilities can evolve – in terms of economic, cultural, social and mobility resources – throughout their life course and during their migration trajectory. By contrast, policies and research concerned with migrants' integration often focus on their *deficits*, i.e. the supposedly few resources they bring with them and the many others they lack. Furthermore, it is assumed that migrants can simply bring their resources in a 'rucksack' (Erel 2010), thereby disregarding structural barriers that negatively affect migrants' wellbeing when resources cannot be utilised or exchanged. Although migrants sometimes find creative ways to re-activate some resources, other resources might remain de-valued through the process of (onward) migration. This helps to explain why the experiences of wellbeing can vary significantly between migrants and from one social context to another.

2.4 Summary

This chapter examined the various definitions of multiple migration in the academic literature. Although this particular migration trajectory has received more scholarly attention in recent years, it still remains relatively under-researched. Efforts to conceptualise multiple migration have resulted in ever new labels being attached to this migrant group, which underscores the great variety of motivations and experiences inherent in this migration process. Nevertheless, there is a need to more explicitly draw on migration theories and models in order to clarify the ways in which multiple migrations might challenge or confirm previous theoretical insights.

Therefore, the second section considered a range of theoretical approaches and their suitability for explaining the drivers of Nigerian onward migration. Migration theory has tended to focus on the drivers of migration that affect individuals when they are still living in their origin countries by accounting for the initial motivations of the migrants, as well as the macro- and meso-level determinants. While some migration theories emphasise macro-level determinants, other theories focus on the micro-level. Carling's (2002) ability/capability model helps to integrate different levels of analysis relevant to the migration process from an actor-oriented perspective. Importantly, this approach is dynamic and therefore also helps account for changes across space and time. I then proposed several amendments to adapt the aspiration/ability model for the study of onward migration. Furthermore, I discussed how onward migration challenges received

theoretical understandings of transnationalism and migration outcomes, and I subsequently explained how this study will address these issues.

The next chapter outlines the methodology of my thesis. It explains the multi-sited and mixed-method approach of this study and describes the rationale for the research techniques that were employed.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The main objective of this thesis, as explained in the introduction, is to study the motivations, patterns and outcomes of the intra-European mobility of Nigerian migrants. To this end, I opted for a multi-sited and mixed-methods approach. I employed research methods and techniques that would help me to unpack the multi-dimensional process of onward migration and understand particular social and spatial trajectories. This included interviews with key informants who had knowledge about onward migrants, and in-depth interviews with Nigerian migrants in three European countries – namely Germany, the UK and Spain. Furthermore, I also made use of a range of other ethnographic methods and analysed statistical data and other secondary data sources.

In this chapter, I discuss how I conducted my research with Nigerians who moved from their origin country towards and within Europe. In the first section, I explain the rationale underlying the research design. The next section deals with the specific methods I used to address my research questions. I then discuss the ethical concerns regarding informed consent, the rights of research participants and the possible outcomes of this study. The last section deals with data analysis and reflexivity. Throughout the chapter, I will elaborate on the specific challenges I encountered during the research process.

3.1 Research design

This first section outlines my research design and I enlarge on the reasons why I developed a mixed-method and multi-sited study. I also explain my focus on Nigerian migrants, the selection of research sites, the planning of the different phases and the research techniques of the study.

3.1.1 *Mixed-methods research*

In terms of research design, I was open to and familiar with the use of qualitative and quantitative research methods. During my studies and while working as a research assistant

and associate researcher working on projects about international student migration and migrations between Africa and Europe (MAFE), I had already gained experience with a variety of methods. Mixed-methods research has become increasingly popular in the social sciences, because ‘methodological pluralism’ allows researchers to compensate for the drawbacks that can result from only using a single type of method or data source (Bergmann 2008). Nonetheless, Hammersley (2008) insists that the scientific rigour of studies resulting from mixed-methods research depends on how well the methods are applied and integrated with each other. Furthermore, it has been suggested that migration research could be enhanced by combining methods from different disciplines in order to analyse migration processes across extended time periods, as well as connect multiple geographical contexts and scales (Castles 2012).

My initial chance encounter with Harrison made me question the academic literature of the time, in which the intra-European onward migration of third-country nationals was depicted as a migration trajectory especially common amongst former refugees. Therefore, I set about exploring more primary and secondary data sources, such as official statistics, newspaper articles and government reports etc., to get a broader overview of onward migration. However, it soon became clear that the published statistical data only provided limited information concerning onward migration (for a discussion about the various limitations of the published statistical data, see section 3.3.4). Yet, a public announcement in relation to the EU-wide 2011 Census promised the availability of new and more reliable data concerning onward migrants. It was the first time that EU member states had decided to harmonise the census questions and intended to include questions for *both* the variables ‘country of birth’ and ‘nationality’. The prospect of having data about these two variables was going to make it possible to estimate, at least, the onward migration of foreign-born migrants *with* EU citizenship. However, the results of the 2011 Census were only scheduled to be progressively released from late-2013 onwards, which was after my fieldwork.

In the meantime, I took a closer look at the statistics that were publicly available in 2010 to compare and contrast general trends in onward migration. My aim was to identify a suitable group of onward migrants to focus on for this study. The British Annual Population Survey (APS) data indicated a great variety of countries of birth amongst onward migrants residing in the UK. Furthermore, the APS data confirmed that onward migrants in the UK also originated from countries that had produced relatively low numbers of refugees or ‘mixed migration flows’ in the recent past. I decided to focus on Nigerian migrants for four reasons. First, Nigerian migrants in Europe had arrived via various migration channels,

Table 3.1 Nigerian-born working age population in the UK by nationality ('000)

Year	Nigerian-born migrants in the UK					
	with British nationality		with Nigerian nationality		with another nationality	
	estimate	CI ^b +/-	estimate	CI ^b +/-	estimate	CI ^b +/-
2015	97	14	91	14	12	5
2014	86	13	84	13	8	4
2013	81	13	99	14	5	3
2012	83	13	98	14	4	3
2011	92	13	97	14	7	4
2010	65	11	85	13	6	3
2009	67	11	88	13	4	3
2008	56	10	81	12	5	3
2007	61	10	75	11	6	3
2006	62	10	67	10	3	2
2005	46	9	63	10	3	2
2004	41	8	47	9	3	2
2003	47	8	43	8	2	2
2002	39	8	38	8	2	2
2001	32	7	44	8	2	2
2000	30	7	35	8	1	1

Source: Office of National Statistics, Annual Population Survey (APS)^a

Notes: ^a The APS is made up of wave 1 and wave 5 of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) plus annual booster samples. The LFS excludes some residents in communal establishments (e.g. student residences, boarding houses, hostels, etc.). The results of the APS shown here were re-weighted in light of the results from the 2011 Census. ^b In this table the 95% confidence interval (CI) is applied to indicate the reliability of the estimates.

as labour migrants, students, family migrants, asylum seekers, victims of trafficking and irregular migrants. Second, Nigerians were the second-fastest growing migrant community in the UK, after the Polish. Table 3.1 evidences that the growth of the Nigerian-born population in the UK showed a large percentage increase between 2001 and 2010 in fact, it constituted the highest percentage increase out of all non-EU-born migrants groups during this time period.³ Third, the ratio of Nigerian onward migrants with EU citizenship as part of the total Nigerian-born population in the UK indicated a slow but steady upward trend in the years before 2010 (and this did not even capture all the different types of onward migrants, seeing that others move on as Nigerian nationals). Finally, relative to the size of their emigrant community in Europe, Nigerians were an extremely under-studied migrant group.

³ For the sake of completeness, I have updated Table 3.1 with the more recent APS data that were published after 2010. The new data suggest a marked rise in onward migration intensity towards the UK amongst Nigerian-born migrants.

In order to answer my research questions and study how onward migration was measured, represented and experienced, I decided to combine the analysis of statistical data and other secondary data sources with extensive ethnographic research. Overall, the research for this study followed a 'sequential' mixed-methods design (Bergmann 2008) that was structured in four phases:

- First, I carried out a review of the academic literature on onward migration. I got in touch with potential informants, through personal and professional contacts. In addition, I spent a week in London visiting Nigerian businesses, associations and identifying key informants in South London. I also undertook a two-week pilot visit in Berlin during April 2011 in order to understand how prevalent onward migration was amongst Nigerians in the Schengen zone and to test my research techniques.
- The main part of my empirical research consisted of 17 months ethnographic fieldwork with Nigerian migrants living in Germany, the UK and Spain. Between June 2011 and December 2012, I conducted a total of 120 interviews with Nigerian migrants (n=40 per country). I also interviewed 21 key informants who worked with or had knowledge about Nigerian migrants – including religious leaders, association presidents, employment advisors, local council officials, authors and migrants' rights activists. Although I do not quote directly from the key informant interviews they inform the broader background in this thesis. Through ethnographic methods I gathered a variety of data through which I learnt how Nigerians experienced (onward) migration, as well as how it was represented by other individuals and institutions.
- The initial findings and themes from the first two phases informed and guided the quantitative phase during which I assessed how onward migration was captured in statistical data. Once the 2011 Census data was released, I produced some general descriptive statistical analysis and explored recurring topics from the qualitative data in more depth. The complexity of migrant trajectories I found out about during my ethnographic research helped me to evaluate and understand the limitations of the quantitative data. Unfortunately, the subsamples of onward movers with EU citizenship that were reported in the 2011 Census round were very small and thereby ruled out further comparative statistical analysis.
- Through continued contact with 45 of my informants and several key informants after completion of the fieldwork, I was able to add a longitudinal element to this study. Therefore, I could see how the trajectories of some of my informants continued to evolve. Only information that was shared in direct communications with me forms part of this

study. I decided to exclude any updates that people posted on social media.⁴ The sustained contact with some of the informants enabled me to discuss and reflect on my data analysis. Sharing drafts of chapters and research papers with informants gave them the opportunity to provide feedback on the research findings before they were published.

3.1.2 *Multi-sited research*

In order to address my research question concerning the *motivations* due to which Nigerians engage in onward migration, it was obvious that I would need to conduct ethnographic research with Nigerian migrants in Europe. Most other research projects concerning intra-European onward migration of third-country nationals were carried out in the UK and identified the UK as an important destination of intra-European onward mobilities (Kelly 2013; Lindley and Van Hear 2007; Mas Giralt 2016; van Liempt 2011). Restricting my research to only one European country would have meant that I was also limiting what I could find out about the *patterns* and *outcomes* of intra-European onward migration. At the outset, it was unclear whether onward migrants constituted a particular group of migrants that were engaging in these more complex migration trajectories; or whether onward migration formed part of a wider trend, which meant that migration trajectories in general were diversifying in terms of the range and number of destination countries.

To evaluate the scale and patterns of onward migration beyond the UK context, I therefore opted for a comparative and multi-sited research design. In his seminal paper on multi-sited research, Marcus (1995) proposed various alternative ‘modes of construction’ in order to move away from classical anthropological studies that focused on a single research site. Multi-sited research enables the researcher to follow the people, the thing, the metaphor, the plot, the life, or the conflict (Marcus 1995: 106). Although I did not join onward migrants while they traversed intra-European borders, my aim was to trace ‘the global in the local’ and see how transnational and translocal mobilities are interwoven in people’s everyday lives (Appadurai 1995; Anthias 2012; Brickell and Datta 2011; Burawoy 2000: xiv).

⁴ Many informants asked me to add them on social networks and I found that this was useful in order not to lose contact should phone numbers change. With some of my informants over time, I also developed friendships. However, I decided not to analyse any private updates my informants posted on social media, because these were posts intended for family and friends, but not a research audience. In direct communication with informants, it was possible to remind my informants that I was still working on my research project and was interested to hear how ‘their story’ continued.

My choice to focus on the UK, Germany and Spain as field sites was based on four main reasons. First, the three countries represent three very different immigration policy regimes: the UK used to be characterised by relative openness toward immigration but is becoming increasingly restrictive; Germany's immigration policies appear to be travelling in the opposite direction, from restrictiveness to a greater focus on migrant integration; meanwhile Spain has traditionally been very open to immigration. Second, I have lived in all these three countries and I am fluent in English, German and Spanish, which was likely to make the research process easier. Third, the comparison of the UK with Germany and Spain also meant that I could study whether the onward mobilities within the Schengen zone differed from those trajectories in the direction of the UK. Third-country nationals with short-term and permanent residence permits can visit other member states in the Schengen zone for up to 90 days as tourists. The new EU long-term residence permit even grants third-country nationals 'freedom of movement' rights to live and work in another member state. However, third-country nationals who want to relocate to the UK need to wait to acquire an EEA or Swiss passport through naturalisation or have to apply for a separate visa.⁵ Finally, these three European destination countries also represent the three different post-colonial migration phases that will be outlined in Chapter 4. The UK was the principal destination of Nigerian migrants and had attracted the majority of *been-to* migrants in Europe since the 1960s. Germany drew a proportion of the highly-skilled *Andrews* from the 1980s onwards, although most of them were unable to find work at their skill-level.⁶ Meanwhile Spain represented a newer destination of Nigerian migrations towards Europe and was a country where many Nigerian migrants were employed in low-paid jobs after the 2000s.

Multi-sited research at times has been critiqued, because spreading a study over several field sites raises doubts of the depth and quality of the research (Falzon 2009). Yet, I believe that the inclusion of various field sites allowed me to gain deeper insights about the connections between mobility and emplacement for onward migrants in specific localities (Smith 2001). My aim was to get a sense of the 'translocal' geographies within which my informants' trajectories and practices unfolded between Nigeria and in Europe (Appadurai 1995; Brickell and Datta 2011). I divided the fieldwork between the capital cities of the UK, Germany and Spain, as well as Manchester, Cologne and Málaga. By

⁵ More recently, the Brexit referendum, of course, has thrown into question whether EU citizens can still make use of their freedom of movement to move to the UK. And it is also unclear which rights EU citizens already residing in the UK will continue to enjoy.

⁶ These migrant labels – 'been-tos' and 'Andrews' – will be described in detail later. In brief, 'been-tos' are the early graduate migrants who returned to Nigeria after advanced studies abroad, whereas 'Andrews' are much later skilled emigrants quitting the country because it held no future for them, in their view. For more details, Chapter 4 (section 4.1.2).

including several cities and neighbourhoods in this study, I had the opportunity to draw attention to the particular 'locatedness' and 'situatedness' of the everyday lives of Nigerian onward migrants (Brickell and Datta 2011: 3). The cities differed considerably in terms of size, regional governance structures, global connectedness, hierarchical position within the Nigerian diaspora and ethnic diversity. Even though in all cities the general workforce was principally employed in the service sector, the particular industries varied, as did the particular labour market segments and networks that Nigerians could access.

The following paragraphs provide a brief summary of the key features of the cities in which fieldwork was conducted, as well as details about the respective Nigerian migrant communities in these locations:

- *London* is the capital of the UK and also the metropole of the former British Empire. The Black presence in the city dates back to the 16th century. The city has been the destination of many post-colonial migrants and its large migrant communities greatly contribute to the city's cosmopolitan character. Today London is a world city renowned for the global role it plays in the arts, finance, media, tourism and education. A large number of universities are located in London, thus offering many educational opportunities. Out of the 201,184 Nigerian-born residents in the UK in 2011 around 57 per cent (114,718) lived in the capital and were concentrated in South East and North East London. Especially the main streets of the district of Peckham are seamed with Nigerian shops, churches and mosques. The city's importance as a diasporic hub is further reflected and reinforced by the fact that around a third of all Nigerian migrants in Europe resided in London and large shares also lived close to the capital in South East England and East England (also see Table 4.2).
- *Manchester* is located in North West England. The raw materials acquired in Britain's colonies fuelled the industrial revolution, which centred in this region. Large quantities of linens, towels and colourful wax prints, known as 'Manchester goods', were produced in the cotton mills of nearby Oldham and then sold in the markets in West Africa and other parts of the world. Amongst the city's main industries today are media, culture and sports. Between 2001 and 2011 the share of the Nigerian-born population residing outside of London increased considerably. In 2011 there were 13,903 (7 per cent) Nigerian-born migrants living in North West England, a particular popular region due to its more affordable living costs. Smaller concentrations of Nigerian businesses and churches are located in two rather deprived areas of Manchester: Moston Lane in Harpurhey in North Manchester and in Gorton, southeast from the city centre.

- The capital of Germany, *Berlin*, is located within the territory of former East Germany. The Black presence in the city dates back to the 18th century and the number of Black residents increased after World War II when African-American soldiers were stationed there. As in many other German cities, guestworkers from Southern Europe were recruited to assist post-war reconstruction and later became settled in Berlin. Refugees arriving in the 1990s were often dispersed and confined to asylum camps in the rural and eastern parts of the country, where they awaited the outcome of their asylum claim and often experienced racism (Hinger 2016). Following Germany's reunification, numerous government ministries, embassies and (international) company head offices re-located from Bonn to Berlin. Despite its status as a capital city and a major industrial centre, Berlin has been plagued by high unemployment rates and persisting public debt. In 2011 an estimated 557,000 people with an African migration background lived in Germany,⁷ out of which 19,898 were Nigerian citizens and 1,593 (8 per cent) lived in Berlin in 2011 (UNHRC 2017; Statistisches Bundesamt 2012). Small clusters of African and Nigerian businesses and churches are located in Neukölln, Kreuzberg and Wedding, though Nigerians choose to live in a wide range of different neighbourhoods in Berlin.
- *Cologne* is the largest city within Germany's most populous federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia. Around 30 per cent (5,985) of Nigerian citizens lived in North Rhine-Westphalia in 2011 (Statistisches Bundesamt 2012). As part of the Rhine-Ruhr metro-region, Cologne benefits from a close-knit transport network that makes the city very accessible to Düsseldorf, Duisburg and Essen, as well as the neighbouring countries Belgium and the Netherlands. There is an international airport situated between Cologne and Bonn, which provides international flight connections. Cologne and the wider region offer employment opportunities in the automotive, media, insurance, trade and chemical industry. Several African and Nigerian businesses can be found along the first ring road that circles the old city centre, as well as further afield in the districts of Ehrenfeld and across the river in Mülheim.
- *Madrid*, located in the centre of the country, is the capital of Spain and the largest municipality in the autonomous Community of Madrid. In the early 2000s Spain experienced an economic boom and the influx of migrants peaked. Migrants were chiefly working in the construction, tourism, hospitality and domestic-service sectors – many of whom were employed illegally before regularising their status. It is assumed that most

⁷ This data is based on the German 2011 micro census and includes individuals born in Africa and those with at least one parent born in Africa (Nwabuzo 2015). However, this data omits third-generation migrants and subsequent generations. The overall number of African descendants and Afro-Germans living in Germany therefore is likely to be higher.

Nigerians flew to Spain on tourist visas, while others entered the country irregularly across the Mediterranean or as failed asylum seekers from Northern Europe. A total of 38,280 Nigerian-born migrants lived in Spain in 2011, out of which 8,599 (22 per cent) resided in the Community of Madrid (INE 2012). The vast majority of Nigerians lived and worked in the outskirts of Madrid, e.g. there were concentrations of Nigerian communities located towards the Northeast of the city around Torrejón de Ardoz and in the Southwest close to Móstoles.

- *Málaga* is a port city located in southern Spain in the autonomous region of Andalucía, as well as the capital of Málaga province. Generally, unemployment rates in southern Spain have been amongst the highest in the country. Málaga is a transport hub for the Costa del Sol and its beaches attract many tourists in the summer months. Andalucía's coastline is also the main region of arrival for African migrants, who cross the Mediterranean irregularly via the Strait of Gibraltar. In the past many Nigerians worked in the agricultural sector in Andalucía, but preference now is given to temporary foreign workers from other countries. There were 5,985 (16 per cent) Nigerian-born migrants living in Málaga province in 2011 (INE 2012). Over a dozen Nigerian grocery shops, hair dressers, eateries and associations are situated close to Málaga's central bus station, while many Nigerians live and attend churches located in neighbourhoods along Avenida de Velázquez and towards the north in Palma-La Palmilla .

3.2 A transnational and translocal research field

3.2.1 Negotiating access

Due to the multi-sited nature of this study, I devised several strategies that helped me to negotiate access to my research field. O'Reilly (2012: 113) has noted that in ethnographic research access to informants has to be 'negotiated and renegotiated' across different groups and in different settings. My strategies principally consisted of online networking, getting in touch with gatekeepers, 'hanging out' in the premises of Nigerian businesses and attending Nigerian churches and mosques, which allowed me to build up a network of contacts and find out about social gatherings and other events.

In the first year of my PhD, I created social media pages on Facebook and Twitter to document the research process, engage online with Nigerians and the general public, as well as disseminate relevant information and research findings. In addition, having a social media presence allowed me to follow the public posts of individuals, businesses and

community associations (Kissau and Hunger 2010; Schrooten 2012). This was a useful way to build contacts before I arrived in a new field site and to become aware of events I could attend. Unexpectedly, my social media engagement also resulted in two individuals contacting me because they were interested in participating in the study. Although they fitted my informant profile, their current place of residence did not permit me to conduct an interview in person and we decided to use Skype instead. Thus, online networking became, albeit unintentionally, another means for me to diversify the entry points for recruiting informants.

In all fieldwork sites, I got in touch with Nigerian community associations. These associations were organised around particular topics that included: hometown associations, ethno-regional associations, diaspora associations (mainly local chapters of the 'Nigerians in Diaspora Organisation' in Europe NIDO), professional associations, women's groups, football teams, cultural and music associations, etc. I then asked for permission to attend an upcoming association meeting to introduce myself and the research project to the association members. My presentations at the association meetings only in very few cases resulted in immediate interview appointments. Nonetheless, the public endorsements from the presidents and other elected members of the executive committee of the migrant associations were important for me to gain trust in the places where I conducted fieldwork. It meant that I could later regularly return to the offices and communal spaces of the associations and socialise with the members after the meetings. Furthermore, it made it easier to strike up conversations with Nigerians in other settings, because people would recognise me.

Seeing that some Nigerians were not part of any association, I also tried to create other means of unmediated access to the research field. In all fieldwork sites I found a great variety of Nigerian-owned businesses, such as food stores, barber shops, tailors, shipping agents, money transfer agents, restaurants and bars that were frequented by Nigerians. During my fieldwork it was also these businesses that I patronised for my grocery shopping and other everyday purchases. In this way I hoped to at least indirectly reciprocate the wider community support I received in conducting the research. I had many informal conversations and also used these interactions to ask if anyone knew Nigerians who had lived in several European countries. Many of the people I spoke to could think of at least two onward movers. Nevertheless, it was common for the people I met to be hesitant about immediately sharing the contact details of their relatives and friends, which I respected. Therefore, I usually suggested to call my interlocutors within the next few days, to give them time to seek permission for the sharing of contact details.

3.2.2 Sampling techniques

Onward migration is only one of several possible migration trajectories. In order to understand whether there is anything particular about onward migrants, it was therefore equally important for me to interview Nigerian migrants, who had *not* (yet) opted for this trajectory. Thereby I hoped to understand how different socio-economic backgrounds, life aspirations, wellbeing needs and mobility rights impinged on the migrants' desire and capacity for onward mobility. Thus, I was interested in interviewing Nigerians who: i) had not (yet) onward migrated within the EU; ii) had onward migrated; or iii) were (temporarily) returning after onward migrating elsewhere. In other words, the total population of interest to me in this study were Nigerian-born migrants present in the research sites at the time of the interview, including undocumented individuals. However, there was no complete or easily accessible total sampling frame available, which in turn made a random representative sample impossible.

Table 3.2 Gender composition of informants

Interview Location	Sex		Total
	male	female	
UK	26	14	40
London	15	8	23
Manchester	7	4	11
Other	4	2	6
Germany	23	17	40
Berlin	9	6	15
Cologne	8	7	15
Other	6	4	10
Spain	20	20	40
Madrid	10	9	19
Málaga	8	10	18
Other	2	1	3

Table 3.3 Age range of informants

Interview Location	Age range			
	18-24	25-34	35-44	Over 45
UK	2	7	24	7
Germany	0	14	14	12
Spain	1	8	20	11

The difficulty of knowing the actual size of the Nigerian emigrant population and identifying the onward migrants mixed within this population indicates that Nigerian migrants can be defined as a 'hard-to-reach' population. Different sampling methods have been recommended to engage so-called 'rare' and 'hidden' populations. Lee (1993) and Mendez and Font (2014) present the advantages and drawbacks of a range of sampling methods, including respondent-driven sampling, network sampling, peer group research, participatory methods, social media and locational sampling. It has been noted, however, that the most productive sampling approaches for hard-to-reach populations are the ones that utilise a 'judicious blend of strategies and techniques' (Thompson and Phillips 2007: 1296).

As I outlined in the previous section 3.2.1, my informants were contacted through a variety of starting points, principally using locational sampling, networking, participatory methods, and to a lesser extent social media. The combination of these sampling methods allowed me to mitigate some of the bias that can be introduced into a sample when relying on a single sampling method. A disadvantage of the locational sampling, for instance, is that the individuals who are present in places with geographical concentrations of community members may have characteristics that are not representative of the sampling frame as a whole. Through my regular attendance of social events and by networking, however, I was also able to establish contact with 'spatially integrated' Nigerian migrants, i.e. those who had found housing and work outside of ethnic enclaves. In several instances, I was also able to transnationally network between field sites and obtain the contact details of onward migrants who I interviewed at a later stage.

Nigerians in Europe are a very heterogeneous population and therefore I wanted to include informants with a variety of backgrounds and perspectives in my sample, even though I was aware that it would be impossible for me to construct a fully representative sample. Nevertheless, I took care to include a variety of interviewees through purposive sampling across a range of characteristics, i.e. age, gender, socio-economic background, ethnicity, occupational status and legal status.

3.3 Research techniques

3.3.1 Participant observation

Traditionally, ethnographies provided written in-depth accounts of geographically bounded groups of people. More recently ethnographers also have turned their attention to

other aspects of contemporary social life, by studying the practices that connect places, institutions and people across social and geographic boundaries (Marcus 1995). In order to understand why Nigerians engage in onward migration, I wanted to unpick how onward migration was represented – not just by migrants, but also by other stakeholders. Using ethnographic methods allowed me to capture and make sense of the production of meaning. In this way I could learn how the practice of onward migration was understood and interpreted.

The Nigerians I met throughout my fieldwork were aware of the practice of onward migration within Europe and could usually name a few acquaintances or family members who had lived in multiple European countries. But there was no formal acknowledgment of Nigerian onward migrants on the part of public institutions in Europe.⁸ Neither did the Nigerian onward migrants I spoke to necessarily identify themselves as a distinct social group. I therefore do not claim that my study is about some kind of ‘special’ or ‘unique’ community, but my intention is rather to explore how a particular migration trajectory is practised and experienced by Nigerian migrants in Europe.

Ethnographic research is characterised by a wide range of data collection methods. During this study, I relied on participant observation, visual methods and informal conversations, as well as in-depth interviews. Information conveyed during the participant observation and informal conversations was recorded in field diaries that I kept during the fieldwork. Through the initial entry points described in the previous section, I learned about a variety of social events that were oftentimes publicly advertised on flyers, noticeboards and in diaspora magazines. These events included concerts, book launches, film screenings, fashion shows, beauty pageants, sport events and exhibitions. On a weekly basis, I also attended churches and mosques that were either Nigerian-led or had a substantial Nigerian congregation. Informants were oftentimes keen to invite me along to the church or mosque where they worshipped. This was especially true for Pentecostal Christians, seeing that their churches actively encouraged the recruitment of new church members. As a result, I sometimes followed invitations to a second later Sunday church service elsewhere, mid-week bible-study meetings and other celebrations.

After getting to know some of my informants better, spending time in their homes and being introduced to their family and friends, I could observe how local and transnational practices and connections formed part of their lives. At times, their personal

⁸ Conversely, the intra-European onward moves of other third-country nationals have gained a more public profile. Research with Somali onward migrants in the UK has illustrated how their concentrated settlement across a few British cities prompted a greater awareness on the part of local authorities and an adaptation of service provision (Ahrens *et al.* 2016; van Liempt 2011).

lives echoed the countries in which they had lived. Particular objects, foods, media, expressions and habits proved essential to home-making practices and provided meaning for their multi-local lives. The social ties with friends and family members who lived close by and others in more distant locations could be maintained, but also frustrated, by communication via phone, messages and social media (Vertovec 2004). Through the sustained engagement with some of my informants I learnt about various rhythms of their mobilities – their everyday commutes within the city; cross-border livelihood strategies; virtual mobilities; their trips to visit friends and relatives and their return trips to Nigeria (see Cresswell 2006; Janta *et al.* 2015; Urry 2007).

3.3.2 *Visual methods*

In addition to the participant observation, I also made use of visual methods. The ways in which I employed visual methods were informed by the visual practices of the Nigerians I met. With my mobile phone I took pictures of the places and events I attended. This felt less obtrusive than using a bigger camera. At the time of my fieldwork, most Nigerians also owned smartphones with cameras. Through street photography I documented details of the different field sites, the shop fronts of Nigerian businesses and the public places where people congregated. At the end of the Sunday church service especially younger church members would ‘snap’ each other with their smartphones. While socialising in a communal space or milling around outside the church, they would pose with friends to take pictures in their ‘Sunday best’. I often was asked to be in a picture and I would also ask Nigerians for permission to take their picture.

At social gatherings, I also took videos to capture speeches, performances, music and the general atmosphere. As part of the larger Nigerian community events, such as concerts, independence day celebrations, weddings, child naming ceremonies and birthdays, it was common for a so-called ‘video man’ and photographer to be hired to document the occasion (Shaka 2003).⁹ In some cases, I later had the opportunity to buy a copy of the edited DVDs that were sold publicly, or see videos and photographs that had been uploaded to Youtube or other social media. These visual practices made it possible that the images of such celebrations circulated in the transnational space between the diaspora and Nigeria. But new smartphone technology means that visual practices are evolving fast; messaging

⁹ Shaka (2003) argues that in Nigeria films used to be predominantly produced by colonial and state-led film production companies. But after the 1970s a domestication of ‘video coverage’ occurred when Igbo electronics importers and dealers, who were trading in Asia, introduced the technology into private households.

applications now facilitate the instant sharing of images or even 'live' video calling. Some of the informants I stayed in touch with sent me pictures of the places they visited and their families, while we were updating each other about what was happening in our lives. But only the images I took with the explicit consent of participants are included in this thesis.

3.3.3 In-depth interviews

Within my mixed-method approach, the main source of information about the experiences of onward migrants were the in-depth interviews. The data generated from the interviews provided me with insights about my informants' everyday lifeworlds – as well as how individuals had arrived where they were now, their experiences of living in different places and where they saw themselves in future. Furthermore, I could analyse the various meanings that migrants attached to their imagined, completed and discarded trajectories.

The vast majority of interviews lasted between one and two hours, although a few informants spoke to me for up to four hours. Nearly all interviews were recorded during one single encounter, which was due to practical reasons. Seeing that I had to travel long distances to meet some of my participants, it was not feasible to interview all informants multiple times. Furthermore, many participants led very busy lives and therefore struggled to make time for one interview appointment and would simply not have been able to meet up with me on multiple occasions.

The interviews took place in the participants' preferred location, either public spaces or their homes. In two instances, I conducted recorded interviews over Skype, because my informants lived too far away for me to travel to meet them in person. Before each interview, I explained the objectives of my research, stating that I was interested to hear about the life stories of Nigerian migrants who lived in Europe. If they had not done so already, at this point my informants took the opportunity to ask me questions concerning my motivations for doing this research and my personal background. I answered the questions in the detail that was required. Given the amount of information that my participants were willing to share during the interview, I thought it only fair to also give my interviewees the opportunity to know more about me.

I asked my informants for permission to record the in-depth interviews. In three cases informants said that they were uncomfortable for their voices to be recorded, which meant that I took extensive notes during the interview instead. Recording the interviews enabled me to focus on listening to what the informants were saying and to pay attention to their body language. Having recordings of the interviews also allowed me to capture particular expressions that informants used to narrate their experiences. The interviews

were mainly conducted in English, although participants occasionally also used words in other languages when describing details of the places where they had lived.

I did not impose a structure on how informants told me ‘their stories’; nonetheless the narratives of my informants usually followed a chronological order. Most informants required hardly any prompting to include information about their lives before migration, their decision to emigrate and their lives abroad. Once the informants had completed their narratives, in the second part of the interview, I switched to a more interactive and conversational mode. This allowed me to pose follow-up questions about issues that had not been touched on or remained unclear in the narratives. In addition, I asked my informants about their views concerning themes that I had come across in other interviews. Furthermore, I encouraged my informants to tell me about their ‘future plans’, because most informants provided a retrospective account of their lives but did not mention future plans without my prompting. Finally, I recorded basic demographic data about my informants. Some informants I continued to meet after conducting the interviews, which permitted me to have informal conversations with them afterwards or join them for everyday activities, like going shopping, sharing meals, running errands, visiting neighbours or picking up children from school.

In this study, I understand my informants’ narratives as both ‘experience-centred’ and ‘co-constructed narratives’ (Andrews *et al.* 2013). On the one hand, this means that the type of data that I was able to generate through the interviews are not generalisable facts about onward migration, but should be rather interpreted as subjective and ‘situated knowledge’ (Haraway 1991). This became especially apparent to me, when I continued to be in touch with several of my informants after the interviews and witnessed how their views and trajectories evolved over time. On the other hand, this is a reflection of how my interlocutors presented themselves and their stories to me as a researcher. The way in which individuals convey information is undeniably influenced by the audience – in this case the researcher and individuals reading any publications arising from the research. After an initial informal conversation, one of my informants changed some of his personal details during the recorded interview. When he saw the slightly puzzled look on my face, the informant gave me a wink and smiled, to indicate that he was taking charge of anonymising his narrative in the way I had explained before we started the recording.

Overall, I conducted in-depth interviews with 120 migrants from Nigeria, involving 40 migrants each in Germany, the UK and Spain. I also tried to achieve a gender balance in my sample and in total I interviewed 69 male and 51 female Nigerian migrants. Actually, in some research sites, especially London, I encountered difficulties achieving a balanced gender composition. This was not due to a relatively smaller presence of Nigerian women

in these locations, but rather an effect of the long working hours of women and their childcare responsibilities. This meant that potential female informants simply had less time to participate in interviews. To address this issue, I suggested to schedule more interviews straight after church services and offered to conduct interviews while helping with cooking preparations in my informants' home.

The age range of the informants was 23-67 years, although the modal group were in their 30s. The majority of the interviewees originated from the South of Nigeria or had spent a considerable time living in Lagos before leaving Nigeria. My study included 107 first-generation migrants, as well as 13 migrants who were part of the 1.5 generation that joined their parents in Europe as teenagers. Before their emigration to Europe, 15 informants had engaged in migration spells to other countries within Africa or another continent; a considerable number also had migrated internally within Nigeria. Most of my informants said they identified with either the Igbo, Yoruba or Edo ethno-regional groups, while a minority of individuals said they pertained to the Ijaw, Efik, Esan and Hausa ethnic groups. Several informants stressed that they had mixed ethnic identities, because they were raised by parents of different ethno-regional heritage and spoke several Nigerian languages. The overwhelming majority of my informants identified as Christian, only two were Muslim.¹⁰ In terms of educational background, the majority had obtained secondary and tertiary qualifications in Nigeria, only 2 informants in Spain and 3 in Germany had not attended school beyond primary level. In general, my informants' families were part of the lower and upper middle-class in Nigeria, but several women mentioned that they came from very poor families.

3.3.4 *Descriptive statistics*

Throughout this study, I incorporate data published by several national and international statistics agencies, as well as relevant legislation and policies to provide insights about how Nigerian (onward) migration is measured. In Chapter 4, I present data regarding the size and demographic characteristics of the Nigerian migrant population in various parts of the world, which indicate that Europe is becoming an increasingly important destination for

¹⁰ In general, Muslims of the Hausa and other ethno-regional groups from Northern Nigeria are more likely to migrate to the Gulf states (de Haas 2007a). Most Nigerians I met attested that they had never met a Hausa or Fulani Nigerian in continental Europe, except in Bonn where *Deutsche Welle* operated a dedicated Hausa radio programme and recruited Hausa staff. Even though, there are many Yoruba from Southern Nigeria who are Muslim, nearly all of these individuals I spoke to had migrated directly to their destination country. In the UK, the 2001 Census indicates that 9 per cent of the Nigerian-born population was Muslim, equivalent to around 12,000 to 14,000 individuals. There is no similar data available for Spain or Germany (Change Institute 2009: 51).

Nigerian migrants. Secondary data analysis of the statistics concerning visas and asylum applications also illustrates the variegated nature of Nigerian migration flows to different European destination countries.

Data about onward migrants remains difficult to locate in migration statistics. Although countries pay considerable attention to registering the arrival of new immigrants, most countries keep no records of immigrants who later decide to leave. As a result, there are limitations to what can be deduced from the available statistics. First, emigration statistics are generally somewhat unreliable, because they are essentially an estimate of 'disappearances' from a specific population cohort. To estimate how many immigrants have emigrated it is necessary to combine various types of datasets: formal de-registrations of former residents; periodic administrative de-registrations of non-tax filers; reported deaths and estimated deaths.¹¹ Second, only very few national statistics agencies collect data regarding 'country of next usual residence' after emigration, thereby making it difficult to distinguish between emigrants who are onward migrating to a third country and those who are returning to their origin country.¹² Third, the 'country of previous residence' is usually recorded either 5 years or 1 year prior to the survey date. This variable thus only captures recent onward migrations of those individuals who were residing in a third country at a particular point in time. Finally, none of the current immigration statistics have the capacity to 'track' international moves that involve more than two countries, nor do they capture shorter onward mobilities that lasted under a year (Ahrens 2013).¹³

In this thesis, the descriptive statistics regarding intra-European onward migrants are mainly based on the 2011 Census round. This is the first EU-wide census in which all member states harmonised the census questions and included both the variables of 'country of birth' and 'nationality'. In general, census data have a higher reliability for the analysis of small subgroups than the Labour Force Surveys. It is important to note, however, that the enumerated population of the Census 2011 varied across member states. In the UK, the census 2011 included a full census return from all usual residents. Meanwhile in Germany

¹¹ The results of the 2011 Census revealed that Germany had 1.5 million fewer residents than previously estimated. In particular, the number of foreign passport-holders resident in Germany had been over-estimated by 1.1 million. BBC (2013) Census reveals German population lower than thought, *BBC News*, 31 May <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-22727898>

¹² Amongst the few notable exceptions that record emigration destinations are Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands, Portugal and Australia (Bratsberg *et al.* 2007; Hugo 2008; Nekby 2006; van Heelsum and Hessels 2006).

¹³ However, by using innovative sampling methods the PIONEUR project collected data about mobile EU citizens and found that around half already had a previous migration experience and further 25 per cent even had lived in a third country (Kuhn 2011: 138; Recchi and Favell 2009)

a stratified sample of 10 per cent and in Spain of 12 per cent of the population and households was enumerated, which was then matched with data from municipal registers and several other statistical sources.¹⁴ In addition to the standard output of the 2011 Census data, I also made requests for Commissioned Tables to include further variables. This option of accessing data was slow and, unfortunately, the estimated costs exceeded my budget. Besides, my interest in a relatively small population meant that my requested Commissioned Tables did not meet confidentiality restrictions, consequently particular variables would have had to be provided in aggregate form thus not allowing sufficient new insights.

The standard output from the 2011 Census, allowed me to identify Nigerian-born residents who naturalised in one EU member state before onward migrating to another. However, this estimate still under-represents the incidence and different types of onward migration. From my empirical research, I became aware that a substantial number of Nigerians were mobile within the Schengen zone before acquiring a European passport. Thus, this estimate does not account for the intra-European onward mobilities of third-country nationals who use their short-term residence permit, a permanent residence permit or the new EU long-term residence permit to (temporarily) relocate to other member states – and irregular onward migration is not accounted for at all. Furthermore, the census data fail to capture multiple onward mobilities within the EU, relocations with a duration of under a year or the potentially multiple places of residence of third-country nationals prior to their arrival in Europe.

3.4 Positionalities

Aware of the ‘situatedness’ of knowledge, feminist and post-colonial scholars have argued that it is important to be conscious about the context in which knowledge is produced (Stoetzler and Yuval-Davis 2002). Researchers have to account for the ways in which their various senses of being and belonging influence their interactions with the research process. The positionality of researchers conducting qualitative research is said to be characterised by clearly defined ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ positions. However, I agree with Carling *et al.* (2013) that researchers – especially in a transnational context – occupy complex and shifting positionalities based on the interplay between the research context,

¹⁴ The other data sources included: population registers; a housing census; a household sample survey; survey of special shared housing facilities (prisons, student residences, etc.); tax registers; and a follow-up survey.

the characteristics of the researcher and the individuals they are conducting research with. Furthermore, certain cultural codes, physical traits and language competences might be more visible than other identity markers. The positionality a researcher is assigned also depends on the extent to which these various layers of identity are shared with informants. The rapport and trust a researcher is able to build with particular individuals might depend on emphasising certain shared identity markers. In the following, I will outline, from my own subjective viewpoint, how different personal characteristics and research contexts affected my positionality during the fieldwork.

As a white European woman carrying out research with Nigerians in Europe, my researcher position could be imbued with colonial connotations (Huisman 2008). Upon our first encounter, many Nigerians would refer to me as *Oyinbo* or *Oyibo* – a word used in Nigerian Pidgin, Yoruba and Igbo to refer to a person that is not African and typically of European origin. My Nigerian interlocutors generally assumed that I was British due to my fluency in English and my first name. In the casual conversations that followed, I was nearly always asked a quick succession of questions that enquired about my origin, the origin of my parents, my occupation, my place of residence, whom I lived with, my marital status and whether I had children. As a result, I was perceived in more nuanced and, in at times, conflicting ways.

Although I had a long-term partner, most Nigerians did not understand why I was not married and had no children. Both women and men alike stated that an African woman in her early thirties would have long since married. Yet, several first-generation migrants told me that they themselves did not comply with these societal norms. After coming to Europe many were postponing marriage plans. Meanwhile others were cohabitating with a partner, and in many cases married according to European law, but had not travelled to Nigeria to celebrate the marriage according to customary marriage laws. However, in most systems of customary marriage law in Nigeria, a marriage is not recognised until all mandatory elements of the marriage are completed.

Besides, my responses allowed my interlocutors to know about my kinship ties. My dual Irish-German nationality led one Nigerian-Irish interviewee to identify me as a subject 'colonised by the British', whereas several Igbo informants were curious to know whether I shared their Catholic faith. These remarks illustrate Ireland's complex relationship with Nigeria and other African countries. Even though Ireland did not officially colonise any country in Africa, it had a strong presence through Catholic missionaries and migrant

workers. Therefore Ireland 'was fundamentally and intrinsically part and parcel of the European, if not British, imperialist apparatus on the continent' (Ejorh 2012: 587).¹⁵

Revealing my ethno-national background meant that Nigerians did not consider me part of the majority population in the UK and Spain, which possibly made it easier for my informants to share more critical remarks with me about their experiences. By contrast, in Germany I had to make an extra effort to assure a few of my informants that I was not working for the German immigration authorities. I found that learning basic greetings in various Nigerian languages was a good way of creating bonds. Although it was beyond my abilities to learn several Nigerian languages in-depth, my efforts were usually appreciated. Over time, I became able to follow conversations in Nigerian Pidgin, which allowed me to join in some of the banter and jokes that people shared. On the whole, I think the ways in which I reflexively used my positionality were successful because I had very low interview refusal rates across all fieldsites and managed to interview a wide range of participants.

It is common for social scientists to conduct research on topics they have an affinity with. Similar to the majority of my informants, I have lived in several countries and therefore felt I had some insights into what it meant to be 'on the move' and the effort it took to 'settle in'. Many informants expressed that I must know what it was like to be a 'migrant' and expected me to have a more 'international' and 'open-minded' perspective than the Europeans they knew who had never lived outside of their origin country. On hearing about my geographical attachments many Nigerians I met started sharing their own stories about the places they lived and visited, but also the places they could not reach or were forced to leave. Therefore, I was acutely aware that I had more formal mobility rights than many of the informants I spoke to and on occasions this power imbalance made me feel very uneasy.

Across all research sites, I introduced myself as a worker-student. Although I was awarded a grant for my fieldwork in Germany and later also for part of the writing-up stage of my thesis, these funds were limited and that is why I worked in several part-time jobs throughout the PhD. Having to balance work and study was an experience that many Nigerians could relate to. Amongst Nigerians, education is held in high regard, and therefore even individuals who did not have an advanced level of education understood what doctoral research entailed. Informants often proudly told me about the siblings or children they supported to become 'graduates'. By presenting myself as a student and not as a researcher,

¹⁵ None of my informants remarked upon Germany's history as a colonial power. This is particularly interesting given the fact that two former German colonial 'protectorates' – namely Mahinland, an area around Lagos (1884-1885), and part of German Kamerun (1884-1916) – are constituent territories of present-day Nigeria.

I also hoped to manage my informants' expectations in terms of the potential benefits of their participation in this study. I made clear that I had limited influence on policy-makers and therefore was unlikely to effect substantial change for them personally. Nevertheless, I do see it as my responsibility to draw attention to injustices and unfair conditions that negatively affected people's lives.

3.5 Ethical concerns

Before starting the interviews, I obtained informed consent from the interviewees. In most cases this was written consent, and in a few cases interviewees gave recorded verbal consent to participate in the study. Seeing that I recruited the majority of my participants in public places or via their personal networks, our interview appointment was usually the first opportunity we had to talk one-to-one. Before starting the interview, I explained the objectives of the study, the rights of the informants, as well as the risks and benefits of participation. Concerning the rights of research participants, I made potential interviewees aware that all the information they shared during the course of the study would remain confidential. Furthermore, I assured informants that all data would be securely stored in a password-protected environment and handled in accordance with ethical standards and guidelines. In terms of the dissemination of the findings, I explained that in any presentations and publications arising from the research I would remove any revealing personal information from their narratives to ensure anonymity.

The informants themselves chose the pseudonyms used in this thesis. I felt it was appropriate to let my informants choose their own pseudonyms, because Nigerian names often reveal the ethno-regional origin of the person. My concern was that, for instance, a Yoruba name, alongside information about the migration trajectory and the current place of residence of the informant, may not ensure a sufficient level of anonymity. Indeed, many of my informants picked English names. Others said that they wanted to use their 'traveling names', as they did not mind other people in Europe recognising the names, but preferred not to be identified by their families in Nigeria. Unexpectedly, several individuals insisted on using their real names, because they said they were tired of assuming other identities and names. There are general concerns when research participants waive their 'right to anonymity' (Guenther 2009). Yet there is hardly any discussion about this issue in the wider academic literature and I believe it needs to be addressed more fully in ethical guidelines. Following a longer conversation about the possible ramifications of using their real names,

I ultimately accepted my informants' self-asserted 'right to identity' and 'ownership' over their narratives.

Furthermore, I informed my interviewees that the risks involved in participating in the study were minimal to them. Nevertheless, I made clear that talking about experiences, such as moving to another country, can be difficult or traumatic. I highlighted that if any question made them feel uneasy, they were not obliged to answer and we could stop the interview at any point, without the need to provide a reason. One informant, in particular, got very upset relating his story to me and asked me to stop the recording. But he insisted that he wanted to resume the interview with me the following day and we then met again, stopping and starting the recording at various points to let him compose himself while he told me his story. Several other informants told me when they were preferred to omit certain parts of their experiences from their narrative.

Additionally, I made sure that the informants knew that the participation in the research was voluntary and they would not be compensated for participating. Nevertheless, out of common courtesy, I did usually offer to buy a soft drink for informants when in a public place. I explained how the interview itself would proceed, by making clear that in the first part of the interview it would be up to them to tell me their story in their own words and then in the second part of the interview I would ask them a few questions. I informed the interviewees that they had the right to stop the interview at any point and that even at a later stage they could withdraw their consent to participate in the research, without any need to provide an explanation. In this case, all their data would be immediately and permanently destroyed. Before we started with the interview, I gave informants the opportunity to ask further questions.

Contributions about the ethical issues involved in doing migration research usually focus on the particular concerns when doing research with refugees and irregular migrants (van Liempt and Bilger 2009; RFC 2007). In general, the Nigerians I interviewed were not especially vulnerable because most had legal residence papers and a livelihood strategy. Only in Spain my sample included individuals who had an irregular migration status at the time of the interview. The perceived greater threat of deportation in the UK and the fear of the 'police state' in Germany are likely to have prevented Nigerians with an irregular status from engaging with me. Nevertheless, across all research sites I interviewed individuals who had experienced periods of irregularity at earlier stages of their migration project. Interestingly, Nigerians often perceived me as vulnerable, because I was new to their city. Except for Manchester, I had not ever lived in any of the cities where I conducted research and compared to my informants therefore had less 'local' knowledge. On several occasions,

individuals insisted on waiting with me at the next bus stop or giving me a ride in the car and I was very touched by their care.

3.6 Data analysis

Having discussed the various stages and sources that formed part of my data collection, I now turn to how I proceeded with the data analysis. A mixed-methods approach entails that researchers not only need to integrate data collection methods, but also have to consider how they integrate the data sources at the stage of analysis (Bergmann 2008). An initial analysis already took place during the data collection phase. I kept a field diary where I noted down my observations and impressions while doing fieldwork, which was an important way of recording and thinking through my qualitative data. In addition, I compiled summaries of the interviews, including information about the demographic details and the migration trajectories of the interviewees, as well as the main themes of the interviews. The themes that were repeatedly mentioned by Nigerians in some cases influenced which key informants I approached for interviewing, with the aim of gaining different perspectives on the issues that had been raised by informants. Some of my key informants, for instance, included representatives who worked at migrant associations, migrant rights NGOs, employment agencies, citizens' advice bureaus, churches and school administrations. Due to restrictions of space in the thesis, I did not include quotes from the key informants directly, but the insights I gained were invaluable for me to triangulate some of my findings.

Despite taking regular short breaks during the fieldwork, I felt quite exhausted on returning from the field. I underestimated how physically and mentally demanding it would be to conduct multi-sited research. Therefore, I had to take a step back before I could proceed to analyse the interviews in-depth. I then listened to all the interviews in full and created a more detailed standardised summary containing the main characteristics of the informants, their migration trajectories, as well as an index of main interview themes. This provided me with a comprehensive overview of my interview sample and allowed me to see different patterns emerge. I selected 44 interviews to be transcribed in full. The criteria for selecting interviews for transcription was to reflect a wide range of onward migration experiences and interviewee backgrounds. The remaining interviews were transcribed selectively. I proceeded to inductively code the transcripts, as well as my fieldnotes, using a structured coding technique. Once further themes emerged, I re-coded the transcripts.

It was a key concern for me to accurately represent my informants' 'voices', which influenced how I chose to analyse and present the narrative material. First, the aim for me was to focus on interviews on the basis that they were either representative or exceptional compared to the experiences of other onward migrants who were part of this study (Kvale 2007). Therefore, the quotations included in this thesis are not exhaustive but instead are to be understood as illustrative examples of experiences that several participants expressed. Second, I opted for a *verbatim* transcription of the interviews, which left all linguistic expressions unchanged, including the occasional use of Nigerian Pidgin. When I gave papers at conferences, other researchers suggested that I should have corrected the quotations to standard British English and removed what were perceived to be odd syntactic turns and lexis. Yet, I felt that this linguistic editing in fact would have erased the important local appropriation and hybridisation of English that has taken place in Nigeria. As Bhabha noted, hybridisation is the 'strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal... It unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power' (Bhabha 1994: 112). Nonetheless, it is true that in Nigeria and the diaspora, despite its importance as a contact language between the over 200 ethno-linguistic groups, the use of Nigerian Pidgin remains contested – viewed by some as an emancipatory post-colonial project, while others aspire to speak American or British English.

The sequential research design meant that the empirical fieldwork and most of the analysis of the qualitative data was complete, when the quantitative data from the 2011 Census was released. In addition to exploring the general statistical trends, I therefore also explored some of the main themes from the in-depth interviews via the statistical data (Creswell and Plano Clark 2007). Yet, a full integration of my data sources was not possible. Some themes that my informants repeatedly mentioned in the interviews could not be explored further through statistical data sources, because they simply were not covered by the census questions or the data were not available in disaggregated form. The training I received in data visualisation techniques was tremendously useful for uncovering further patterns in the statistical data, which I had overlooked with standard data analysis.

Remaining in touch with key informants and interviewees, was not only useful in order to remotely 'follow the people' and their trajectories (Marcus 1995). The continued contact also enabled me to share drafts of my research for feedback. This way it was possible for me to ensure that interviewees agreed with the way in which I used and interpreted their narratives. Furthermore, this was also a way of confirming that I had correctly implemented the level of anonymity that my informants had requested me to provide them with (see discussion in section 3.5). In fact, two articles stemming from my doctoral research have been published in academic journals. One paper analyses the various forms

of semi-legal mobilities of Nigerians in Spain (Ahrens, J. (2013) Suspended in Eurocrisis: new immobilities and semi-legal migrations amongst Nigerians living in Spain. *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 22(1): 115-140). In a second article I co-authored with Melissa Kelly and Ilse van Liempt, we compare the onward mobilities of three different migrant groups in the direction of the UK and present a typology of intra-European onward movers (Ahrens, J., Kelly, M. and van Liempt, I. (2016) Free movement? The onward migration of EU citizens born in Somalia, Iran, and Nigeria. *Population, Space and Place*, 22(1): 84-98).

The feedback I received on the draft papers in most instances consisted of small changes and amendments, but informants also provided me with valuable new information about policy practices and their own trajectories. Remaining in touch with participants, however, also had its own challenges. Sometimes I felt that I never really exited the field.

3.7 Summary

In this chapter, I outlined the methodological design of this study, as well as the context in which the data was generated. Furthermore, I explained how I addressed several ethical concerns. This thesis involved both a triangulation of research sites and methods. Overall, I carried out 120 interviews and extended participant observation in Berlin, Cologne, London, Manchester, Madrid and Málaga. In addition, an analysis of the secondary statistical data from the 2011 Census was carried out to provide further demographic insights about Nigerians who onward migrate after acquiring EU citizenship. Unfortunately, the currently available statistical data do not fully capture the intra-European onward migration of individuals who relocate with their short-term or permanent residence papers.

Furthermore, I highlighted how the positionality of the researcher is dependent on the specific interactions of various identity markers with different research participants and with the research contexts. I explained how my various positionalities were constituted and evolved across the different field sites. I emphasised that the knowledge that is co-produced during these encounters is unavoidably subjective and situated. In order to overcome ethical concerns during the research process, I argued that it was important for me to involve my informants and get their feedback on how to resolve certain issues. As a result, the names used in this thesis are pseudonyms the informants chose themselves, including fictitious names, nicknames and real names. In agreement with feminist scholars, I argue that thinking through knowledge production with research participants in this way can help to avoid colonial ethnological approaches.

Chapter 4

Europe in Africa, Africa in Europe: Nigerian Migration and Diaspora

Nigerians have migrated internally, regionally and beyond the African continent, though the direction and intensity of these mobilities have varied over time. In this chapter, I embed the main features of contemporary Nigerian international migration within several social, and indeed global, transformations. This examination reveals certain continuities between historical and present-day Nigerian mobility and migration patterns, but also highlights overlooked features and new patterns. Both Africa and Europe have witnessed profound social, economic and political changes throughout their inextricably linked history. Migration oftentimes played an integral part in these developments. The first section provides some background concerning the long history of out-migration from Nigeria, dating back to the trans-Saharan trade of the middle ages and the trans-Atlantic slave trade between the 17th to 19th centuries. These forced migrations are distinct from the colonial and post-independence migrations, which were motivated by personal aspirations for better opportunities relating to education and work, as well as the need to escape from political violence and socio-economic hardship. I reappraise the main post-colonial Nigerian migration phases with its key 'figures' – the 'been-to' migrants, 'Andrews', 'hustlers' and refugees. In light of the over-looked phenomenon of onward migration, I argue that narratives about particular Nigerian migration phases and 'figures' can be criticized for 'fixing' often complex, ongoing migration trajectories to particular destinations, time periods, migration cohorts and ethno-regional groups. These sections also form the basis for my discussion in Chapter 7 about how the previous, current and future emplacements and mobility of my informants and their family members lead to the emergence of what I define as 'multi-sited transnationalism'. Then, the next section turns to the analysis of the main features of the contemporary Nigerian diaspora. I analyse the wider social conditions that contributed to the entrenchment of migration aspirations amongst the youth during the period when most of my informants left Nigeria. Finally, I examine the scale of migration and the geographic distribution of the Nigerian migrant communities. Therefore, this chapter provides insights into the turbulent history of Africa's demographic giant, as well as its multi-faceted migration.

4.1 Multi-faceted Nigerian migration dynamics

4.1.1 *Pre-colonial migration patterns*

During the pre-colonial era several kingdoms and empires such as the Benin, Ile-Ife, Kanem-Borno and Sokoto Caliphate rose and fell in the area around the River Niger (Falola and Heaton 2008). The social structures in this region were based on ethnicity and kinship. Even though there is little known about the ancient times of kin-based societies, there is 'linguistic, cultural and economic evidence' that patrilineal structures in West Africa date back to the early 16th century (Lovejoy 2011: 12).¹⁶ In these societies elders maintained political power, because they controlled access to the means of production and women. Women were usually the main workers on the agricultural land, therefore economic production and social reproduction were connected. An elder's position in society was determined by the number of wives, the number of children born to each wife, support from younger kin, as well as access to land and other resources (Eades 1980: 53). In addition, societies based on kinship practised various forms of dependency, such as slavery and pawnship. Dependent individuals had no kinship connections to their masters and performed similar tasks as lineage members. But an increase in the number of dependents meant that elders could mobilise more individuals and this augmented their gerontocratic authority (Lovejoy and Falola 2003).

Various migrations to and from the territory that is now known as Nigeria resulted in the settlement of over 200 ethno-linguistic groups that speak over 250 different languages (Falola and Heaton 2008). But the understanding of Nigerian ethnicities was in fact conceived as a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, missionisation and colonialism in West Africa – prior to that, group identities were mostly based on geographic locality and kinship ties (Eltis and Richardson 2010). There were two migration patterns that dominated the pre-colonial period. First, the trans-Saharan trade of the Hausa states and the Kingdom of Kanem-Borno in northern Nigeria fostered intensive social and commercial connections with the Maghreb states of North Africa, the Middle East and Europe. Over the centuries the trans-Saharan trade involved conventional goods, such as salt, textiles, iron and weapons. In addition to the exchange of goods and people, this trade route also served as a means for the diffusion of Islam to northern Nigeria. Later pilgrimages to Medina and Mecca sustained these transnational links and individuals who

¹⁶ The exception being the matrilineal Akan on the Gold Coast, which today is Ghana.

were unable to complete their journeys became 'permanent pilgrims' in Sudan and Chad. By the 14th and 16th centuries the trans-Saharan trade intensified, due to the high profits that could be achieved from trading with gold and slaves. There are no accurate estimates about the extent of this trans-Saharan slave trade, but given the dangerous conditions involved in crossing the Sahara on foot, it is assumed that a significant proportion of slaves lost their lives during the journey (Lovejoy 2011: 35). Around this time an increasing number of wars and slave raids between different ethno-regional groups and kingdoms were documented.

The second dominant migration pattern was the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Following the arrival of Europeans on the West African coast in the 15th century, the focus of trade shifted south and the trans-Saharan trade diminished. Initially trans-Atlantic trade centred on high-value items such as textiles, pepper and gold. But after the Europeans landed in the Americas the demand for plantation labour increased in the 16th century, therefore the focus shifted to the trade with slaves. By the turn of the 19th century, 'slave trade with Europeans had become integral aspects of the economies of states and societies throughout the greater Nigerian area' (Falola and Heaton 2008: 59). The shipping records compiled so far show that in the period between 1622 and 1851 there were 944,046 slaves purchased between Badagry and Calabar ports, which now constitute the Nigerian coastline.¹⁷ On vessels sailing under British, French and Portuguese flag, slaves were taken for forced labour in plantation economies of the Americas, including 741,495 to the Caribbean (78.5 per cent), 85,067 to Brazil (9 per cent), 44,194 to North America (4.7 per cent) and 18,261 to other, mainly South American, destinations (1.9 per cent). The slaves mainly were Yoruba-speaking and Igbo-speaking peoples, although there were also significant numbers of Hausa and Ibibio (Eltis and Richardson 2010; Lovejoy 2011).

Slavery also caused the emergence of a particular type of diaspora, namely the 'Black Atlantic', which involved the circulation of ideas and people (Gilroy 1993). After the abolition of slavery, this social institution continued to form an integral part of the political economy of West Africa as domestic slavery became more common. Many historians and geographers argue that this in turn has influenced the current population distribution in Nigeria. Especially minority ethnic groups that were unable to defend themselves from the

¹⁷ These data were extracted from the *Trans-Atlantic Slave Database* www.slavevoyages.org (Eltis *et al.* 2009) in September 2016. Not included in my selection are data relating to other nearby ports in the Bight of Benin and Bight of Biafra, where Yoruba-speaking and Igbo-speaking slaves were also purchased. Out of the 944,046 slaves circa 16.8 per cent died during these particular voyages. Furthermore, various slaving vessels embarking after 1810 were intercepted and taken to African ports with 53,432 slaves on board, many of whom were declared free following international tribunals mostly held in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

slave raiding of larger states, fled to remote terrains in the hills and plateaus (Adepujo and van der Wiel 2010: 23). Partly due to these historic migrations, the central Jos Plateau is characterised by a high cultural and ethnic diversity.

During the colonial period, ethnic groups were divided by new geographic borders imposed by the colonial powers. This resulted, for example, in the Yoruba being split between Nigeria and Benin – suddenly changing customary regional mobility patterns into international border crossings. In addition, Britain sought to control the productive means of the Nigerian people to ensure a cheap and steady supply of raw materials for its own industrial revolution (Binaisa 2013). The colonial administration focused major investments on the intensive cultivation of cash crops in southern Nigeria, which also involved labour migrants from northern Nigeria in the generation of exports, such as cocoa, palm oil, cotton, groundnuts and rubber. Moreover, the introduction of poll taxes and hut taxes resulted in new mobility patterns amongst Nigerian subsistence farmers, who had to seek wage-paying work. The urban expansion in the South motivated an unprecedented number of people to move to cities like Lagos and Enugu, but urbanisation also occurred in the north in cities like Kano, Kaduna and Jos (Meagher 1997). Urbanisation was one of the drivers of rural-urban migration systems, and led to novel land distribution patterns of the plots that migrants left behind (Eades 1980: 37; Mabogunje 1970).

In addition, Nigerians sought livelihood opportunities across the wider West African region. During the colonial and post-colonial period Nigerian migrants were working in mines, plantations, and construction sites, as well as engaged in trading (kola nuts, livestock and foodstuff) in both Ghana and Cameroon for several decades. The 1960s saw a major economic downturn in Ghana and migrants were blamed for the deteriorating conditions that followed. This resulted in the expulsion of 200,000 Nigerians in 1969 (Van Hear 1998: 78). In sum, mobility and migration, including forced migration, were fundamental to the social and economic history of Nigeria.

4.1.2 Colonial and post-independence migration patterns

During the colonial period and after Nigeria gained political independence from Britain, international migration intensified and it is possible to discern four broad migration phases, as well ‘key figures’ of migration. Bredeloup (2013) analyses several figures which have been employed by scholars to describe African migrations. In the following, I will delineate particular key figures of post-colonial migration that are specific to the Nigerian socio-historical context. The first emigration phase encompassed the late colonial era up until

Table 4.1 Emigrant and Immigrant Populations of Nigeria 1960-2013

	Population in Nigeria	Emigrant stock	Emigration intensity (%)	Immigrant stock	Immigration intensity (%)
2013	172 817 000	1 117 901	0.65	1 233 592	0.71
2010	159 425 000	1 000 523	0.63	1 127 668	0.71
2000	122 877 000	659 197	0.54	744 018	0.61
1990	95 617 000	433 256	0.45	443 723	0.46
1980	73 698 000	369 574	0.50	1 264 645	1.72
1970	56 132 000	375 556	0.67	157 826	0.28
1960	45 212 000	335 201	0.74	94 126	0.21

Sources: Data compiled from UN Population Division and the World Bank *Global Bilateral Migration* database.

Note: It is important to note that ‘emigration intensity’ and ‘immigration intensity’ are based on migrant stock data and should therefore not be confused with ‘migration rates’ which are based on annual flow data (Flahaux and de Haas 2016).

1960, during which time Nigerian elites and skilled migrants migrated to the UK and the USA, as well as the USSR, in pursuit of education and professional development (Adi 1998; Matusevich 2003, 2009). In order to bolster their respective ideological and economic agendas in the ‘third world’, the Cold War powers sought to attract African students from decolonising nations through the provision of generous scholarships. Migrants of this era were referred to as the ‘been-to’ generation,¹⁸ because graduates usually returned to Nigeria after completing their studies.¹⁹ Their new qualifications enabled them to secure jobs in the bureaucracy and oil sector that paid internationally competitive wages (Falola and Heaton 2008: 138). Even though Nigeria experienced a comparatively high *emigration intensity* during this period, the emigrant stocks remained relatively stable due to the steady return migration (Table 4.1). While pursuing degrees abroad African student associations actively contributed to the independence movements by exerting pressure on the Colonial Office in London (Adi 1998: 134). When Nigeria gained independence from Britain in 1960,

¹⁸ Novels by acclaimed Nigerian authors, like *No Longer at Ease* (1960) by Chinua Achebe, *Jagaa Nana* (1961) by Cyprian Ekwensi and *The Interpreters* (1964) by Wole Soyinka, all include characters who studied abroad and obtained well-paid posts on their return to Nigeria. In the wider Anglophone West-African literature set in the same era, the ‘been-to’ figure is also very common. See Egbunike (2014).

¹⁹ While abroad and after their return to Nigeria, ‘been-to’ migrants often formed associations to meet up with other alumni. During my fieldwork in London I also had informal conversations with Nigerian graduates who trained in the former Soviet Union. Their associations were evocatively named *Soyuznik* (Russian for: ally) or *Sputnik* (after the first earth satellite launched by the USSR in 1957).

many Nigerians returned to take up positions that had opened in the public service after the departure of the administrators of colonial rule.

The second migration phase, which lasted from the 1960s to the 1980s, was initially precipitated by ethnic and religious tensions within the country, culminating in a military coup in 1966. The ensuing Nigerian-Biafran Civil War lasted from 1967 to 1970 and left over one million people dead due to conflict and starvation. Many Nigerians, mainly from the Igbo ethnic group, were internally displaced and others sought asylum abroad. This period was also marked by relocations back to ancestral regions, because of the discrimination regarding housing and education that 'strangers' faced elsewhere (Bakewell 2008a).²⁰ 'Been-to' migrants who were attending universities abroad delayed their return to Nigeria and settled in the destination countries. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) high-price policy meant that oil-rich Nigeria experienced a tremendous rise in revenue. As a result, Nigeria became the main destination in West Africa for low-skilled workers from the region. Later, environmental factors repeatedly induced internal migration; because of crop failures and lack of water in the early 1970s and 1980s thousands of farmers and pastoralists moved southward during periods of severe drought (Meagher 1997: 83).

The third migration phase commenced in the 1980s. Due to economic mismanagement, as well as a decline in oil production and oil prices, the country experienced a severe economic downturn. Therefore, in 1983 and 1985, Nigeria expelled an estimated two million West African migrant workers, including around one million Ghanaians (Van Hear 1998: 78). Migration patterns within West Africa underwent further shifts when an increasing number of countries suffered economic decline due to the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) dictated by the Bretton Woods institutions and this heightened xenophobia towards migrant workers. In Nigeria the implementation of the SAP under General Babangida in 1986 brought about economic hardship; the retrenchment of the public sector increased urban unemployment and inflation skyrocketed. By 1987, the real wage of a lower-ranking civil servant was worth only 37 per cent of its 1975 value

²⁰ This is a legacy of the British colonial policies of divide-and-rule, which accorded more rights to 'indigenes' and discriminated against (internal) migrants, who were labelled 'strangers'. Especially in northern Nigeria, separate areas of habitation based on ethnicity, so-called 'strangers' quarters', were rigidly enforced during colonial rule (Kraxberger 2005). These discriminatory practices remain embedded in Nigerian law. In some states 'certificates of indigeneity' need to be requested from local government areas (LGA) for residents to gain access to civil service jobs, public education and basic services. Yet, there is no clear definition of what defines 'indigeneity' and therefore these certificates are often issued arbitrarily and thus are not recognised.

(Birks and Sinclair 1991, cited in Meagher 1997). Deficient employment opportunities and political repression in Nigeria meant that more skilled and professional workers started to leave the country with the intention of settling abroad (Reynolds 2002). Therefore, the period from 1970 to 1986 Nigeria witnessed a 'reverse migration transition', going from high net immigration to high net emigration (Black *et al.* 2004). Between 1965 and 1990, the USA operated dedicated visa programmes to attract highly-skilled migrants (Martin 2003).²¹ And indeed, the *Global Bilateral Migration Database* (Özden *et al.* 2011) shows that Nigerian emigrant stocks in the USA increased by 37,408, whereas in the UK there was a more modest increase of 19,094 between 1980 and 1990. By broadcasting a series of propaganda short films on the state-owned Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) channels, the Nigerian regime tried to dissuade its young and skilled citizens from emigrating, and thereby halt the country's 'brain drain'. The adverts featured the self-assured main character called Andrew standing in front of Murtala Muhammed International Airport in Lagos. 'Men, I'm checkin' out', Andrew says in an American slur, then reeling off the reasons for his departure: 'No good roads, no light, no water. Men, you can't even get a bottle of soft drink!' (Adichie 2014: 188). The regime's intention was to highlight that these infrastructural problems were being fixed and foster a sense of patriotism amongst Nigeria's diverse peoples. But instead young Nigerians identified with the main character and emigrants of this era then referred to themselves as *Andrews*. It was no coincidence that Enebeli Elebuwa, a famous Igbo actor, portrayed the character of Andrew, seeing that this particular migration flow is said to have involved many Igbos. Although the NTA short films portrayed this as a male-dominated migration, a substantial number of these highly-skilled migrants were in fact women.

The fourth migration phase began in the 1990s. Under General Abacha's military dictatorship between 1993 and 1998, the country turned into a pariah state. Wole Soyinka, a renowned Nigerian playwright, and other members of NADECO (National Democratic Coalition, a pro-democracy group) fled the country for fear of persecution by the Abacha regime. The deepening economic crisis and severe civilian repression compelled a wider range of migrants to leave, including migrant workers, asylum-seekers and irregular migrants. In addition, the region was ravaged by civil wars in Sierra Leone (1991-2000), Liberia (1989-1996 and 1999-2003), Guinea (1999-2000) and Côte d'Ivoire (2002-2005) (Bakewell and de Haas 2007). However, during this period many traditional destination

²¹ The terms highly-skilled, highly-educated, and tertiary-educated are used interchangeably in the academic and policy literature; though I think it is, of course, problematic to define 'skilled' workers solely with regard of their educational attainment, as this fails to valorise other types of skills and knowledge.

countries had introduced more stringent visa requirements, especially for African migrants (Flahaux and de Haas 2016). This led to a spatial diversification of migration, which appears to indicate the declining importance of ‘colonial links’ in African emigration patterns. More Nigerians moved to Germany and the Netherlands in search of work and study opportunities, where they also started engaging in the export of second-hand vehicles to Nigeria.²² Meanwhile countries like Spain, Italy and Saudi Arabia also had a strong demand for low-paid migrant workers and their immigration policies (or, in the case of Spain and Italy, lax entry controls) constituted an attraction for these workers (de Haas 2007a). These migrants were often aware that life in Europe meant that they would need to *hustle*,²³ in other words they were prepared to do menial and demeaning jobs to make a living, even though some of them possessed skills and had ambitions to obtain better-paid work.

Finally, I argue that there has been another, under-studied and under-theorised migration pattern, which involves more complex trajectories. It is likely that these patterns were always in existence and formed part of the aforementioned migration phases, but were simply overlooked. There certainly is evidence that intra-European onward mobilities of Africans have started becoming more prominent since 1995, as I will demonstrate in the next chapter (see discussion in section 5.2). The itineraries of onward migrants can take the shape of open-ended trajectories towards Europe and beyond, back-and-forward moves across destination countries and Nigeria, as well as circular mobility between destination countries. Meanwhile, others might stepwise migrate in order to reach a desired destination. These migrants usually maintain multi-stranded transnational ties to various places. Onward migrants’ social position within these places, their capability to access and use resources and social networks, as well as their embodied experiences are shaped by particular configurations of constraints and opportunities at various scales. I will take up this discussion again in Chapter 7 where I analyse the multi-sited and ‘grounded’ transnationalism of onward migrants. Yet importantly, an understanding of onward migrants and their complex, ongoing and transformative migration trajectories destabilises

²² Following the lead of several former British colonies, Nigeria switched from driving on the left side of the road to driving on the right side on 2 April 1972. This change was to improve road safety and commerce in West Africa, seeing that these former British colonies share extensive borders with former French colonies, where cars drive on the right. In order to source left-hand drive vehicles, Nigerian traders started migrating to other European countries like the Netherlands and Germany. Shipping containers became commonplace in maritime trade in Africa, as in other parts of the world, around the same time in the 1970s. Shipping costs to Lagos and Cotonou vary greatly across Europe; ports in Germany, the Netherlands and Spain generally offer the cheapest rates. For other accounts of the Nigerian second-hand trade, see (Jedlowski 2016; Omobowale 2013; Şaul 2014).

²³ ‘Hustling’ is a word used in Nigerian Pidgin, which refers to someone trying hard to make a living and accepting any type of work. The term is also used by migrants, who want to work in Europe. On the use of the word and practice of hustling in West Africa see Chernoff (2003).

the narratives about the archetypical Nigerian ‘figures’ of the ‘been-to’ migrant, ‘Andrews’, the ‘refugees’ and the ‘hustlers’, that have been ‘fixed’ to particular destinations, ethno-regional groups and migration cohorts.

4.2 From ‘waithood’ in Nigeria to ‘migranthood’ in Europe

4.2.1 The formation of migration aspirations in Nigeria after 1990

Most of my informants came to Europe during the 1990s and 2000s, a period when more individuals sought to permanently leave Nigeria and emigrant stocks rapidly rose from 433,256 to 1,000,523 (see Table 4.1). At the time of their departure, most were under 35 years old and had been unable to secure wage-paying employment, although women who joined their husbands in Europe often gave up well-paid jobs. The overwhelming majority of Nigerian migrants in Europe had completed formal secondary and even tertiary education, and their families belonged to the lower and upper middle-class parts of society. The youth population in Sub-Saharan Africa has received particular attention from demographers, because the total number of young people in this region is growing faster than in anywhere else in the world.²⁴ Moreover, the African youth population is unlikely to peak for another 20 years, whereas in other world regions fertility rates are already starting to decline (World Bank 2014: 3). Currently an estimated 76.7 per cent of the population in Nigeria are aged under 35 (UN Population Division 2015). Despite their numerical significance, young people in Africa today tend to play only a minor role in the economic, political and cultural processes in their countries, thus they often feel relegated to the margins of society.

In the recent literature on African youth, this demographic shift has heightened longstanding crisis discourses regarding the supposed breakdown of traditional structures of economic, social, cultural and political organisation. The main claim is that young people across Africa find it hard to reach ‘social’ adulthood due to the lack of opportunities for a stable livelihood. Vigh (2006) has described this phenomenon as ‘a social moratorium of youth’, which he defines as a social position that young people are involuntarily confined to

²⁴ The World Bank (2006) and the United Nations (2007) classify the age of youth as 15-24. In contrast, the African Union (2006) and many African states, including Nigeria, define youth to be 15-35 years of age.

as a result of a longstanding decline in social possibilities. Honwana (2012) later used the similar concept of 'waithood' – a composite term meaning 'waiting for adulthood'.²⁵ She claims that enduring societal problems have diminished young people's capability to support themselves and their families. As a result, many young people are unable to attain social adulthood, which traditionally has been defined by markers such as earning a livelihood, starting a family, building a home, and providing for their offspring and relatives. Without any means of achieving these goals, young people remain dependents of their families for longer than they wish to. Meanwhile Waller (2006) has highlighted that these discourses revolving around the supposed 'idleness' and 'immaturity' of young Africans date back to the colonial period when they faced similar challenges of finding employment and making their voices heard.

In reality, there have always been a variety of pathways to achieving social adulthood. Furthermore, these pathways have been continuously evolving over time influenced by both 'Western' and 'traditional' family norms. In the following, I will map various factors that contributed to shifts in the way that young Nigerians imagined their futures: the decline in the quality of education, growing corruption and persistent violence. Furthermore, I outline how young people have responded to these challenges; either by trying to comply with traditional paths to adulthood or charting alternative routes.

Recent generations in Nigeria are no longer able to rely on education alone to achieve social status or a decent livelihood. Their parents' generation benefited from the rapid expansion of professional opportunities, as Nigerians moved into occupations from which European colonisers departed when independence was realised in 1960. In addition, the discovery of oil in 1956 fuelled an economic boom that enabled Nigeria to expand the bureaucracy and state services and to join the ranks of the wealthiest economies in the 1970s. These changes in the Nigerian state and the economy thus created a demand for knowledge and skills, which, at that point, was mainly fulfilled through Western education. But the drop in oil prices between 1976 and 1979 and again in the early 1980s brought about a severe economic downturn that was accompanied by political repression. The dramatic decline of the country was also attributed to the austerity measures of the SAP and the contraction of the labour market, which led to a 'rolling back of the state' and an unprecedented economic crisis in the region (Mohan 2000). In spite of the purge of positions in the civil service and other branches of government, many young Nigerians today still aspire to obtain jobs that offer similar social status and security, in terms of salary

²⁵ The term 'waithood' was first coined by Singerman (2007) based on her research in the Middle East.

and pensions. This expectation of reproducing a middle-class status through civil service employment is strongly reinforced by the parents' generations.

The conditionalities of the SAP also required the state to reduce expenditure in the sector of education, which led to lower provisions for students and staff, as well as less investment in the infrastructure, equipment and learning materials. From 1986 onwards, teachers at primary, secondary and tertiary level have engaged in extensive industrial action to push for improved working conditions (Adejumobi 2000: 212). Although students generally are sympathetic to the grievances of the university employees, the lengthy strikes prolong their studies and delay their graduation dates indefinitely. Even though education facilities in Nigeria used to be renowned in the past, chronic under-funding and delay in the expansion of education institutions means that the state is failing to educate a large proportion of its youth. The gross enrolment ratio²⁶ at secondary-school level in Nigeria was 44 per cent in 2010, and thus 4 percentage points higher than the Sub-Saharan average, but this figure is 21 percentage points below the global average (Unesco 2016). Furthermore, secondary schools and universities are blamed for not transmitting adequate transferable skills that can be used for innovation and entrepreneurship – instead the curricula still focus on skills for wage-paying formal jobs, which have become scarce.²⁷ Nonetheless, university education remains highly coveted, and therefore more private and even fake universities are opening in Nigeria (also see Chapter 5). An alternative for young people is to join Quran schools or the multitude of newly-established Pentecostal churches to access education and training (Osaghae 1999). Others opt to become apprentices in the hope of eventually receiving a wage or taking over the business, but the conditions of these arrangements are not always clearly spelled out and can become exploitative.²⁸

Macro-economic mismanagement, social exclusion and political marginalisation have contributed to rising levels of poverty and income inequalities. Traditionally social structures in West Africa have been rooted in systems of reciprocity associated with kinship and clientelism. Even though both the prosperous and the poor sometimes feel frustrated

²⁶ The gross enrolment ratio refers to the number of enrolments at this level as a percentage of the total population of that cohort.

²⁷ The wealthy Nigerian businessman Aliko Dangote announced in 2012 that he had advertised 100 training positions for truck drivers in his business and received 13,000 applications, including from six PhD holders, as well as 704 applicants with postgraduate and 8,460 with undergraduate degrees. In the national press and online media this was interpreted as an indication of the level of desperation amongst highly-educated young Nigerians, who remained unemployed. See: Abayomi, A. (2012) PhD holders as truck drivers: Fallout of government's unseriousness? *Vanguard*, 5 November.

²⁸ Amongst my informants three complained that their families had placed them in businesses as apprentices to learn a trade, where they received a very low salary and hardly any food. Eventually they ran away and tried to find a different job. Several others said that the death of their parents meant that they lacked 'connections' to arrange a university place or an apprenticeship.

by the burdens and obligations of kinship and patron-clientelism, at least these social bonds used to ensure a degree of redistribution of resources (Smith 2001). But the fast growth of the oil sector in the 1970s led to the development of a 'rentier-state' – meaning that the governing elites grew disinterested in the needs of the citizens and instead became primarily concerned with seeking rent and royalties from multi-national oil corporations. During the years of successive military and civilian regimes, government officials plundered and mismanaged the state's revenue (Falola and Heaton 2008: 183). Even after the transition to democracy in 1999, these dynamics of large-scale corruption continued amongst politicians, bureaucrats and business elites. Although Nigerians are not necessarily surprised that public funds are being squandered, they no longer are as complacent about these actions given that looted money is now largely invested abroad. The general population therefore no longer trusts that public funds will reach poorer people in Nigeria (Falola and Heaton 2008).²⁹ One example of how this corruption was challenged at the local level was through the formation of 'area boys'. The Bakassi Boys were youth vigilante groups that came together to fight crime that the police were not dealing with, but later many of these vigilante groups were politically captured for power struggles between the federal and state governments (Meagher 2007; Smith 2004).

The level of peacetime violence and political unrest in Nigeria is considerably higher than in other African countries. Environmental factors such as land degradation and pollution due to oil exploitation have been vehemently opposed by the affected local communities since the 1990s. Several identity-based social movements were founded, some of which later became formally organised into ethnic militant groups (Gore and Pratten 2003: 212). This included the Ogoni people, and later the Ijaw Egbesu youth in the Niger Delta who tried to regain control over their land and stop further environmental degradation due to oil exploitation. More recently, numerous intercommunal and ethno-religious conflicts in different parts of the country have displaced thousands of Nigerians over the last decade. At the end of 2016, an estimated 1,822,541 Nigerians were internally displaced; some lived in host communities while others stayed in camps (UNHCR 2016). Especially the young and unemployed are said to be at risk of recruitment by Islamist insurgents Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria.

²⁹ In May 2016 the then British Prime Minister, David Cameron, was overheard saying that some 'fantastically corrupt' states like Nigeria and Afghanistan were sending government representatives to attend the global anti-corruption summit in London. The response from the Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari was not to deny this fact, but rather to ask the British government for support in returning the stolen assets, which had been invested in the UK, back to Nigeria. See: BBC (2016) David Cameron calls Nigeria and Afghanistan 'fantastically corrupt'. *BBC News*, 10 May.

The ultimate exit strategy from the state is migration. To put things into perspective it is important to note that the overwhelming majority of Nigerians who have motivations to emigrate do not realise their migration projects. Despite their willingness to move, most aspirant migrants find it impossible to overcome the barriers created by the increasingly restrictive policies implemented by both Nigeria and European destination countries, and they thus experience 'involuntary immobility' (Carling 2002: 5; de Haas 2007b).

4.2.2 Characteristics and dispersion of Nigerian migrants

This section now turns to the analysis of Nigerians living abroad by considering the scale of migration, as well as the geographical distribution and new migration patterns. Nigeria's National Migration Policy, which was adopted in 2015, for the first time defines the nation's diaspora as:

[...] people of Nigerian nationality and/or descent who have migrated to or were born and live in other countries, who share a common identity and sense of belonging (FEC 2015)

Previously there was no consensus in Nigeria about how to delimit the diaspora and this partly explains the widely diverging figures being cited for the diaspora population. Another issue is that statistical sources still use varying definitions and some data are based on estimates, thus the following findings need to be interpreted with caution. Unfortunately, it is difficult to remedy this situation, because there is a general lack of reliable or even approximate statistical data on Nigerian migration. Until recently the authorities in Nigeria did not record or estimate emigration, and the Nigerian state showed a fairly low interest in the matter (Binaisa 2013; de Haas 2007a). Furthermore, migration rates are likely to be inaccurate because the results of population censuses in Nigeria are highly contested (see Table 4.1 in section 4.2.2). This has to do with problems during the data collection phase³⁰ and elites disputing results because seats in parliament and ethno-regional resource allocation are linked to census figures (Suberu 2001). Statistical data from destination countries is also incomplete, given that most sources do not include naturalised, second-generation or undocumented migrants in immigrant statistics.

³⁰ Communities living in remote or inaccessible areas are often not included in the census exercise. Furthermore, inaccuracies arise from the phenomenon of 'census migration', which sees individuals relocating from their usual place of residence to their ethno-regional home community during the census enumeration period. These strategic relocations are an attempt to enhance the demographic weight and political power of certain ethnic-regional groups (Suberu 2001)

Therefore, the following sources provide an overview of the Nigerian *emigrant* population, and do not reflect the total Nigerian *diaspora*, as defined in the Nigerian Migration Policy issued in 2015. Based on the 2000 census round, the *Global Migrant Origin Database* puts the stock of Nigerian emigrants at 1,041,284, whereas the *Global Bilateral Migration Database* indicates that there were 659,212 Nigerians living abroad in 2000. Meanwhile in 2007, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Joy Ogwu, estimated the Nigerian diaspora encompassed 20 million, a figure that has also been cited by many other Nigerian politicians (Adepoju and van der Wiel 2010: 117). The latter certainly is an inflated number that lacks empirical underpinning. Nevertheless, Adepoju and van der Wiel (2010) assert that the aforementioned estimates under-represent the true size of the Nigerian diaspora. This is mainly due to the fact that current datasets do not adequately capture the actual level of intra-continental migration of Nigerians. A recent research report published by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (2007) estimates migration within Africa to be seven times higher than inter-continental migration, the authors argue that a more realistic estimate of the Nigerian diaspora for 2005 is 4 million. This figure is also closer to the estimate of 5 million put forward by Hernández-Coss and Bun (2007) and Orozco and Mills (2007).

It is also relevant to consider the geographic distribution of the Nigerian diaspora. I already discussed the likely under-representation of the Nigerian diaspora in existing statistical sources. Table 4.2 suggests that in 2015 around a third (34 per cent) of Nigerian emigrants resided in other African countries – most of them living in neighbouring countries within the region such as Cameroon, Ghana, Benin, Togo, Niger and Gabon. In addition, there are also sizable Nigerian migrant communities to be found further afield in Sudan, South Africa and Northern African countries. It is important to highlight the size of this population, because African diasporans are often regarded as those who live outside of the continent, despite their significant presence *within* Africa (Bakewell 2008a; Olatuyi *et al.* 2013). Empirical research about this migrant group is scarce; notable exceptions are the studies conducted by Collyer (2007) and Kastner (2014) with Nigerian transit migrants in Morocco. Besides, Omobowale (2013) provides a detailed account of the *Tukunbo* trade networks³¹ operating between the UK, Benin and Nigeria. Moreover, Adida (2011)

³¹ As Omobowale (2013) explains, *tokunbo* is a Yoruba word, which means ‘from across the seas’. It used to refer to children that were born outside of Nigeria, usually in the USA and the UK. The term conveyed the elite status of these children. Eventually *tokunbo* was associated with desirable products that were imported from overseas and perceived to be superior to locally produced *aloku* products.

conducted an innovative comparative study about the integration of Nigerian Yorubas and Hausas, who live in Benin, Ghana and Niger.

Furthermore, Table 4.2 corroborates the importance of the USA and the UK for Nigerian migration patterns. Nigerian communities were initially able to establish themselves in these two destination countries due to favourable entry conditions. For instance, in 1995 the US visa lottery was expanded and as a result facilitated the entry of skilled and educated African applicants (Wasem 2011). The high educational attainment of Nigerians in these two destinations has also been the focus of academic research. Reynolds (2013) has engaged in extensive ethnographic research with Igbo migrants in Chicago, during which she also has explored the transmission of educational aspirations. In her comparative study with second-generation Nigerians in the USA and the UK, Imoagene (2017) found that virtually all of her respondents experienced further social mobility relative to their parents. From a destination country perspective, Nigerians represent the largest single national group amongst African migrants in the UK and the USA (Black *et al.* 2004: 17; Capps *et al.* 2012). Meanwhile, from an origin country perspective, the emigration intensity towards the UK and the USA has also rapidly increased; 23 per cent out of all Nigerian emigrants lived in these two destinations in 1990 and this figure had risen to 41 per cent by 2015 (see Table 4.2).

However, spatial diversification of migration patterns means that now there are substantial Nigerian migrant communities in other parts of the world (Flahaux and de Haas 2016). This is mirrored in the geographical broadening of research conducted with Nigerian migrants in the newly emerging destination countries, such as Italy (Campani 2000), Spain (Ahrens 2013; Kastner 2014), Germany (Ahrens *et al.* 2016; Carstensen-Egwuom 2011), Ireland (Iroh 2010; Kómoláfé 2008; Veale and Andres 2014), the Netherlands (Haagsman and Mazzucato 2014; Knibbe 2009; van Dijk 2009), France (Mai 2016), Greece (Antonopoulos *et al.* 2011), Turkey (Schapendonk 2013; Şaul 2014; Suter 2012) and China (Castillo 2014; Haugen 2012). However, Table 4.2 suggests that emigration intensity towards Europe, as a proportion of total emigration intensity has significantly increased – from 88,170 (20 per cent) in 1990 to 398,476 (36 per cent) in 2015. This is despite the fact that the growth of the Nigerian-born migrant stocks has been slowing, or even plateauing, in the European destination countries most affected by the financial crisis of 2008. I argue that this is due to a rise in onward migration of Nigerians who naturalised as European citizens, as well as a decrease in new arrivals. In the case of Spain, stocks of Nigerian-born migrants appear to have even dropped from 36,852 in 2010 to 30,995 in 2015. At the same time, other continents like North America and Asia have been hosting growing Nigerian

Table 4.2 Geographic distribution of Nigerian migrants by destination 1990-2015

Destination regions and countries	1990	2000	2010	2015
Africa	295 400	277 558	346 871	375 435
East Africa	185	178	4 265	4 637
Central Africa	127 434	119 311	99 508	100 491
Cameroon	105 140	90 495	82 748	81 676
Gabon	7 381	11 280	14 072	15 479
Others	14 913	17 536	2 688	3 336
North Africa	25 584	26 967	19 924	19 126
Sudan	23 208	24 143	16 214	14 828
Others	2 376	2 824	3 710	4 298
Southern Africa	17 634	8 404	14 625	19 397
South Africa	16 073	6 829	13 083	17 753
Others	1 561	1 575	1 542	1 644
West Africa	124 563	122 698	208 549	231 784
Ghana	14 876	16 584	57 056	67 629
Benin	19 972	24 306	38 036	44 603
Côte d'Ivoire	31 352	35 607	37 482	38 917
Togo	9 708	16 087	29 347	31 974
Niger	38 319	18 540	19 177	19 436
Others	10 336	11 574	27 451	29 225
Asia	4 768	7 457	23 678	38 803
East Asia	193	2 089	3 923	3 680
South East Asia	45	321	189	192
South Asia	1 286	790	670	646
Middle East	3 244	4 257	18 896	34 285
UAE	1 417	2 319	13 178	22 572
Kuwait	1 160	1 060	1 515	4 441
Others	667	878	4 203	7 272
Europe	88 170	163 640	370 456	398 476
Eastern Europe	1 665	2 028	3 005	3 672
Northern Europe	48 002	98 156	220 631	248 389
UK	45 984	85 449	192 508	216 268
Republic of Ireland	837	10 745	21 433	21 894
Others	1 181	1 962	6 690	10 227
Southern Europe	14 223	32 757	96 631	90 842
Italy	11 859	26 781	56 249	56 259
Spain	704	3 876	36 852	30 995
Others	1 660	2 100	3 530	3 588
Western Europe	24 280	30 699	50 189	55 573
Germany	13 230	14 877	25 736	26 623
Austria	4 673	5 872	7 254	8 485
Netherlands	1 410	3 836	6 310	7 079
Others	4 967	6 114	10 889	13 386
Latin America & the Caribbean	784	869	2 346	2 707
North America	58 379	145 334	236 514	271 841
USA	55 350	134 940	205 519	237 221
Canada	3 004	10 326	30 810	34 432
Bermuda	25	68	185	188
Oceania	0	1 820	4 690	6 382
Total	447 501	596 678	984 555	1 093 644

Source: UN Population Division 2015

migrant communities. Yet, despite the diversification of migration patterns to other world regions, linguistic affinity appears to be an important factor in shaping Nigerian migration flows. The disaggregated data suggest that 65 per cent (706,555) of Nigerian migrants resided in Anglophone destination countries in 2015 (UN Population Division 2015).³²

Even though Nigerian migrants who are living in Europe trace their ethno-regional origins to various parts of the country, there is evidence that most of them originate from the South of Nigeria. The chain migration of certain ethnic groups to particular destination countries is oftentimes a reflection of strong social networks and varied labour market opportunities. Research conducted with Nigerians in the UK shows that the majority are Yoruba and Igbos, with a smaller proportion of Edo and Ogoni and other ethnic groups (Harris 2006; Hernández-Coss and Bun 2007). Meanwhile the Igbo are likely to dominate in other parts of Europe, such as Germany and the Netherlands (Carling 2006). The Edo are the main ethnic group in Spain and Italy, where many women are victims of human trafficking (Carling 2006; Plambech 2014). By contrast, the migration of the Hausa and Fulani population of Northern Nigeria is principally orientated towards Saudi Arabia, the UAE and other Muslim-majority countries (Bakewell 2008a; de Haas 2007a). There has been a growing body of literature on the Christian religious practices of Nigerian migrants, such as the Yoruba Cherubim and Seraphim church (Harris 2006), the Igbo Catholic church (Knowles 2013), as well as several Pentecostal churches (Botticello 2007; Glick Schiller *et al.* 2006; Knibbe 2009; Maier and Coleman 2011) in the UK and other European destination countries. During my fieldwork I found that processes of self-identification, such as African, migrants, Black, Nigerian, Igbo, Christian, or in fact as German, are dependent on situation and context – thus the use of social identifiers is highly flexible (see Carstensen-Egwuom 2011).

Nevertheless, Nigerians are aware that they face considerable stigmatisation in Europe due to the negative reports in the media (Carling 2006). In many parts of Europe, the news frequently features Nigerian migrants accused of highly politicised crimes of human trafficking, drug-dealing, credit card fraud and email scams. For instance, 30 individuals were convicted in 2016 in relation to the fake national lottery letters that were sent out across various countries asking for payment of advance fees to disburse the winnings.³³ Variations of this type of scam used to be known as ‘Spanish prisoner letters’ and had been circulating around the world since the French Revolution, but due to the

³² In this case Anglophone countries are defined as those countries where English is the official language or one of the official languages.

³³ El País (2016) Condenas de hasta 11 años a 30 acusados por estafa con las cartas nigerianas. *El País*, 1 July.

widely-reported arrests of Nigerians they are now commonly referred to as *lotería nigeriana* in Spain. Amongst Nigerians these crimes are called '419 scams', in reference to the section in the Nigerian criminal code addressing fraud. Nigerians themselves appear to have internalised these exaggerated claims of criminality, as I was repeatedly told that 'Spanish prisons are full of Nigerians' (Ahrens 2013). In 2016, President Muhammadu Buhari was quoted in an interview that '[Nigerians abroad] made it difficult for Europeans and Americans to accept them because of the number of Nigerians in prisons all over the world accused of drug trafficking or human trafficking.'³⁴ But these accounts are likely to be the result of a conflation with the number of Nigerians in detention for immigration-related issues, especially given that many countries use prison buildings as detention centres. All this negative attention has tarnished the image of Nigerians and means that they are met with considerable scepticism by Europeans and other migrant groups. Nigerians have tried to actively challenge these conceptions via social media with hashtags like #NigeriansAreNotCriminals that put forward many examples of hard-working and law-abiding individuals.

Different types of networks have shaped and reinforced contemporary international migration patterns in Nigeria. These networks include Nigerian second-hand trade networks that offer opportunities for migration when import-export apprentices graduate to international buyers (Omobowale 2013). Increasingly selective immigration policies also mean that some migrants are contracting the services of specialised visa brokers to assist them with the preparation of their travel documents and access particular travel 'connections' (Alpes 2011). Other migrants pay smugglers or human traffickers to arrange their journey and take them to a destination country.³⁵ More recently, the 'internationalisation' of higher education has fostered active student recruitment in origin countries, involving either alumni or university employees who approach potential international students. Recent data show that the share of family members and dependents migrating to Europe for the purpose of family reunification is increasing.

Similar to other countries, Nigeria has experienced a feminisation of migration. The migration flows within West Africa always included substantial numbers of independent business women. In 2015 women constituted 43 per cent of the Nigerian emigrant stock in West Africa and 41 per cent in Africa as a whole (UN Population Division 2015). Over the last two decades, more women have also been migrating outside of the continent. In Europe

³⁴ BBC News (2016) 'We are not criminals' Nigerians tell their president, *BBC News*, 9 February.

³⁵ Smuggling and trafficking are distinguished one from the other by the level of deception and coercion that is exercised; an agreement that started out as smuggling can turn into trafficking (Mai 2016; Plambech 2014).

47 per cent of the resident Nigerians were women in 2015, although the gender composition differs considerably across individual destination countries (UN Population Division 2015). Phizacklea (1998: 31) pointed out that ‘sex, marriage and maids’ are the predominant themes in research about the channels that migrant women utilise to enter Europe. Yet in the case of Nigerian women, research about prostitution, as well as the women’s experiences and (self-)representations as victims of trafficking, appears to have captured most of the academic and media attention (Campani 2000; Carling 2006; Mai 2016; Plambech 2014; van Dijk 2001). There are a few studies about Nigerian women who independently migrated to Ireland as asylum-seekers, because up until 2005 *ius soli* provisions in Irish citizenship law meant that children born in Ireland were eligible for citizenship, even if their parents were migrants with an irregular status (Iroh 2010; Kómoláfé 2008; Veale and Dona 2014). More recently research has also included the gendered transnational caring arrangements of Nigerian families in Europe (Haagsman and Mazzucato 2014; Iroh 2010; Veale and Dona 2014). Suprisingly, no research has been conducted with Nigerian women in the UK, despite the fact that they have dominated migration flows since the pre-independence period (Adepoju and van der Wiel 2011: 146). Moreover, nothing is known about the experiences of women who arrived in Europe as highly-skilled migrants and students.

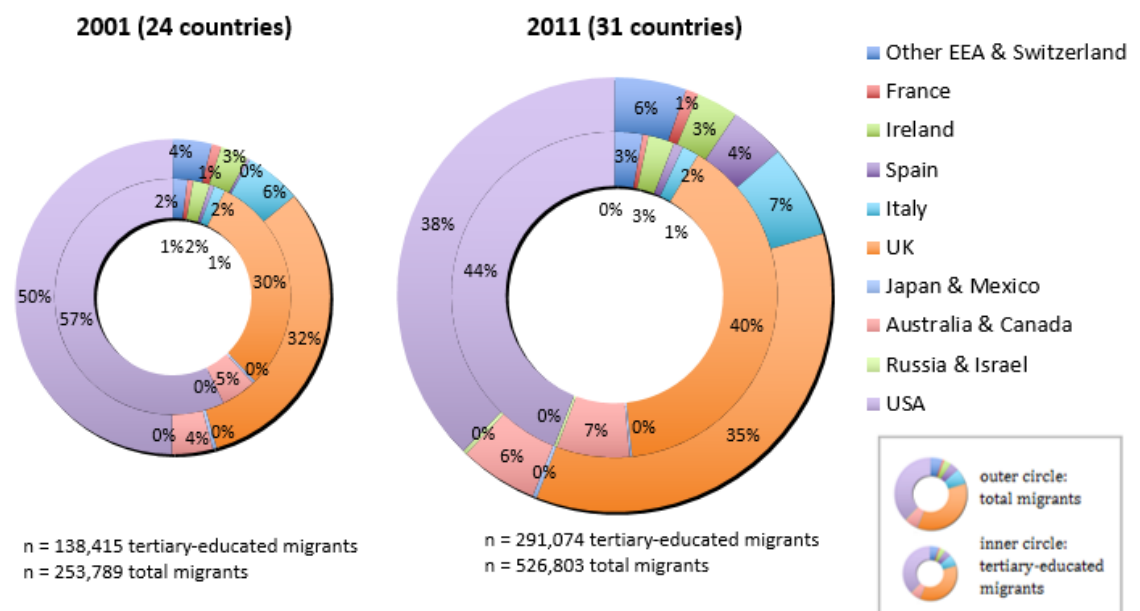


Figure 4.1 Nigerian tertiary-educated migrants (>15 years) in OECD countries

Source: Database on Immigrants in OECD countries (DIOC). Note: For 2001 'other EEA' are: Austria, Belgium, Czech Rep., Denmark, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia and Sweden. For 2011 the countries added to 'other EEA' are: Cyprus, Estonia, Iceland, Netherlands, Slovenia

In terms of the educational background of the Nigerian migrant population, Figure 4.1 presents an overview of the proportions of tertiary-educated Nigerians in selected OECD countries. In 2000, half of the Nigerian migrants (50 per cent) living in OECD countries were residing in the USA and this group comprised a disproportionately high share (57 per cent) of Nigerian highly-skilled emigrants. In comparison, the UK attracted 30 per cent of Nigerian highly-skilled migrants and Canada and Australia together hosted 5 per cent. In 2001, only 8 per cent of tertiary-educated migrants from Nigeria chose the other EEA countries or Switzerland as their destination (Figure 4.1). From these figures alone, it is not possible to ascertain the country of training, seeing that highly-skilled migrants may have attended universities in the destination countries. Yet, a study that controlled for the ‘age of entry’ of highly-skilled migrants in 2001 suggested that virtually all highly-skilled Nigerian migrants obtained their tertiary degree in Nigeria (Beine *et al.* 2007). Furthermore, other research found that the emigration rate of low-skilled Nigerians towards OECD countries ‘was extremely low’, also suggesting that Sub-Saharan migrants are particularly positively selected on skills (Docquier *et al.* 2009). Figure 4.1 illustrates that by 2011 Europe hosted the majority (56 per cent) of Nigerian working-age migrants in the OECD, including 48 per cent of the tertiary-educated Nigerian migrants. The UK witnessed the biggest percentage increase of highly-skilled Nigerian migrants between 2001 and 2011. This was presumably driven by the UK’s ‘selective openness’ to immigration since 1997, which included a dedicated highly-skilled visa programme between 2002 and 2010. However, since 2010 most other highly-skilled visa categories introduced as part of the 2008 points-based system have been restricted, causing a ‘balloon effect’ in the number of student visas and visitor visas issued.³⁶

Forced migration has been a major component of the international migration of Nigerians. At the end of 2016 there were 191,529 Nigerian refugees being hosted in neighbouring African countries (UNHCR 2016). According to UNHCR estimates, the US, the UK, Germany and Canada received 45,396 Nigerian resettlement refugees between 1996-2005 (Mberu and Pongou 2010). As the brutality of the dictatorships and militarisation of civilian life intensified in the 1990s, Nigerian migration towards Europe started to encompass more refugees and asylum-seekers. Due to the limited migration channels available to them, these groups were often exposed to greater risks of exploitation and abuse. Surges in asylum applications in Europe over the past decades have coincided with outbreaks of political violence in Nigeria (Figure 4.2). This is also substantiated by the

³⁶ Consterdine, E. (2015) How the coalition effectively scrapped points-based immigration, Politics.co.uk, 25 March.

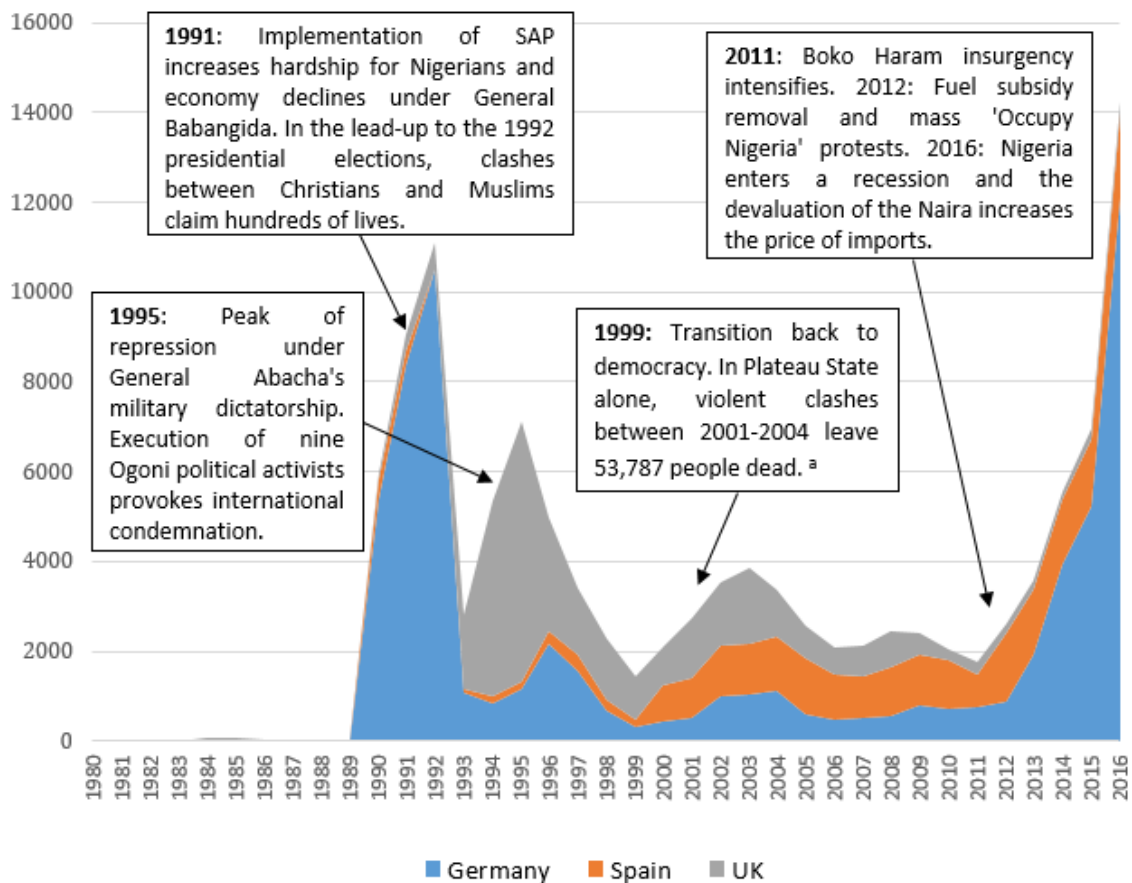


Figure 4.2 First-time asylum applications by Nigerian nationals

Sources: OECD 1980-1999, BAMF 1991-2014 and UNHCR 2000-2016

Note: ^a BBC News (2004) Nigerian clashes: '50,000 killed', BBC News, 7 October.

comprehensive *Armed Conflict Location and Event Data* (ACLED) Project dataset (1997-2015) that shows increases in conflict fatalities in the years 2004, 2010 and between 2012-2015 (Dowd 2013; Raleigh *et al.* 2010). Nigerians initially applied for asylum in the UK then also in Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Austria, France, and later Italy – in 2004 Nigerians were the fifth-largest group to seek asylum in Europe (Carling 2006). Nevertheless, the acceptance rates of asylum applications filed by Nigerian nationals in general have remained low. This is because destination countries often take the view that there are other regions within Nigeria that refugees could relocate to in order to escape the violence (Carling 2006: 39). Nigerians still try to seek asylum because even rejected asylum-seekers are not always deported. It is very likely that a large number of Nigerians stayed in Europe and gained legal status by other means.

Modern mass media, and most notably the advent of the internet and social media, have raised people's awareness of the opportunities in other countries, which in turn has

also raised their aspirations (de Haas 2012). The visibility of remittance-financed goods and houses in Nigeria also serves as a powerful advertisement for the lifestyle that migration can provide (Hernández-Coss and Bun 2007; Osili 2007). With US\$20.77 billion in 2015, Nigeria is amongst the top-five remittance receiving countries in the world (World Bank 2016). Included in these flows are collective remittances sent via home-town associations and other migrant associations (Lampert 2009). Remittance flows to Nigeria alone account for two-thirds of total remittance inflows to Sub-Saharan Africa. However, official reports on remittances do not capture remittances that are sent through informal channels, nor do they record *reverse remittances* that migrants receive from family members in the origin countries (Mazzucato 2009). Policy-makers and academics focusing on the *migration-development nexus*, have generally celebrated the global rise in remittances³⁷ as one of the positive effects of migration and a potential tool for alleviating poverty in migrant origin countries. However, this enthusiasm has worn off in recent years, as there is a growing realisation that migration can also 'reinforce pre-existing inequalities by mainly serving the material interests of the already well-off and by maintaining the (often authoritarian) political status quo' (de Haas 2012).

The current-day situation in Nigeria continues to influence Nigerian diasporans even if they live far away from their origin country. Those who have family members and other kin in Nigeria often remain in close contact. Despite supposed strong economic growth between 2000 and 2015, only a rapidly shrinking segment of Nigerian society is benefitting. Overall Nigeria still is classified as a low-income country; 54.7 per cent of the population lived in absolute poverty in 2004, which increased to 60.9 per cent in 2010.³⁸ At the same time subjective poverty, based on respondents' self-assessment, stood at 75.5 per cent in 2004 and reached 93.9 per cent in 2010 (NBS 2010). Since then socio-economic conditions have worsened even further. In 2012, massive flooding destroyed 600,000 homes and displaced more than 2.1 million people throughout the country. Responses by the state to these sudden losses of livelihood have largely been considered inadequate and thus resulted in further tensions in communities hosting internally displaced people. In 2012 the protest movement 'Occupy Nigeria' mobilised thousands on the streets of major Nigerian cities and further protests were organised at embassies in destination countries in response to the removal of the fuel subsidy by the administration of President Goodluck

³⁷ The global rise in remittance was partly attributable to more accurate ways of tracking and recording remittances, as well as the formalisation of informal remittance channels.

³⁸ These are the most recent available data regarding poverty levels.

Jonathan.³⁹ Given the lack of steady electricity supply in Nigeria, the removal of the fuel subsidy had an enormous impact on the price of other goods and services. Furthermore, Nigerians were aggrieved because they had come to perceive the fuel subsidy as the only tangible benefit they still received from the state. By 2016 inflation reached an 11-year high and the Nigerian economy entered a recession, thus making the cost of everyday items unaffordable and further threatening livelihoods.

4.3 Summary

In the first two sections of this chapter, I have illustrated the main patterns in Nigerian migration in the pre-colonial, colonial and post-independence periods. We were able to see that Nigerian migration is multi-faceted in many respects and was influenced by global and local social transformations. Over time, it has involved various destination countries and different migrant types, and since the 1990s Nigerian migration has intensified and become more dynamic. Moreover, I have identified a recent post-colonial migration pattern that so far has not been addressed in the academic literature. Europe is becoming an increasingly popular migration destination, seeing that here the Nigerian migrant population has been growing more rapidly than in other destinations over the last decade. I also suggested that contemporary African migration is defined by growing complexity; it now involves more labour migrants, students, family movers and onward migrants (Plaza *et al.* 2011; Schoumakers *et al.* 2015). Similarly, I argue that it is becoming more common for migrants to experience several shifts between legal status and migrant type. Yet research about international migrants often ‘fixes’ their experience to one particular destination country or migrant type and therefore does not capture how migrants cross various boundaries – not just geographical, but also legal, social and discursive (Castles 2002). These are discussions that I will return to in Chapter 7, where I address this phenomenon of multi-sited transnational practices of onward migrants.

The last two sections of this chapter addressed the emigration context and the key features of the Nigerian diaspora. Given that most of my informants left Nigeria in the 1990s

³⁹ The mass protests of ‘Occupy Nigeria’ followed, and were also inspired by other youth uprisings that erupted in 2011 across many other countries like Mozambique, Senegal, Tunisia, Portugal, Spain, Chile, the USA and the UK (Honwana 2012). While the movements formed as a result of particular local events and conditions, the grievances the young people expressed typically included unemployment, corrupt governments, socio-economic marginalisation and unsound economic policies. Across North Africa and the Middle East these youth-led movements also played an important role in the revolutions of the so-called ‘Arab Spring’.

and 2000s, I provided some background on this particular emigration context. I suggested that the austerity measures of the SAP in Nigeria brought about profound changes in the country and that the declining socio-economic conditions meant that young Nigerians experienced prolonged 'waithood'. As a result, international migration has become an appealing prospect for many young Nigerians, for whom leaving their country signifies not only a symbolic 'rite of passage' but also the opportunity to attain material markers of social adulthood. I will pick up again on these themes in Chapter 6, where I discuss how aspirations and capabilities influence international (onward) migration. Finally, in the section about the Nigerian diaspora I analysed statistical data concerning the Nigerian migration stocks and flows. Furthermore, I discussed some of the main characteristics that define the Nigerian migrant communities, namely their educational profile, the gender balance, forced migration, stigmatisation and migration networks.

Chapter 5

Policies and Statistics on African Migration and Onward Migration

5.1 European policies concerning African migration

Today an estimated 15 million people of African descent live in Europe (Nwabuzo 2015). Changing immigration policies were one of the many factors that shaped the timings and patterns of African migrations towards Europe. Due to the different history and national priorities of the EU member states, it has been difficult to realise a common European migration policy. Overall the EU's migration governance remains strongly defined by individual states, which in turn has contributed to the countries' distinctive migration profiles. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to provide a detailed account of all European immigration policy initiatives and funding instruments, therefore the focus will be on recent initiatives that are relevant to African migrations. Before 1962, for instance, Nigerians were able to travel visa-free to the UK and many other European destinations, but with time, complex policies have been put in place to restrict migration flows. When EU member states agreed to weaken border controls at their national frontiers, this occurred alongside a simultaneous creation of new bordering practices. The EU's immigration control is moving 'upwards' to intergovernmental bodies, 'downward' to localities and 'outward' to non-state actors (Guiraudon and Lahav 2000: 176). It is also being 'externalised' to other countries (Carrera 2007). While some policies are directed towards ever-tighter border controls, another approach has been to address the presumed 'root causes' of migration – such as poverty and unrest in the origin countries – with the aim of removing the need for people to migrate, even though there is little evidence that this approach works in practice (Bakewell 2008b). The following sections summarise the two ideational frames that characterise both the proposals for a common EU approach to migration and the initiatives of individual member states, namely the *migration-security nexus* (Huysmans 2006) and the emergence of the *migration-development nexus* (Sørensen *et al.* 2002). Overall, these policies have not stopped African migrants from coming to Europe, but they have made international migration an increasingly selective, costly and at times dangerous process. I show how EU policies have an impact on migrants at different stages of their migration

project. Onward migration forms part of more diverse and complex migration trajectories, not just towards, but also within and beyond Europe.

5.1.1 Securitisation and networks of immigration control

In post-war North-Western Europe, migrant workers were actively recruited as a 'solution' for reconstruction and industrial expansion. But after the 1973 'oil crisis' and subsequent recession, immigration started to be viewed as a 'problem' that needed to be addressed with appropriate policies (Hollifield 2004: 10). Nonetheless, socio-political pressure to restrict immigration contrasted starkly with the socio-economic realities. Demand for migrant workers soon exceeded the number that were able to enter via the more limited legal modes for migration. As a result, more migrants opted to travel as tourists with the intention of 'overstaying' their visa or used other modes of irregular entry. These factors also drove the remarkable 'migration turnaround' of Southern Europe – a region that between the 1950s and 1970s had been characterised by mass emigration and from the 1990s onwards became a region of mass immigration. Migrant workers, especially those with an irregular status, often do the '3D jobs' (dirty, dangerous and demeaning) that are also precarious and badly paid. It is common knowledge amongst industry leaders and governments that migrant workers are illegally employed in sectors like construction, agriculture and services, but little is done to remedy the situation. Castles and Davidson (2000: 73) assert that the resulting inconsistency in state policy is in fact intentional, because 'illegal' migration 'is often tacitly permitted or even encouraged, just because illegals lack rights and are easy to exploit'.

In 2002, the Council adopted a 'comprehensive plan to combat illegal migration and human trafficking in the European Union' (Council of the European Union 2002) and since then significant investments have been made in this area. Although the securitisation of immigration and the association of immigration with terrorism date back a lot further than the September 11th terrorist attacks on the United States, the adoption of measures for security-driven border control has gathered pace since these events (Bigo 2016). These measures are adopted even though there appears to be no direct evidence of a connection between migration and terrorism. But without doubt, this has contributed to the perception that the *migration* of third-country nationals is 'suspicious' and 'undesirable', while the *mobility* of EU citizens and highly-skilled migrants has been promoted. The importance of 'free movement' of goods, capital, and services in what now constitutes the EU was enshrined in the Treaty of Rome from the very beginning. The freedom of movement – the

so-called ‘fourth freedom’ – for workers was progressively extended to all EU citizens and now also includes non-workers, i.e. students, pensioners and unemployed.

Since then, further complex legal status categories have been created. Migrants who do not have the citizenship of their destination country have been subjected to a process of ‘civic stratification’ that accords different amounts of rights to different migrant categories (Kofman 2002; Morris 2002). When the Schengen Agreement came into force in 1995, member states agreed to remove border controls from fixed positions along the internal borderlines of the EU member states. Although some member states have reinstated national border checks and installed new razor-wired fences since the refugee ‘crisis’ in 2015,⁴⁰ on the whole the policing of national borders within the EU has decreased. Instead, there has been a significant increase in sub-national and cross-national bordering practices. Amongst other things, these control measures include police cooperation; sharing of (digital) information; common visa requirements and gradual harmonisation of the EU migration and asylum policy.

There now also are *smart borders* that digitally monitor migrants at various stages of their migration trajectory (Broeders 2007; Walters 2006). The Schengen Information System (SIS) is used to store information about individuals or objects (mainly lost or stolen ‘identity papers’).⁴¹ Information requests can be submitted to the system and are used as a basis to refuse migrants’ entrance at the border, as well as apprehend individuals who are already present in the EU’s territory. Additionally, the Eurodac central database linked with the Dublin II regulation became operational in 2003 and contains the fingerprints of all asylum applicants over the age of 14. Gradually the Eurodac has been extended to also include information about irregular migrants (Broeders 2007).

Other initiatives aim to decrease the number of irregular migrants arriving in Europe by stopping migration further ‘upstream’. In 2001, EU member states drew up a ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ list that is used as a criterion for visa applications, but there is no publicly available information as to how countries are assigned these markers (van Houtum 2010: 964). Nigerians nowadays have a relatively ‘weak passport’ that only provides visa-free or visa upon arrival access to 44 countries (Czaika and Hobolth 2016).⁴² In general,

⁴⁰ The term refugee ‘crisis’ is placed in inverted commas to draw attention to the uncritical nature in which the term is used in public discourse, often disregarding the policy dynamics preceding the situation and the measures used to address it. (see Crawley 2016; Crawley *et al.* 2016).

⁴¹ The UK, which is not part of Schengen, decided to opt-in to SIS (Broeders 2007).

⁴² According to the website www.passportindex.org, in 2016 Swedish and German passports provided the greatest ease of international travel by facilitating visa-free or visa upon arrival access to 158 countries. Spanish and British passport holders do not require a pre-departure visa in 157

Table 5.1 Visa refusal rates for Nigerian applicants by destination (in %)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Average	Visa issued
Finland	20	29	51	68	69	79	72	68	52	42	55	3,938
Poland	:	:	51	46	61	:	55	59	45	33	50	3,973
Portugal	47	26	48	32	:	:	:	64	88	43	50	2,351
Greece	25	37	:	64	68	60	54	37	41	33	47	10,216
Slovakia	:	:	4	43	47	27	76	84	43	43	46	935
Iceland	:	:	59	48	54	40	:	38	34	38	44	:
Norway	:	41	59	48	54	40	:	38	34	38	44	4,145
Bulgaria	:	:	:	41	39	45	48	37	49	:	43	839
Hungary	:	31	54	49	60	51	22	29	:	:	42	4,603
Denmark	:	:	50	46	40	65	27	36	29	28	40	:
Czech Rep.	:	1	1	48	55	57	45	42	52	51	39	10,947
Luxembourg	:	:	38	39	36	44	33	37	38	43	39	:
UK	31	40	46	50	44	41	38	30	26	33	38	1,056,376
Belgium	18	42	38	39	36	44	33	37	38	43	37	23,009
Sweden	:	37	50	46	40	37	27	36	29	28	37	13,163
Lithuania	:	:	:	:	:	51	22	29	:	43	36	:
Estonia	:	:	:	:	:	:	38	29	28	43	35	:
Cyprus	:	:	50	11	21	:	49	:	:	:	33	503
Germany	:	22	21	19	20	21	31	36	48	36	28	143,775
Spain	1	1	25	32	27	34	34	19	50	43	27	31,451
Italy	63	65	13	20	11	10	17	16	20	21	26	69,183
Netherlands	38	16	12	13	17	34	38	29	28	26	25	74,863
Romania	:	:	:	:	21	15	25	39	29	10	23	2,197
Austria	:	:	2	14	:	:	43	14	37	27	23	5,872
France	1	10	14	14	17	9	33	31	30	34	19	193,211
Malta	:	:	:	:	:	10	17	16	20	21	17	:
Switzerland	:	:	:	:	:	:	14	1	8	11	9	12,305
Average	27	28	34	38	40	39	37	36	37	34	35	
USA	:	:	:	54	32	36	37	36	37	34	38	

Source: The European Visa Database (Hobolth 2012)

Note: Cells with black borders indicate years when country was not part of the Schengen area

aspirant migrants wanting to apply for a Schengen short-term visa have to present in person at a consular office abroad, and provide evidence of income and substantial ties to their origin countries, in order to demonstrate that they will return.

Recent research on *visa barriers* suggests that the international travel for African nationals is particularly restricted; destination countries are introducing more arduous visa application procedures (Flahaux and de Haas 2016). Figure 5.1 illustrates that the visa

countries respectively. By contrast, the Nigerian passport only permits visa-free or visa on arrival access to 44 of countries. This includes the rights of free movement, residence and establishment of business within ECOWAS member states introduced for its citizens in 2014. Furthermore, the African Union has called for visa-free travel for all Africans in Africa by 2018.

refusal rates for Nigerians vary tremendously across European destination countries, and at times they also change dramatically from one year to another (Hobolth 2012). The green shading indicates a low visa refusal rate and the red colour a high visa refusal rate. While some destination countries create 'closures' of certain migration channels by rejecting more visa applications, at the same time other countries generate 'openings'. This means that the outcome of visa applications and the chances of reaching a particular destination are extremely unpredictable. But ultimately it is not in the economic and political interest of destination countries to completely stop travel and migration opportunities.⁴³

In addition, *carrier sanctions* were introduced into the Schengen Implementation Convention and subsequently have also been adopted into member states' legislation (Guiraudon 2006). This means airlines and other private carriers that bring individuals who lack appropriate travel documentation to a destination country are either fined or required to pay for the return journey (Bigo and Guild 2005). Moreover, since the mid-1990s EU member states have stationed *immigration liaison officers* in origin countries. However, in the case of Nigeria, it is not clear how many European border officers have been stationed there in order to assist and train local immigration officers.⁴⁴ In addition, several destination countries now conduct pre-departure biometrical screening and since 2008 Nigeria is amongst the countries issuing her citizens with e-passports that are more difficult to falsify. It is important to note that recently, there has been a significant increase in the recorded number of Nigerians who were refused departure at various departure points in the country. In 2012 and 2013, a total of 79,483 and 106,739 Nigerians respectively were stopped from travelling abroad (Isiugo-Abanihe and IOM 2016). By contrast, in 2011 only 4,808 Nigerians were refused departure.⁴⁵ This intensifying *emigration control* in Nigeria, together with the EU member states' unwillingness to make existing legal migration channels work, is likely to have contributed to a rise in irregular migration (Czaika and Hobolth 2016; Düvell 2011).

Furthermore, a growing number of actors is being drawn into the complex internal 'network of immigration control' that now carries out the functions that used to be exclusively performed by immigration officers (Bigo and Guild 2005). Public sector workers

⁴³ The over 1 million visas issued to Nigerian nationals to travel to the UK between 2003-2012, will have certainly contributed in making Nigerians the fourth largest foreign spenders in 2011. Harrods department store in London advertised in Hausa language on the shopfloors during 2011. See: Elbagir, N. (2013) Hey, big spender: Nigerians shop 'til they drop in London. *CNN News*, 11 January.

⁴⁴ I could only find evidence that Austrian immigration liaison officers have carried out missions at Lagos airport since 2003 (Jandl 2008: 33).

⁴⁵ These Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) data concerning 'refused departures' is not made publicly available.

and private individuals in destination countries are progressively being tasked with excluding irregular migrants from main institutions, such as the formal labour market, state education, the housing market, health insurance and social security benefits. In the UK, since 2009 British universities are required to report international students that 'miss 10 lectures' to the Home Office and since 2010 the Home Office has been using National Health Service (NHS) patient records to track down irregular migrants. In 2013, the then Home Secretary, Theresa May, announced plans to create a 'hostile environment' in Britain for 'illegal migrants'.⁴⁶ Several proposed measures have now come into force under the Immigration Act 2016, which, amongst other things, has resulted in private landlords facing criminal charges if they rent out properties to irregular migrants. These new bordering practices represent another shift in immigration control. Illustrations 5.1 shows the *Invisible Borders* exhibition I visited at Bielefeld University. Every red line represents a different administrative 'route', as well as several borders, turning points and procedures that migrants face in Germany.



Illustrations 5.1 *Invisible Borders* exhibition at Bielefeld University

Similarly, in Spain a whole host of measures introduced after the 2008 financial crises had a negative impact on migrant communities, although some of the measures were subsequently reverted or withdrawn due to public opposition (Ahrens 2013). Racial profiling in police work had been an on-going issue for migrants, as Spanish police forces illegally targeted People of Colour in public spaces and checked their residence permits. A document leaked to the press revealed that in 2008 certain police stations in Madrid were

⁴⁶ Travis, A. (2013) Immigration bill: Theresa May defends plans to create 'hostile environment', *The Guardian*, 10 October.

given weekly quotas for the number of irregular migrants they had to detain (Amnesty International 2011). In addition, the withdrawal of universal healthcare came into force in September 2012, which meant that irregular migrants no longer had access to basic healthcare – only children, pregnant women and people in need of emergency assistance continued to be eligible. Many health practitioners conscientiously objected to this law and the autonomous regions resisted enacting it; as a result, universal healthcare was informally reinstated in 2015, but not guaranteed by law.

Despite the overall political rhetoric that is aimed at ‘fighting irregular migration’, Frontex statistics indicate that the interceptions of irregular migrants at the EU’s external borders remain high and the EU’s policy documents also acknowledge an estimated ‘stock’ of 3 million irregular migrants. There have been continuous attempts to speed up the removal of detained migrants and failed asylum seekers from the EU’s territory, through deportations and assisted voluntary returns programmes. To this end, several member states have signed bilateral agreements with various countries of origin. Nigeria is signatory to several bilateral ‘migration deals’ concerning readmission with the governments of Italy (2000), Spain (2001) and Switzerland (2009) (Adepujo *et al.* 2010; IOM 2010: 84-85).⁴⁷

No such migration deals were signed between Nigeria and Germany, nor between Nigeria and the UK. However, since 2006 German authorities have been working with Nigerian embassy officials to conduct ‘mobile hearings’, which means they travel between regions to identify groups of ‘stateless’ failed asylum seekers and irregular migrants (Atsenuwa and Adepoju 2010: 32). There are no formal criteria as to how nationality should be confirmed. It is alleged that since 2006 Nigerian embassy officials in Germany received a €500 cash payment for every identification and issuance of an ‘emergency travel certificate’ for deportation. After several years of campaigning by Nigerian activists and the occupation of the Nigerian embassy in Berlin, this practice was halted in 2012, because several African migrants were wrongly identified as Nigerian and deported.⁴⁸ Regarding the UK, a non-published Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) concerning migrant removals was signed with the government of Nigeria in 2016, updating a bilateral agreement from 2005.⁴⁹ A 2016

⁴⁷ In general, my informants appeared to be unaware of these bilateral and multilateral agreements concerning migrant returns and deportations that the Nigerian government had signed. In Germany, two key informants attributed the increase in deportations of Nigerians to corrupt embassy staff, who were paid by the German government for issuing travel documents. Meanwhile in Spain, several informants mentioned that they believed Barack Obama’s presidency had a positive influence on policing practices in Spain.

⁴⁸ Mützel, D. (2016) Der Pass wird passend gemacht. *der Freitag*. 26 January.

⁴⁹ Nigerian Ministry of Interior (2016) Nigeria/UK sign MoU on the return of migrants. *Press Release*. Abuja: Ministry of Interior.

Freedom of Information request revealed that £70 is paid to the Nigerian embassy for each 'emergency travel certificate' issued. However, deportations are costly and have often resulted in arbitrary treatment and the violation of human rights. Therefore, member states have also started offering assisted voluntary return programmes implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Nevertheless, the 'voluntary' nature of these returns can be disputed, given that the only other option provided to migrants in this situation is deportation or destitution. An unofficial third option for irregular migrants is to go to another member state, seeing that deportation orders usually state they should leave the national territory, but do not actually require them to leave Europe.

5.1.2 *The EU's 'externalisation' of migration control*

Within the field of EU external migration policy, a vast number of funding instruments is directed towards migration-related projects in third countries. Since 2005 the overarching framework of the EU's external migration and asylum policy is based on the '*Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM)*', which was re-worked in 2011 (EC 2011a). This agenda for migration management relies on four main principles: fostering well-managed mobility; preventing irregular migration and tackling human trafficking; maximising the development impact of migration and mobility; and the promotion of international protection. With the introduction of the 2015 *European Agenda on Migration* (EC 2015) and the 2016 *Partnership Framework* (EC 2016), it is not clear if these instruments will replace the GAMM as overarching frameworks. From an overview of the funding decisions there is strong evidence, however, that 'security and irregular migration have been deemed the highest priority' and that there is 'a strong geographical focus on countries in the southern Mediterranean and sub-Saharan Africa' (den Hertog 2016: 1).

The GAMM builds on the concentric circles model that was introduced in 1998 with the Vienna Action Plan, which set out the securitised line of policymaking on matters of asylum and immigration (Lavenex 2011). In relation to African migration this approach takes the shape of an inner circle (the Schengen area), the second circle (the Mediterranean countries), the third circle (the EU's neighbourhood regions) and the outer circle (the countries beyond the neighbouring region). Thus, the EU and member state initiatives aim to manage migration at various geographical scales. The external borders of the EU have been reinforced with fences, and more intensive land and maritime patrols. Nearly all of

these activities are coordinated by the border agency Frontex.⁵⁰ Since 2010 virtually all irregular Mediterranean maritime crossings of small *pateras* and *zodiacs* are said to have been intercepted (Andersson 2014: 86). In response to the refugee 'crisis' in the Mediterranean, the most recent Commission communication, *A European Agenda on Migration* (EC 2015), exemplifies a renewed focus on securitisation. This is to be achieved through a three-fold increase of the budget for Frontex; measures to reduce irregular migration, the targeting of smuggling networks; and commitment to stronger common asylum policy and promotion of legal migration (King and Lulle 2016: 119).

In addition, the EU's migration control has been 'externalised' or outsourced to countries of transit and origin (Carrera 2007). The *European Neighbourhood Programme (ENP)* (with a budget of €15.4 billion for 2014-2020) provides a detailed catalogue of initiatives in which North African countries (as well as Eastern European and Central Asian countries) cooperate in EU border control practices. Countries located in the immediate vicinity of the EU have been requested to conduct 'transit checks' on individuals crossing their territory. Furthermore, under the Dublin regulation asylum-seekers are sent back to 'safe third countries' they transited on route to the EU, even though at times such returns violate the principle of *non-refoulement*. Neighbouring countries are obliged to readmit any transit migrants who entered the EU irregularly, and this is also a priority in the EU-North Africa negotiations. These measures mean that EU member states, especially the founding EC member states at the geographical core of Europe, have effectively transferred the responsibility for irregular migrants and asylum seekers to the member states located at the external borders of the EU, as well as neighbouring countries located beyond the EU's borders. In response, the EU member states at the periphery of Europe have called for more 'burden sharing' of the financial costs associated with the reception of asylum-seekers.

Moreover, the spatial reach of the EU border control practices has been extended to sub-Saharan African origin countries. The *European Development Fund (EDF)* (with a budget of €30.5 billion for 2014-20) is limited in its geographical scope to the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, excluding North Africa. The first time the Commission linked the issues of migration and development dates back to 2002, although the focus at that point was on migration control and addressing the 'root causes of migration flows'; interestingly, no distinction was made between irregular migrants, migrant workers and refugees (Council of the European Union 2002: 4). A more substantial engagement with development

⁵⁰ Frontex is an EU agency based in Warsaw, which was created as a body tasked with the coordination of border control between member states. Andersson (2014) provides an insightful ethnographic account of various players in the Euro-African 'business of bordering'.

issues followed in 2005 with the publication of the Green Paper *On an EU Approach to Managing Economic Migration* (CEC 2005a) that also addressed remittances, brain circulation and return migration. In the same year the communication *Migration and Development: Some Concrete Orientations* (CEC 2005b) suggested to mainstream migration into aid policy and development cooperation with third countries. Recently the paper *Maximising the Development Impact of Migration* (EC 2013) advocated a rights-based approach concerning internal migration in developing countries, the impact of climate change and migration management. The last three communications thus highlighted the potential positive effects of migration on development, which could be summarised as a 'migration for development' approach, even though in practice development funding was extensively used to realise projects that restricted migration.

Since the refugee 'crisis', EU funding on migration and development has undergone a fundamental shift. Tackling the 'root causes' of migration has re-surfaced as a central policy objective. This is immediately evident from the title of the *Africa Trust Fund*, which aims to 'address the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa' (EC 2015). This is despite the fact that previous academic analyses have pointed out that boosting socio-economic development in origin countries will not stop migration to Europe in the short-term. In fact, improved economic and social conditions result in higher emigration rates – a phenomenon that is variously known as the 'migration transition' or the 'migration hump' (Castles *et al.* 2014). Only at a more advanced stage of development, when people have reached sufficient levels of wellbeing, and hence transited over the 'hump', are emigration rates likely to decrease again. Furthermore, it is questionable whether limiting migration through development is in the interest of origin countries and whether it in fact complies with the primary objective of EU development cooperation, which is poverty eradication.⁵¹

More generally, there has been some critique as to whether the rhetorics of 'partnership' and 'participation' used in development cooperation with Africa are deployed to hide self-interested interventions by actors outside of the continent (Mercer *et al.* 2003). The more recent trend of 'migration conditionality' in relation to migration and development aid, undoubtedly gives the EU even more undue 'leverage' in its relations with third countries. The Partnership Framework thereby encroaches upon the co-management and ownership principles outlined in the Cotonou Agreement. Besides, den Hertog (2016: 50) argues that, due to the incoherent funding landscape in this area, 'conditioning funding

⁵¹ See: Article 208(1), second paragraph, Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

on cooperation on migration may actually backfire' because migrant origin countries might threaten 'to trigger migration flows to obtain more funding'.

In addition, the EU has started concluding bilateral cooperation frameworks with several migrant origin countries, which either take the form of a 'Mobility Partnerships' that include readmission agreements in an exchange for visa facilitation (EC 2007) or a 'Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility' (CAMM) for countries that cannot commit themselves to readmission agreements (see EC 2011b). Nigeria signed a CAMM with the EU 2015, which is based on Nigeria's 'National Migration Policy' that was adopted in 2015.⁵² The European partners have committed themselves to explore ways through which they can facilitate legal channels for migration. Nevertheless, the majority of the projects implemented as part of the mobility partnerships in reality are focused on: providing information about legal migration; projects that inform migrants about voluntary return programmes; pre-departure training for migrants who want to migrate; and bilateral agreements concerning social security provisions. Labour migration remains a competence of member states and most of them are reluctant to open more legal migration channels.

Finally, several other actors and initiatives are also involved in the migration governance in Africa and Europe. The African Union and ECOWAS have been key players in migration management on the African continent. Since 1995 nationals of ECOWAS member states should be able to freely enter, reside and establish a business within the ECOWAS region, but in practice such mobility rights are not always accepted, or indeed tolerated (Black *et al.* 2004). This is reflected in the high visa restrictions that African states impose on other African nationals and the lack of enforcement of migrants' rights (Adepoju 2001). In 2016, the *African Union e-passport* was introduced and it is planned to become available to all African citizens by 2018. It is hoped that this will enhance mobility and migration in the region.

5.2 Migration within Europe and beyond: facts and figures

As I have shown in the previous section, the EU has developed several policy measures to 'manage' the migration of third-country nationals towards its territory, as well as 'combat' the presence of irregular migrants within the EU. However, the onward migration of third-country nationals and 'new' European citizens within the EEA has received hardly any attention, despite the fact that this has been a long-established migration pattern and that

⁵² The drafting of Nigeria's national migration policy started in 2006 (Binaisa 2013)

third-country nationals show a similar propensity to engage in intra-European mobility as native-born EU citizens. In this section, I will therefore provide some relevant facts and figures about the general scale and patterns of intra-European onward migration. But first, for the sake of clarity, I re-state what I mean by onward migration. There is no agreed, nor universally accepted, term for migration trajectories that span multiple states. Furthermore, the exact definitions of the numerous terms vary across different contexts and migrant groups (see discussion in section 2.1). A general broad definition is that onward migration is a migration trajectory that involves stays in at least two, if not more, destination countries. In addition, onward migration, in my view, also comprises several other dichotomous migration categories: regular and irregular; temporary and permanent; forced and voluntary; as well as linear, circular and return moves.

It is important to stress that the statistics presented throughout this thesis only provide information about *one*, very specific type of ‘onward migrant’, i.e. non-EU born migrants who acquired an EU passport through naturalisation and subsequently relocated to another EEA member state. These statistics therefore do *not* capture onward migrants who lived in multiple countries before coming to Europe; relocated with short-term residence papers but without an EU passport; engaged in irregular moves; or completed shorter non-migratory stays or circular moves. However, I did interview these other types of onward migrant as part of my fieldwork research. Therefore, in the three core chapters of the thesis, I will provide insights about the much broader group of onward migrants that currently cannot be captured via immigration statistics.

The new geographies of migration in Europe are facilitated by two inter-linked but distinct policy regimes. The ‘migration’ regime deals with the movement of people crossing the external borders of the EU and is seen a matter of freedom, security and justice (EC 2010). By contrast, the internal ‘mobility’ regime or ‘free movement’ is one of the four fundamental freedoms of the European Union. The preference for using ‘mobility’ to refer to intra-European migration, however, throws up several issues. In following, I briefly problematise these narrow conceptualisations with particular reference to onward migration and the 2011 Census data.

First, the use of the term ‘mobility’ reinforces the policy objective of distinguishing between the ‘desirable’ free movement of EU citizens, and the ‘undesirable’ ‘migration’ of third-country nationals. In practice, this supposed clear-cut distinction between EU citizens and third-country nationals is being blurred in several ways. Table 5.2 illustrates that in 2011 there were 15,852,371 third-country nationals who attained EU citizenship and could potentially make use of their ‘freedom of movement’ rights (equivalent to 3.1 per cent of the resident population). Furthermore, the group of second-generation migrants, who were

Table 5.2 Residents in the EEA and Switzerland by region of birth and citizenship

Country of birth	Citizenship of reporting country		Citizenship of other EU Member State		Citizenship of non-EU country		Other citizenship ^b		Subtotal	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Reporting country	452 403	88.0	2 110	0.4	2 771	0.5	247	0.0	457 532	89.0
Other EU	8 852	1.7	11 086	2.2	143	0.0	29	0.0	20 110	3.9
Non-EU	15 852	3.1	849	0.2	16 019	3.1	159	0.0	32 879	6.4
Other ^a	2 764	0.5	202	0.0	466	0.1	388	0.1	3 819	0.7
Total	479 872	93.3	14 247	2.8	19 399	3.8	823	0.2	514 340	100.0

Source: 2011 Census, European Statistical System

Notes: ^a Not classifiable according to current borders and other ^b Stateless and other not stated

born in Europe is also growing. In total, at least 41,715,955 EU citizens either had a 'migration background', i.e. they were second-generation migrants, or had 'migration experience' themselves, which encompassed 8.4 per cent of EU citizens.⁵³ Usually, the 'mobility' of third-country nationals who possess an EU passport is rendered statistically invisible, because it is subsumed within the data relating to EU citizens. However, Table 5.2 that there were 849,182 'new' EU citizens who onward migrated and they accounted for 0.2 per cent of the population. Furthermore, the new EU long-term residence paper gives third-country nationals 'free movement' rights similar to those of EU citizens and they can seek employment in another member state, but their mobility is currently not captured in the statistics. Although EU long-term residents have the right to seek employment in other member states, they need to overcome substantial hurdles to be issued with a work permit.⁵⁴ This is one of the factors that can create a semi-legal situation for third-country nationals and put them into a precarious situation, but the experiences of this migrant group have remained under-studied (Ahrens 2013; EMN 2013).

Second, the term 'mobility' implies that people will not settle permanently and continue to be mobile by either returning home or moving elsewhere. The renewed focus on seasonal and temporary migration programmes undoubtedly is part of a wider trend in policy-making; several international organisations have promoted 'mobility' in their recent reports (IOM 2010; UNDP 2009). It is therefore appropriate to question the underlying logics of these new policy imperatives and if they include due consideration for migrants'

⁵³ It is likely that this figure is higher, seeing that some EU citizens, who were born and hold the citizenship of the reporting country, could have also migrated in the past and then returned to their origin country before the census enumeration date.

⁵⁴ For an overview of further discretionary member state requirements and indirect limitations see the European Migration Network report (EMN 2013: 22–24 and 34–44).

rights. Although some intra-European mobility certainly takes the form of circular migration, seasonal mobility or daily cross-border commuting, other EU citizens in fact reside in another member state for extended periods of time or even relocate permanently. According to the 2011 Census, over 550,000 EU citizens were residing in another member state for over 30 years. This is also true for onward migrants, who often spend many years in one member state before moving on. Therefore, onward migrants are not necessarily constantly 'on the move', nor should we assume that they want to be. The moves of onward migrants have been compared to those of footloose 'cosmopolitans' or 'nomads' (Ossman 2013), but that is not to say they have no claims to place or rights. Thus, it is important to not only study the mobility of onward migrants, but also their emplacements.

Finally, there is an assumption that the short-distance internal 'mobility' across member states is easier and more fluid than the long-distance 'migration' to and from Europe. In fact, mobility within the frontier-free 'Schengenland' is oftentimes likened to internal migration. But, paradoxically, the overall intra-European mobility intensities remain much lower than internal migration intensities in other parts of the world. Table 5.2 indicated that intra-European migrants account for 2.8 per cent of the resident population,⁵⁵ whereas in India, for example, internal migrants make up 30 per cent of the country's population.⁵⁶ It is possible that EU citizens are less inclined to relocate to another member state, because mobility within the EU usually involves the crossing of linguistic, cultural and institutional boundaries. In order to assess the migration propensity of the non-EU born population (32,879,261), we consider that there were 849,182 non-EU born migrants who onward migrated after acquiring EU citizenship, which is a mobility rate of 2.6 per cent – and thus is slightly lower than the mobility intensity of the EU-born population. It is likely, however, that the EU-born and non-EU-born population have distinct motivations for their migration and 'mobility'.

In the following, I will focus more closely on the migration patterns of non-EU migrants. Several studies have confirmed that there are two established migration patterns that shape the moves of non-EU migrants towards Europe. The first of them can be summarised as *colonial linkages* and the other is a *diversification* of destinations beyond colonial patterns (Flahaux and de Haas 2016). These two patterns can also be identified in the data I analysed. Several former colonising nations engendered substantial post-colonial

⁵⁵ The mobility intensity is higher for the EEA as a whole than for the EU-28, because Norway and Switzerland receive a disproportionately high number of mobile EU citizens.

⁵⁶ The 2001 Indian census recorded 309 million internal migrants, which is equivalent to 30 per cent of the country's population. The vast majority of internal migrants were intra-district migrants, meaning that they migrated relatively short distances. Data for the 2011 census have not been released at the time of writing.

migrations in direction of their former metropole. Considering two destinations in more detail, we can assess the importance of colonial links in shaping African migration towards Europe. In the UK, for example, around 70 per cent of the 1,364,940 African-born migrants originated from former British colonies. In the case of France over 95 per cent of the 3,598,119 African migrants were born in African countries colonised by the French. The second pattern is that of migrants opting for a wider range of destination countries. Since the 1980s greater numbers of African migrants, for instance, have chosen to move to the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Spain and Portugal. This is part of a wider diversification of African migration patterns to other non-European destinations, such as Australia, India, USA, Canada and the Gulf countries (Flahaux and de Haas 2016; Schoumaker *et al.* 2015). In addition, I argue that my limited statistical data regarding intra-EU onward migrants indicates that two further trends emerge from the mobility patterns of the non-EU-born population. The first is that of *converging* migration patterns, whereby migrants follow diverse migratory routes towards different European destinations but later converge on their respective former imperial metropole. Third-country nationals may have a preference for relocating in the direction of their 'colonial motherland' where there often is no linguistic barrier to cross and which in turn lowers the relative 'cost' of onward migration. This was the case for Argentinians, Venezuelans and Uruguayans, many of whom were eligible to apply for an Italian passport abroad due their family roots and the generous provisions in the Italian ancestral descent principle (Mateos 2015). They later onward migrated to Spain, possibly also because of their greater linguistic affinity with Spain. The 2011 Census shows that Argentinian-born onward migrants were the largest group (49,155) of onward migrants residing in Spain, followed by Uruguayans (13,315) and Venezuelans (8,255). Another example of converging onward migration is the re-grouping of Nigerians in the UK, which appears to have gathered pace recently. There were 5,790 Nigerian-born onward migrants residing in the UK in 2011. Considering the total population of Nigerian-born migrants of 201,185, therefore at the time 3 per cent of the resident Nigerians had entered the UK after acquiring EU citizenship in another member state. Interestingly, the 2015 data from the APS survey show that the overall number of Nigerian onward migrants in the UK has more than doubled, now standing at an estimated 12,000 individuals aged 15-64 years (see Table 3.1). Thus, in recent years onward migration via various different member states has become a more important migration channel for Nigerians to enter the UK.

A second trend in the onward migration patterns of the non-EU-born population, that I argue merits further investigation, are *emerging* patterns, which can contribute to the formation of new diasporic nodes or the growth of diasporic hubs (Teerling and King 2012; Voigt-Graf 2004). The top five destinations for intra-European onward migrants in Table

Table 5.3 Top-20 destination countries of intra-EEA onward migrants

Country of Residence	Mobile Europeans (all residents with citizenship of another EU member state)	Onward Migrants (non-EU born with EU citizenship of another member state)	% of Onward Migrants (as part of Mobile Europeans)
Germany	2 275 763	245 220	11 %
United Kingdom	2 887 955	210 090	7 %
Spain	1 951 145	126 275	6 %
France	1 346 167	50 611	4 %
Belgium	748 884	42 159	6 %
Switzerland	955 793	36 676	4 %
Italy	1 108 797	21 942	2 %
Netherlands	334 534	21 869	7 %
Sweden	276 043	13 336	5 %
Cyprus	106 270	12 921	12 %
Austria	372 459	12 348	3 %
Norway	244 970	11 363	5 %
Luxembourg	191 694	8 978	5 %
Denmark	124 997	5 779	5 %
Portugal	94 498	4 256	5 %
Czech Republic	150 571	3 807	3 %
Greece	199 121	3 525	2 %
Finland	61 216	1 561	3 %
Hungary	84 569	1 003	1 %
Poland	23 624	823	3 %

Source: 2011 Census, European Statistical System.

5.3 are Germany, the UK, Spain, France and Belgium, in descending order. What these top five destinations for onward migrants share in common is that they all used to be colonising nations. But when looking at the disaggregated data of the onward migrants, it is not in all cases a colonial link or language affinity that appears to attract onward migrants. In the UK, for instance, the overall size of migrant communities originating from Lusophone African countries was relatively small, but a large share had arrived in the country through the channel of onward migration. For example, 37 per cent of Angolan-born residents (a total of 5,465 individuals), 62 per cent of Mozambican-born (3,685) and 79 per cent of migrants from Guinea-Bissau (1,890) came to the UK as onward migrants. These emerging onward migration flows may in turn contribute to the formation of the UK as a more important Lusophone diasporic node, as well as its further growth as a hub for the African diasporas and Black diasporas. In 2011 the Black population in the UK numbered 1,904,684, comprising those residents in the UK who identified as either 'Black British', 'Black African' or 'Black Other'.

Germany and Cyprus are two cases that stand out in Table 5.3. When looking at the disaggregated data, however, their onward migration patterns do not neatly fit within the aforementioned discussion. In Germany the ratio of resident onward migrants is notably high at 11 per cent. The disaggregated data show that the single largest group of onward migrants in Germany were born in Turkey. Germany is home to the largest community of Turkish-born migrants in Europe and therefore may be drawing in Turkish-born migrants from other parts of the EEA because of the opportunities to enjoy a vibrant diasporic culture. The other noteworthy case is that of Cyprus. At 12 per cent, Cyprus attracts a disproportionately high number of onward migrants. It is difficult to say for sure what is stimulating the onward migration to Cyprus, the two largest groups of onward migrants in Cyprus were born in Georgia and Russia. Yet, Teerling and King (2012) have pointed out that this 'divided island' represents an important 'hub' and 'hinterland' of several other overlapping diasporas.

Of course, there is a risk of over-stating the importance of onward migration and depicting this migration trajectory as something entirely novel, simply because it has not received much scholarly attention to date. In fact, there is evidence that quite the opposite is true. Onward migration appears to have been part of the fabric of intra-European mobilities for several decades. Table 5.4 demonstrates that over 12,051 onward migrants entered their current country of residence before 1979. Besides, the overall intensity of

Table 5.4 Intra-EEA onward migrants by year of arrival in the reporting country

Year of arrival in reporting the country	Mobile Europeans (all residents with citizenship of another EU member state)	Onward Migrants (non-EU born with EU citizenship of another member state)	% of Onward Migrants (as part of Mobile Europeans)
2010 to 2011	1 269 074	78 702	6.20%
2005 to 2009	3 911 621	241 962	6.19%
2000 to 2004	2 210 042	192 863	8.73%
1995 to 1999	851 829	82 565	9.69%
1990 to 1994	617 098	60 748	9.84%
1985 to 1989	445 072	31 146	7.00%
1980 to 1984	295 896	19 423	6.56%
Arrival before 1979	554 209	12 051	2.17%
Never resided abroad	921 940	5 053	0.55%
Not stated	583 591	23 555	4.04%
Total ^a	14 238 948	848 991	5.96%

Source: 2011 Census, European Statistical System

Notes: ^a Disaggregated data missing for Bulgaria, Sweden and Iceland, the total should be higher

onward migration appears to have been relatively stable over the past decades. It is, however, necessary to highlight that the data presented in Table 5.4 refer to population stocks; in other words, those who may have engaged in intra-European mobilities in the past could have already left their destination of onward migration or deceased, and as a result are not included.

Regarding African intra-European onward mobilities, there are several observations to be made. The disaggregated data show that there is considerable variability in the onward migration patterns depending on the region of origin of the onward migrants. The intra-European onward mobility of African-born migrants appears to have only been gathering pace since 1995 and therefore is a more recent phenomenon. Unfortunately, there are too many missing values in the disaggregated 2011 Census data to present a detailed analysis of African intra-European onward mobilities here. Yet, for the top five destinations of onward migrants, there are more comprehensive data available. It is possible to confirm that out of all onward migrants originating from different parts of the world, African-born onward migrants accounted for 2 per cent in Germany, 13 per cent in the UK, 4 per cent in Spain, 15 per cent in France and 19 per cent in Belgium.

As pointed out by other scholars, the term ‘transit migration’ conjures up a politically charged image of a potential ‘large-scale influx’ of migrants and asylum-seekers into Europe (Collyer and de Haas 2012; Oelgemöller 2011). Furthermore, the term implies that all migrants want to stay in Europe, because it is assumed to be their desired final destination, which is reflective of a Euro-centric imagining of migration patterns. Yet, there is evidence that many African migrants leave Europe again, either returning back to Africa or moving onward (Artuç and Özden 2016; Konadu-Agyemang 1999; Takenaka 2007). Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2 present an analysis by Artuç and Özden (2016) based on data from the American Community Survey data. The authors estimate that around 9 per cent of migrants who arrived in the USA during the period from 2001 to 2012 had lived in a country other than their country of birth prior to their arrival. Amongst those migrants who had university-level education the ratio of onward migration was 14 per cent. Figure 5.2 highlights that most onward migrants used high-income countries like Canada, Australia and the UK (but also Spain, Portugal, Switzerland and Austria) as ‘stepping stones’ to reach the USA. Furthermore, the disaggregated data indicate that around 18 per cent of migrants who were born in West Africa arrived in the USA as onward migrants. Amongst highly-skilled West African migrants in the USA the ratio of onward migrants was even higher (26 per cent).

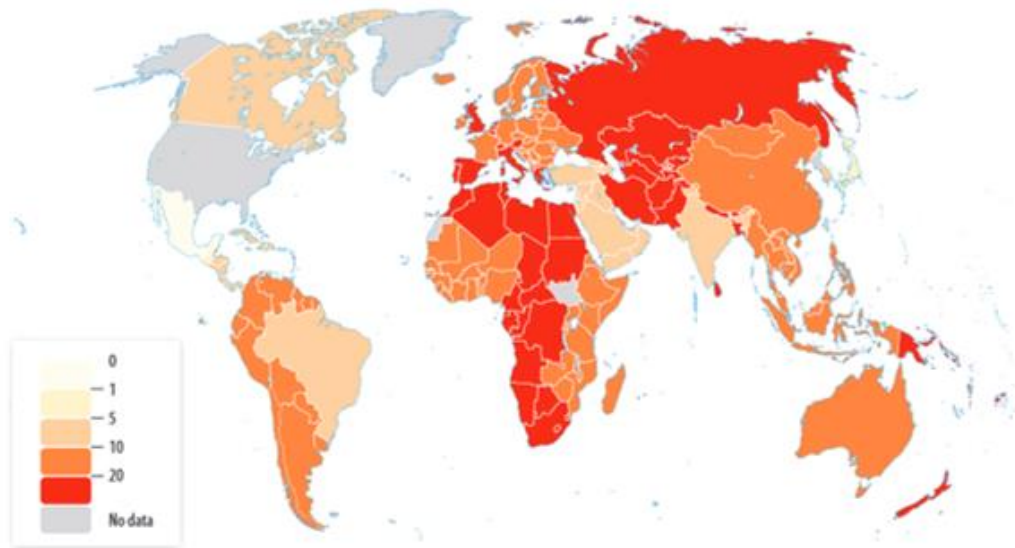


Figure 5.1 Ratio of onward migrants in the USA by country of birth

Source: Data compiled by Artuc and Ozden (2016) from American Community Survey 2001-2012

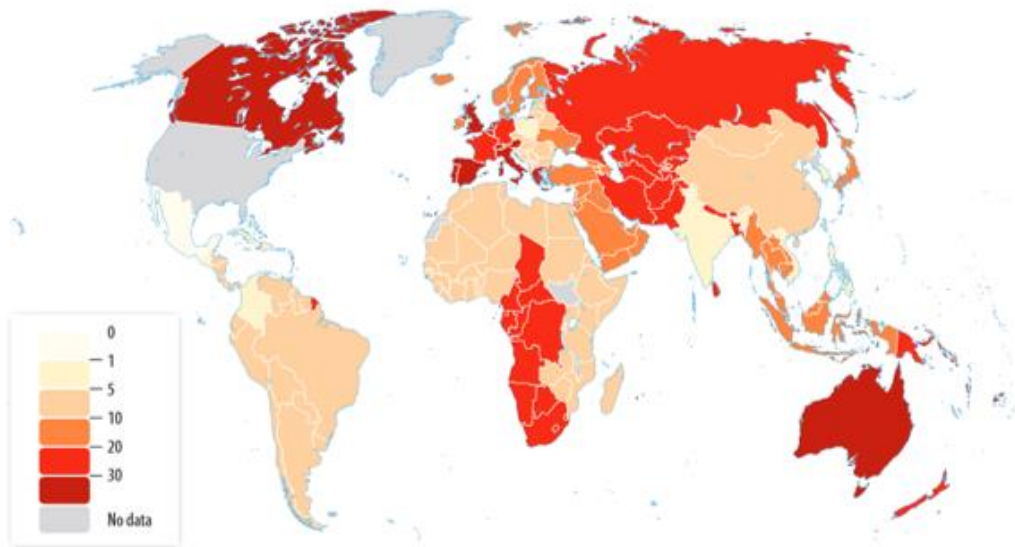


Figure 5.2 Ratio of onward migrants in the USA by last country of residence

Source: Data compiled by Artuc and Ozden (2016) from American Community Survey 2001-2012

5.3 Summary

A multitude of policies and regulations structure migration flows between Nigeria and Europe. Taking a scalar approach, I analysed how migration governance is shaped by numerous institutions and actors at the supra-national, national, regional level and even the

consular representations in Europe. I argued that migrants from Africa are subject to policies and regulations that aim to 'manage' migration at different stages of the migration process, within Europe, at the external borders of the EU, and increasingly also in the neighbouring regions and origin countries. Migration governance is determined by conflicting priorities as regards labour market demands and socio-political discourses. Migrants try to identify 'openings' through which they hope to realise their migration aspiration. Nigerian migrants have also contested 'closures', for example, by challenging deportation procedures and demanding more rights for third-country nationals. Further strategies employed by Nigerians in relation to student mobility and family reunion will be discussed in the subsequent chapters.

Research concerning intra-European mobilities typically focuses on the EU citizens born in the older member states or the newly-acceded member states (for example Engbersen and Snel 2013; Favell 2008). In the latter half of this chapter, I analysed statistical data which provided evidence that non-EU born migrants are also mobile within Europe. Other studies on African mobilities have demonstrated that extra-continental migration patterns used to *follow colonial links* and that more recently they are *diversifying to new destinations* (Flahaux and de Haas 2016). However, I argue that two complimentary trends that have been largely overlooked are multiple migrations which either *converge following colonial links* or *emerge in new directions*, with the latter potentially forming new diasporic nodes and hubs. Importantly, my data show that in recent years onward migration is becoming a more common migration trajectory for those migrants entering the UK. In addition, other studies indicate that onward migrants are also seeking out destinations beyond Europe, particularly in North America. The next chapter now turns to the analysis of the drivers of onward mobility, by considering the aspirations and capabilities of Nigerian migrants.

Chapter 6

Interactions between Aspirations and Capabilities

Research about migration aspirations has provided useful insights into the drivers of international migration in origin countries. Previous studies have mainly provided insights about young adults' aspirations and intentions for emigration, which tend to be predominantly influenced by the social context of the origin country and the characteristics of younger migrants (Carling 2002). Research on return migration in the meantime has challenged conceptions that portray migration trajectories as simple one-stop and one-directional moves, as well as drawing attention to migration motivations of older migrants and the second generation who relocate to their origin country (Christou and King 2014; King 2000). As migration trajectories are becoming more complex and fragmented, migrant decision-making is increasingly taking place across space, time and generations.

Until now there is only limited research that deals with the motivations of onward migrants who migrate and settle in a number of different countries. Individuals who engage in onward migration are typically older than first-time migrants and their aspirations are oftentimes transformed through the act of migration and exposure to various new social contexts. Therefore, the analysis of the determinants and motivations of onward migration broadens our understanding of how migration decision-making can evolve over the life-course and migration trajectory.

By focusing on aspirations and capabilities, this chapter aims to emphasise the multi-faceted and interlinked nature of migration decisions (Boyle and Halfacree 1993). The motivations for onward migration are conceptualised as the result of continuous frictions and negotiations between migrants' aspirations and the restrictions placed on their capabilities by different social contexts. Given that this analysis is based on multi-sited and multi-temporal research, it also opens up possibilities of exploring how migrants' aspirations and capabilities are reconfigured over space and time. The analysis of the research participants' narratives highlights several transnational strategies that individuals employ in order to fulfil their aspirations.

The previous chapters have provided an overview about the socio-historical and policy contexts which influence how migration aspirations are formed amongst young people in Nigeria. This chapter now analyses the narratives of the informants through the lenses of aspirations and capabilities, while they pass through various stages of (actual)

mobility and motility (potential for mobility) in Europe (Anthias 2012). This enables us to see how migrants' aspirations and capabilities shape and are re-shaped by their onward migration – involving both changes to their personal situations and wider structural changes in various destination contexts.

6.1 The formation of migration aspirations and capabilities

Only a few studies have been conducted about the pre-departure motivations and occupational status of Nigerians who migrated to Europe. As part of the wider *Africa Migration Project* of the World Bank, a household survey was carried out in Nigeria in 2009. Prior to their departure to Europe most Nigerian migrants were students (52 per cent), while the other Nigerian migrants had been either unemployed (15 per cent), self-employed (16 per cent) or full-time wage earners (12 per cent).⁵⁷ Household members were also asked to report the primary reason due to which migrants were living outside of the household. For the migrants residing in Europe the main reasons for migration included work (53 per cent), education (34 per cent), and marriage arrangement (9 per cent).

Certain emblematic phrases, such as 'looking for better opportunities' or 'searching for greener pastures', recurred frequently in my respondents' description of their migration motivations. Even though there oftentimes is an assumption that African migrations are somehow 'exceptional', my informants most usually mentioned that they were moving in search of work, to study or to join family members. Women, who came to Europe as self-initiated migrants, however, more often mentioned that they needed to 'provide for the family' due to poverty.⁵⁸ My interviewees generally had explored other options to satisfy

⁵⁷ These figures are based on my own calculations of the publicly available data for the *African Migration Project*. The questionnaire design of this household survey provides limited information about the migration trajectory of individual migrants (Plaza *et al.* 2011). Only the migrants' current place of residence at the time of the survey was recorded. It is therefore not possible to know, if migrants engaged in any internal or intra-African migration before departing on an inter-continental migration. This means that no data about possible transit or onward migration was recorded.

⁵⁸ There was some variation in the pre-departure migration aspirations amongst the interviewees depending on ethnic group in Nigeria. Women from the Edo ethnic group often mentioned the wish to build a house. Benin City, capital of Edo state, has the largest concentration of property development financed by remittances originating from Italy (Hernández-Cross and Bun 2007: 43). The preference for this type of investment is likely to be related to the deportability of the Bini women working as prostitutes in Italy. Another reason is that Bini women are more disadvantaged than women from other Nigerian ethno-regional groups in terms of customary inheritance law (Ewelukwa 2002). Attempts to introduce a Gender Equality Bill at federal level, which amongst other

their needs and aspirations, and some even had relocated within Nigeria or the wider region.⁵⁹ But when other avenues were exhausted, informants often came to see inter-continental migration as a way forward. For some of my interviewees their decision to leave Nigeria was spurred on by other life events such as the birth of a child, divorce or the death of a parent.

Only a few of my informants were able to access the privileged migration routes for highly-skilled migrants to Europe. First, only relatively few young people have the opportunity to attain a university degree in Nigeria, considering that the gross enrolment ratio for the tertiary–education level was only 10 per cent in 2005⁶⁰ and actual completion rates are likely to be lower (Unesco 2016). Second, not everyone can raise the socio-economic resources needed for long-distance travel, afford the high tuition fees for international students, or has the contacts to quickly secure suitable employment in destination countries (Reynolds 2013; Van Hear 2014). The EU Bluecard is a dedicated scheme for highly-skilled migrant workers and provides third-country nationals with a stable residence permit to live and work across Europe, as well as a concrete path to citizenship. But when compared to highly-skilled visa streams offered by individual member states, the EU Bluecard has thus far not been very successful.⁶¹ Even though the largest component of the demand for labour force in Europe relates to low-skilled workers, there are no equivalent legal frameworks that facilitate this mobility on a large scale.

Therefore Nigerians who cannot meet the requirements to migrate as highly-skilled migrants, often opt to travel on a valid tourist visa and then overstay, which is a migration strategy that is also common amongst other nationalities (Black *et al.* 2005; Bigo 2016). Formal tourist visa guidelines issued by the consular offices require applicants to supply evidence of substantial ties to Nigeria through a stable job and disposal of sufficient funds in order to finance the trip. The consular visa issuing practices are very arduous and the visa rejection rates tend to be high (see Table 5.1). The lack of sufficient short-stay visas and the unpredictable nature of the visa application process pose a considerable mobility

things would have created uniform inheritance laws across all Nigerian ethnic groups, were rejected for the fourth time in 2016.

⁵⁹ Internal migration is very common in Nigeria. For graduates internal migration is even compulsory, seeing that they have to serve in the National Youth Service Corps before being allowed to look for employment, which means that for 12 months they are posted to another part of Nigeria.

⁶⁰ These are the most recent data available in the Unesco (2016) UIS database in September 2016.

⁶¹ Between 2012 and 2015 only 129 Nigerian citizens were granted an EU Bluecard, some of which were issued in Germany to individuals already residing in the country. Uptake amongst other nationalities also remains low (Eurostat 2016).

barrier.⁶² Several informants entered Europe via less common routes, for instance three individuals travelled as part of Nigerian football supporters' associations, one came with a group of religious pilgrims and two others had met a European partner online via a dating website. In addition, I repeatedly heard rumours concerning informal or 'unwritten' visa rules. Some informants indicated that previous mobility could make the approval of a tourist visa for Europe or North America more likely. This was because informants believed that consular officials in Nigeria deemed young Nigerians who wanted to travel on a 'virgin passport' as more likely to overstay their visas – thus resulting in a visa rejection.⁶³ Consequently, many Nigerians invested in other migration experiences to Dubai or Ghana or simply paid for fake stamps in their passport to fulfil what they assumed to be an informal visa requirement to 'disvirgin' their passport. Like migrants from other parts of the world, Nigerians mainly moved to Europe for work, study or family reasons (Plaza *et al.* 2011).

Aspirant migrants who cannot access a legal mode of migration often use irregular means of migration, which in turn has diverted migration trajectories to new destinations. These individuals also need to mobilise economic resources and their social networks in order to migrate successfully. For example, many of my informants came to Europe by using fake passports or other irregular means of entry, while others were brought to Europe by migration brokers, smugglers or trafficking networks (Alpes 2012; Plambech 2016). Some of my informants underwent several migration attempts before reaching Europe. Nearly all my interviewees travelled to Europe by plane, even though the politicised media coverage of African migrants crossing the Mediterranean in small boats (*pateras* or *cayucos*) has generated widely held misconceptions that most Africans arrive in Europe via the sea route. Within my sample only twelve individuals reported that they had traversed several African countries and crossed the Mediterranean. A minority of interviewed women did not include information about the exact route they travelled in their narratives.

⁶² There is no single official statistical source for the number of short-stay visa applications and approvals in Europe; these statistics instead are published separately by individual countries in a variety of ways. The *European Visa Database* by Hobolth (2012) is an online resource where this data is compiled in a comparable way. According to the database, the visa refusal rates for Nigerians between 2001 and 2012 varied greatly between member states and also from one year to another. Hobolth also analysed various mobility barriers in terms of access to consular services, visa requirements and visa issuing practices and for the period 2005-2012. Nigerians on average faced the lowest mobility barriers in Switzerland, Latvia, Slovenia, Italy, Malta, Austria, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Lithuania, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and Germany (listed in ascending order).

⁶³ Although in the period between 1999 and 2003 consular officials working in German representations abroad received instructions from the Foreign Ministry 'to be less bureaucratic' when issuing visas and 'mere doubts concerning the willingness of visa applicants to return' to their origin country were 'not an acceptable reason to refuse a visa'. The instruction concluded with '*in dubio pro libertate* – in doubt for freedom (of travel)'. In 2005 an enquiry was carried out into this 'visa-scandal'. Also see Finotelli (2009).

6.2 Evolving migration aspirations in Europe

International migration is often talked about as a simple move, but in reality migrants experience a much more 'bumpy' migration process. The following sections focus on the interplay of aspirations and capabilities in the informants' narratives as a means of analysing migration decision-making. Aspiring migrants encounter barriers that impede their movement or settlement and in response they find ways to overcome these obstacles, or re-adjust their plans. This section emphasises the agency involved in how migrants negotiate various states of mobility and motility throughout their migration project. By considering migration as an open-ended process, reaching the first destination is not necessarily presumed to be the end of the migration cycle. Aspirations and capabilities also shape migration projects within Europe.

6.2.1 *Standing your ground in Europe*

On arrival nearly all informants became disillusioned with the realities they encountered in Europe. At first glance the media images they had seen about Europe appeared true and many Nigerians expressed how much they appreciated the availability of basic amenities such as regular electricity and running water, the supply of which over the years has become more erratic and costly in Nigeria. Interviewees also commented on the aesthetic qualities of some European cities, in terms of cleanliness, design and public transport. But they thought that the more difficult issues only revealed themselves on closer inspection. They felt deceived by other migrants who, during their return trips to Nigeria, had failed to warn them about these issues.

My interviewees were not always fully informed about the difficulties of acquiring a stable legal status in Europe. Out of those who arrived on tourist visas, there was a substantial number who said they were unaware they would not be able to work if they overstayed, while others idiomatically referred to this as a deliberate strategy of 'crash-landing'. Those who travel with tourist visas only have 90 days before losing their legal right to stay in Europe. In Northern Europe other Nigerians often advised the new arrivals to claim political asylum in order to buy themselves more time while they tried to find a solution to their predicament. Many West Africans refer to asylum-seekers as *aduro* (Fleischer 2011: 253), which is a Yoruba word for 'someone who stands or retains his ground'. Nigerian international students were other temporary migrants who encountered difficulties to meet the requirements to extend their residence permit in Europe. Therefore, interviewees who engaged in onward mobilities in the early stages of their stay in Europe

often were motivated by prospects of being able to regularise their legal status in another member state. Most of these undocumented onward mobilities in my sample occurred in the direction of Spain or Italy, but I also spoke to a two individuals who relocated to the UK.

Irregular onward migration in some cases was a response to expulsion orders, that require individuals to leave the national territory. These moves thus occurred with hardly any preparation. Isaac, one of my interviewees whom I met in Manchester, was taken by surprise when he was issued with a deportation order within only a week of claiming asylum in Austria. Isaac then took a train to Italy where one of his cousins lived, but because he had not informed her about his travel plans, he did not receive any support from his cousin: 'She refused to pick me. I didn't tell her I was coming, so she didn't pick me'. At Milan train station Isaac approached some Nigerians who helped him find a place to stay.

Other informants emphasised the importance of social networks for the journey and the beginning of the stay. Maxwell stressed that not everyone in Nigeria has the required financial resources and social networks to migrate to Europe.

It costs money to come to Europe, it costs connections to come to Europe... The poor man from the street from Africa cannot dream of Europe. If you don't have the money you cannot come and if you don't have the connections, which is psychological money, you don't come... Without the local help, the system will exhaust your money within weeks and make you stranded.

(Maxwell, 32, m, Czech-Nigerian in Amsterdam)

Another painful realisation for Nigerians was that they overestimated the amount of money they could earn in Europe (Carling 2006). At a street junction in Sevilla I met Goodluck selling tissues to car drivers when they stopped at the red traffic lights. We arranged to meet the next day at a Nigerian shop and walked to the apartment that he shared with several other Nigerians. Goodluck said he was still 'living like a student'. Hereby he was not only referring to his accommodation, but also to his condition of 'waithood' (Honwana 2012) due to his irregular legal status, which made it difficult for him to provide for his wife and children back in Nigeria in the way he anticipated. Goodluck felt foolish recalling how migrants used to be received with a grand welcome on their return visits back in his village:

We never knew that to ship one bus... At the time we thought... this guy has come from Europe and he has made it. You don't know how many years he has spent before he can afford that one bus. A bus of 400-500 Euros [laughs]! It takes 12 years to gather 500

Euros to buy bus. Then you load it with clothes from *basura* [rubbish bins].⁶⁴ When he get to Africa the people would be hailing him: 'He has come from Europe. Amen!'

(Goodluck, 39, m, without residence papers in Sevilla)



Illustrations 6.1 La Palmilla informal market and Nigerian shipping yard in Málaga

Now that he was in Europe himself, the second-hand vehicles and goods, which returnees used to bring back, appeared in a different light. Goodluck had learnt that the items were worth a lot less, yet at the same time he realised how many years migrants had to work to attain them. These insights made Goodluck re-evaluate the success stories of previous migrants and also wonder whether it had been worth him setting off on his migration project at all. Illustration 6.1 depicts the daily informal second-hand market in the deprived neighbourhood of Palma-Palmilla in Málaga, that my informants who lived there described as a 'ghetto'. On the market Nigerians would barter with Romanian and Moroccan migrants selling clothes and electronic goods, which I saw being retrieved from rubbish bins and charity clothes containers at night time. The second image shows one of the Nigerian shipping yards I spent time at during my fieldwork, helping to sort items and having informal conversations with traders (Omobowale 2013).

Nevertheless, many Nigerians I spoke to also admitted that they themselves contribute to the perpetuations of the myth of Europe as the Eldorado.

No, I was thinking that when I come to Europe, I will start picking the money on the streets. It's true... [laughs]. I thought that there is money on the streets in Europe. I thought that by coming to Europe, in under one month, I will build a house for my family

⁶⁴ In order to offset the costs for shipping to and clearing in ports in and around Nigeria, it is a common practice amongst traders to fill the vehicles and containers with other second-hand items they can sell. For further discussion about the second-hand Nigerian import-export trade, see Jedlowski (2016), Şaul (2014) and Omobowale (2013)

and give the Madam [the migration sponsor, often linked to sexwork] the money she is asking me to pay... and I will have this, I will have that. I didn't know there are still a lot of people that are suffering here, I thought it was only in Africa [...] But I cannot tell my family that. I will tell them that Europe is sweet.

(Iziegbe, 41, f, permanent Spanish residence paper in Málaga)

Having invested considerable resources and incurred debts with visa brokers, smugglers or traffickers to pay their journey, meant it was difficult to return to Nigeria empty-handed. The majority of interviewees had set off from Nigeria in order to earn money thinking they would return to Nigeria fairly quickly – this was the case for both the men and women I interviewed. In contrast, my informants who had come to Europe to join other family members generally envisaged an indefinite stay. At the point of the interview, only four informants mentioned that they had concrete plans to return to Nigeria. Out of the informants I remained in touch with, several returned to Nigeria temporarily and I became aware that one of my informants was deported. The low rate of return intentions amongst my research participants appears striking. But seeing that my fieldwork was focused on destination countries, my research does not provide any insights about the actual rate of return migration. Nonetheless, a representative household survey also shows that the incidence of return migration is particularly low in Nigeria. There were only 3 per cent returnees (as a share of all migrants) recorded in the migrant households surveyed (Plaza *et al.* 2011).⁶⁵

Thus, virtually all of my interviewees had put their plans to return to Nigeria on hold and it was unclear when they would go back. But staying put in the destination country was not always due to hopes that aspirations could be realised at a later point. When faced with barriers – real or perceived – another coping strategy for Nigerians was to adjust their aspirations. One of my informants in Berlin, called Joe, told me that he believed that 'In America you can rise very high, but you can also fall *very* low. That is why I prefer to stay in Germany. Here my life is more stable'. Thus, Joe thought that he could possibly have excelled more in his profession if he had moved to the USA. But this would have come at the considerable cost of giving up the sense of security that the unemployment insurance and other welfare benefits in Germany afforded him should he ever need them. That is why he ultimately decided to stay put.

⁶⁵ The return migration rate was considerably lower in Nigeria than in the other countries where household surveys were conducted as part of the *Africa Migration Project* (Burkina Faso, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Uganda). But it is possible that Nigerian return migrants did not return to their former household and instead decided to live in another part of Nigeria, thus being recorded as internal migrants.

6.2.2 *Gaining an (un)stable foothold*

Legislation concerning immigration draws clear distinctions between legal and irregular forms of migration. Even though migrants generally try to migrate legally, restrictive immigration policies mean that they also seek out other means of travel, entry and stay. Moreover, legal status also structures migrants' aspirations and capabilities for onward mobility. Taking into account the amount and variation of immigration policies across EU member states, it is difficult to summarise the various 'regimes of mobility' that migrants can negotiate as students, workers, spouses, dependent children, etc. According to Morris' definition, civic stratification describes 'a system of inequality based on the relationship between different categories of individuals and the state, and the rights thereby granted and denied' (Morris 2002: 79). Thus, formal access to rights not only differs horizontally across member states, but also vertically between different migrant types. Migrants' capability to access these rights, however, is often linked with their embodied characteristics like gender, 'race' and age.

In order to realise their aspirations of better-paid work, education and healthcare, my informants were keen to acquire a European passport, as this provided the greatest stability and protected them from deportation. Even those interviewees who aspired to lead transnationally mobile lives between Europe and Nigeria or migrate elsewhere, pass through extended periods of 'fixity' and 'mooring' in order to acquire a residence permit or a European passport (Hannam *et al.* 2006). Differentiated capacity and access to mobility has been analysed through the concept of 'motility', which is defined as the 'the manner in which an individual or group appropriates the field of possibilities relative to movement and uses them' (Kaufmann and Montulet, 2008: 45). This resonates with the research that Dahinden conducted with nightclub dancers who opted to reside in Switzerland with the objective of acquiring 'mobility capital' for future life plans (Dahinden 2010). Despite encountering difficulties in one place, migrants were often unwilling to onward migrate until they had managed to obtain a European passport, because they felt that leaving would mean they had to 'start from zero' elsewhere. Many spoke about the time they spent building contacts and getting to know 'the system' would be 'wasted' if they onward migrated prematurely.

In the meantime, migrants have to live with inferior residence statuses and fewer rights. Short-term and permanent residence papers do not allow migrants to vote in destination countries, restrict their mobility rights and maintain them in a state of 'deportability' (De Genova 2002). Furthermore, these residence papers offer considerably less stability, because various conditions have to be met in order for them to be renewed.

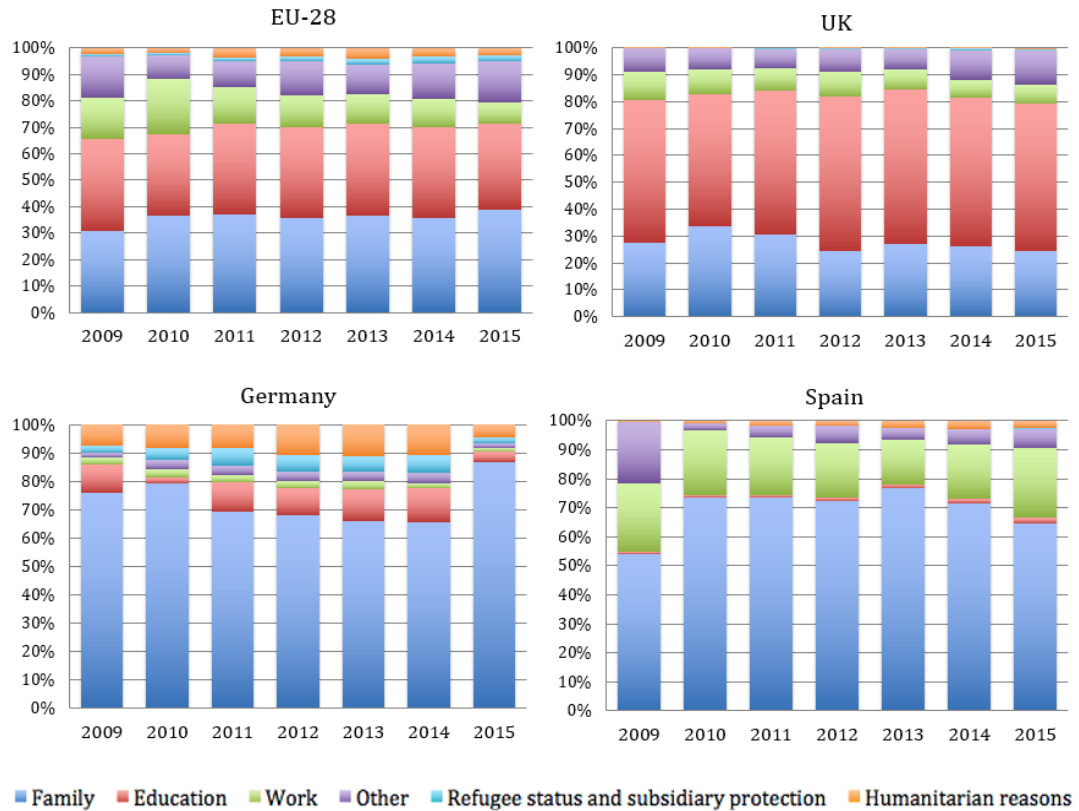


Figure 6.1 First residence permits issued to Nigerian nationals by reason 2009-2015

Source: European Statistical System, database Asylum & Managed Migration. Notes: 'Other entry reasons' include international protection; residence only; unaccompanied minors; victims of trafficking and other not specified.

The conditions can include requirements concerning work contracts, good conduct in the country of residence⁶⁶ and a clean police record from the country of origin.⁶⁷ Depending on their capacity to meet these conditions, migrants can gain and also lose their legal status. Figure 6.1 provides data about the first residence permits issued to Nigerian citizens by reason between 2009 and 2015.⁶⁸ In the EU, overall, two thirds of first residence

⁶⁶ Interviewees and key informants in Spain repeatedly pointed out that several Nigerians had difficulty renewing their residence papers, because of simple 'offences' such as a noise complaint that was issued when neighbours had called the police regarding a private gathering.

⁶⁷ In Spain the requirement for a clean police record from the country of origin is particularly hard to fulfil for Nigerians. While other origin countries facilitate the provision of this document through a centralised database and an online application process, there was no such process put in place by Nigerian authorities. As a result, several hundred Nigerians in Spain falsified their police records (interview with key informant in Madrid). Therefore, Nigerians are now the only immigrant group in Spain that cannot present police records, which were requested remotely. Seeing that it is impossible for irregular migrants to return to Nigeria for this document, the Nigerian police now organises regular visits to Spain to issue police records. Also see Ahrens (2013).

⁶⁸ The Eurostat database on *Asylum and Managed Migration* only contains data from 2008 onwards. Although the OECD's annual publication *International Migration Outlook* (formerly referred to as the

permits were issued to Nigerians for either family or education reasons. However, this picture varies considerably across member states. In the UK, for instance, around half of all first residence permits were issued for education reasons. In contrast, Germany and Spain granted on average 73 per cent and 67 per cent respectively of residence permits to Nigerians based on family reasons.⁶⁹ For the period in question, a relatively small percentage of Nigerians received residence permits due to humanitarian reasons. Work reasons only in Spain accounted for a considerable number of first residence permits that were issued.

In her study Schuster (2005) illustrates how migrants in Italy fitted into and moved through various migrant categories during their stay in Europe. Some Nigerians were able to legalise their stay, while others later found themselves undocumented again (Ahrens 2013). This shifting between categories is what Schuster terms 'status mobility'. The economic recession of 2008-2009 led to a higher number of Nigerians in Spain losing their legal status and being unable to regularise, given that mass unemployment made it very difficult to obtain the required work contracts. Usually the presence of irregular migrants was tolerated in Spain, but the police target visible minorities for identity checks (Amnesty International 2011). As a result, the migrants' everyday mobility could become restricted, which usually had negative impacts on their livelihood and wellbeing. Goodluck continued to live as an irregular migrant and when he messaged me three years after our interview he said his situation had become very challenging:

To pay for my house rent now is a problem. For over two months now I have been at home because the police is asking me for documentation in the street. I was arrested by the police and sent to court. It was the judge that set me free because my lawyer wrote appeal.

(Goodluck, 39, m, without residence papers in Málaga)

Restricted mobility and access to services are common effects of immigration policies that intend to make destination countries less attractive through internal bordering practices (Bigo 2016). In Germany, for instance, following the 1993 asylum reform several

SOPEMI reports) provides a longer time range for these types of data, they are only available at national level and not disaggregated by citizenship of migrants.

⁶⁹ Even though the rate of family reunification is relatively high amongst Nigerians in Spain and Germany (Figure 6.1), it might still be an underestimate. Research shows that due to the backlogs for family reunification visas in Spain, especially non-EU couples often travel before all the legal formalities are completed – on average experiencing only 2.3 years of separation before arriving in Spain (González-Ferrer 2011: 206).

measures were introduced to deter asylum-seekers. The German government was one of the key member states pushing for the introduction of the Dublin Regulation. New German regulations for asylum-seekers meant that, individuals were dispersed to collective asylum residences in remote areas of Germany; they had to comply with the mandatory residence rule (*Residenzpflicht*) and were not allowed to seek employment.⁷⁰ Nigerians who first arrived in Germany spoke of these experiences of seeking asylum and the difficult living conditions they faced at the time.

You have to seek for political asylum. When I stay in Germany, it was never my dream to stay in Germany. But after I seek for political asylum, I should not leave my Landkreis. If I stay... stationed in... for example... you know Berlin very well? If they station you in Neukölln, you can't go to Potsdam or Zoologischer Garten. Why? Am I a criminal?

(Peter, m, 47, German-Nigerian in South East England)

In other instances, 'spatial entrapment' was an unintended consequence of immigration policies. In Spain, Nigerians often opted to move away from cities with large immigrant communities in order to speed up their regularisation process. Especially in Madrid I encountered many Nigerians who lived in localities that were still within commutable distance to Madrid, but in fact situated in adjacent regions, such as Castile-La Mancha. My informants argued that the high influx of migrants in Spain had created enormous backlogs for the municipal population register (the *padrón*), which was the first step in the regularisation process after the implementation of the continuous settlement programme in 2006. For the interview I conducted with Nnenna, for instance, I took a Madrid suburban train to the final station and then waited for one of the two busses that passed on a Saturday to take me to her small village – the already limited summer bus schedule had been even further reduced due to austerity measures. Both these intended and unintended immigration policy consequences have an isolating effect on migrants and hinder their social integration in destination countries.

A considerable number of my interviewees inhabited statuses that neither fitted the definition of a legal, nor that of an irregular status. Several scholars have highlighted how migrants, for instance, can be legally resident in a country but working in violation of the terms specified in their tourist or student visa. In other cases administrative delays can cause migrants to temporarily lose their proof of legal residence. These 'in-between'

⁷⁰ Since the so-called refugee 'crisis' in 2015 some of these measures have been lifted. Yet German asylum policies are characterised by their overarching aim of deterring asylum-seekers. For a more detailed discussion see Hinger (2016).

categories have attracted different labels, such as: semi-compliant (Ruhs and Anderson 2010); liminal migrants (Menjívar 2006); quasi-legal (Düvell 2008) and semi-legal (Kubal 2013). During my fieldwork I encountered several Nigerians who found themselves in a semi-legal status. Many informants who held a short-term residence permit in Spain or Italy were travelling to Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway or Switzerland often for periods of under a year. According to the EU *acquis* they are allowed to stay as tourists in other Schengen countries for a period up to three months in any half-year. As Kubal (2013) points out, it is difficult for authorities to know exactly when these three months of tourist visit have elapsed, because with the absence of border controls there are no entry stamps in their passport. One of the key informants I interviewed also mentioned that the police frequently encountered semi-legal Nigerians from other EU member states in Germany and the officials were not always fully informed about their rights:

Most cases of our girls who come from Italy or Spain and then they are arrested at work. Not because they are not supposed to be here in Schengen... they can... but because they are working [...] This girl came from Spain, they caught her at work with a Nigerian passport with Spanish residence. In fact she has stopped with prostitution in Spain, she now went into catering and hotel. But then in the winter there is no work, so she decided to come here. Then [the police] took her and said: 'We are going to deport her to Nigeria'. And I said: 'Why to Nigeria?' They thought the passport was not good, the passport was fake... I explained that the only thing that could be wrong with it, is that she was not there to take the passport personally, maybe they sent it from Nigeria. This passport was ok. They were going to deport this girl to Nigeria who had fought so hard for her residence permit. [...] The girl said: 'Please give me my passport and let me go back to Spain.' [...] She was eventually deported to Spain. When they come here, of course, they always say the day they were arrested is the day they came. Some have been arrested three or four times.

(Sarah, key informant, Berlin)

After member states eventually transposed the Long-Term Residence Directive with several years delay (2003/109/EC), third-country nationals were able to apply for a new European-wide residence paper that grants them rights and obligations similar to those of EU citizens. The holder of an EU long-term residence permit enjoys 'freedom of movement' rights between Schengen countries.⁷¹ Third-country nationals can apply for the EU long-term residence paper after 5 years of residence, otherwise Nigerians have to reside in Spain for 10 years before becoming eligible to naturalise as a Spanish citizen and enjoy freedom

⁷¹ The 2014 annual German migration report (BAMF 2016) shows an increase in the number of EU long-term residence permit holders that are using this right to relocate to another member state. In 2014 there were 4,412 EU long-term residence permit holders residing in Germany. This number is up from 2,995 in 2013; 1,578 in 2012; 734 in 2011 and 305 in 2010. In 2014 there were 78 Nigerian citizens with an EU long-term residence permit registered in Germany.

of movement. Yet, despite its apparent attractiveness, the uptake amongst third-country nationals still has been very low. This is partly because it was not publicised widely enough and its introduction often occurred alongside the existing national permanent residence permit. But even third-country nationals who manage to apply for the EU long-term residence paper still are subject to discretionary labour market restrictions (Directive 2003/109/EC) and can be denied a work permit after onward migrating to another member state. It therefore is not surprising that during my fieldwork I only met two Nigerians who had used the EU long-term residence paper to engage in onward migration. Bright had come to Germany in 2010 and quickly was issued with a work permit because of the qualifications he obtained as a truck driver in Spain:

I am part of the fortunate ones because I come here [to Germany] with my [Spanish] document [...] I was gathering information, not about me leaving *per se*, because things were still fine in Spain back then. When things started crumbling and there's no job, I listened to the news and checked which of the EU members is strongest... in terms of the economy... and the prospect of getting my kind of job.

(Bright, 38, m, with EU directive long-term residence permit in Düsseldorf)

The proportion of Nigerian migrants who managed to become naturalised European citizens varied in each member state. This is due to the fact that every member state sets its own residence requirements for third-country nationals to be eligible for naturalisation. From a state-centred perspective those who become naturalised citizens express a desire to become permanent members of their 'host' nation. But from a migrant-centred perspective holding a European passport also opens up new mobility opportunities and access to more rights. Due to provisions in the Nigerian constitution, citizens of Nigeria by birth may not renounce their citizenship. Thus, Nigerians can have citizenship rights in two countries and become dual citizens.⁷² My informants often mentioned that they had onward migrated shortly after receiving their European passport.

However, not everyone jumped at the opportunity to become a European citizen. Research participants were keen to stress that, as Nigerians, there were important differences between European passports from different destination societies. Chima had previously lived in Helsinki and decided not to apply for naturalisation in Finland, because

⁷² Although between 1999 and 2009 Nigerian consular staff in Berlin required those wanting to naturalise as German, to first renounce their Nigerian passport. A letter posted on the embassy website in 2011 acknowledged that this practice did not conform with the Nigerian constitution. But Nigerians were not refunded the €400 they paid for renunciation letters, nor were their Nigerian passports re-issued. www.africanheritagemagazine.de/embassy-news/

he believed that as a Black Finnish citizen at European airports he would still face the same extensive questioning which he had come to expect with his green Nigerian passport. He onward migrated to the South East of England together with his Finnish wife and said that he prefers to apply for British citizenship once he becomes eligible. In Chima's view it will be easier for him to claim Britishness. Another interviewee, Rachael, explained that these racialised and racist conceptions of who can be a citizen, and thereby 'belong to the nation', also continue to pose problems for second-generation Nigerians:

For example, even my children who are born here, the Germans ask them: 'Where do you come from?' Whereas in the UK, they ask you: 'Where do you come from *originally*?'. People assume that you could be a British citizen, although you have an accent [...] My children they were born here [in Germany] but they are all in the UK. Because I think the UK is easier for integration for the Black people.

(Rachael, 64, f, German-Nigerian in Berlin)

Rachael's children were made to feel excluded by German society despite the fact that they were born in the country and therefore she encouraged them to study and live in the UK.

6.2.3 *Working conditions, recognition and discrimination*

My research participants' desire to live in a place where they believed that the society is accepting of diversity – where they could feel free, respected and welcome – represented a wider context that impacted on their migration aspirations. Some of my informants had not engaged in onward migration, even though they felt it was hard to meet their wellbeing needs in their current place of residence. Informants were especially frustrated with their employment situation, because they had set out from Nigeria thinking that it would be easier to find a job which matched their skills in Europe. They decided not to onward migrate when they saw some prospects that their employment situation could eventually improve. Studies that compare migrants' occupational status in the origin and destination countries are rare. In their analysis of biographical survey data, Castagnone *et al.* (2014) illustrate that medium-high skilled workers from Ghana, Senegal and the Democratic Republic of Congo experienced considerable downgrading after migration to Europe, and that it took some migrants over 10 years to recover their occupational status. Many of my informants invested time learning the local language, familiarising themselves with the system and building their social networks. Even though their capabilities were negatively affected in the first years after arrival in Europe, eventually some migrants were able to improve their situation.

Destination societies also changed through the presence of migrants. Especially informants who had been living in Europe for a long time period, felt that since their arrival they had witnessed general improvements to the situation of migrants. Although they initially might have considered relocating elsewhere, they had grown accustomed to their country of residence and developed coping mechanisms to deal with some of the difficult situations they encountered.

Things are changing otherwise I would go. I could have easily packed my things and gone to the UK. But I have been here [in Germany] for quite a while, I am used to the system here and I know what to expect. I learnt the skills, fighting for things. But that is not the situation with most of our young people.

(Rachael, 64, f, German-Nigerian in Berlin)

But there was a consensus that there was a limit to the adverse conditions that could be endured in the hope of long-term improvements. Informants in Spain often expressed concerns that even Latin American migrants, who had been living in the country for considerably longer and spoke Spanish fluently, on the whole were still largely relegated to low-paid jobs. While Nigerians were prepared to endure bad working conditions and low salaries at the beginning of their stay, they also believed there needed to be some prospect of future improvement of their situation, demonstrated either through the success of fellow diasporans or other migrant communities. When social mobility was unlikely in their country of residence, my informants envisaged their futures to lie in another destination.

When the situation in their destination countries was unexpectedly altered, interviewees who did not necessarily have plans to relocate, were compelled to reconsider their options. For instance, informants often mentioned how alienated and threatened they felt by racist public discourses and hate crimes in their previous EU country of residence. Over recent years, populist right-wing parties have been gaining support in many EU countries, which has reconfigured politics more widely in that other centre-ground political parties now also are calling for more restrictive immigration policies. Interviewees often stressed that discrimination existed in *all* European countries and recent reports also found that People of Colour frequently experience xenophobia and racism, even though racist hate crimes in general remain under-reported and miscategorised (Nwabuzo 2015; UNHRC 2017). Nevertheless, at the time of my fieldwork in England during 2012, many Nigerians believed that in the UK racism was not as overt as elsewhere in Europe and anti-discrimination laws were enforced more vigorously. But their experiences might be considerably different after the 'hostile environment' policies and Brexit referendum, which

have emboldened some individuals in their expression of anti-immigrant sentiments and led to an increase in racially-motivated hate crimes in Britain.

Another sudden change was the global economic crisis and subsequent austerity measures, which were felt particularly severely in Spain. Unemployment amongst the Spanish nationals peaked at 24.3 per cent at the end of 2013. For the non-citizen resident population, unemployment stood at 36.6 per cent and reached 52.5 per cent amongst third-country nationals of African origin (Colectivo Ioé 2013; INE 2014: 5). The lack of employment was compounded by the fact that all of my informants had exhausted their maximum two-year entitlement to national unemployment insurance, at which point no other universal welfare was available and other austerity measures started to take effect. This created especially strong aspirations for onward mobility, although most informants I spoke to in Spain only had the national short-term or permanent residence papers, and not the EU long-term residence paper or Spanish passport, which would have enabled them to seek work elsewhere in Europe (Ahrens 2013). Meanwhile Latin American migrants, who had preferential access to Spanish citizenship after 2 years of legal residence, were able to use onward migration as a 'coping mechanism' to escape the recession in Spain (Mas Giralt 2016). Another survey, about the Latin American community in London, found that 30 per cent of the respondents were onward migrants, nearly all of whom had previously lived in Spain (McIlwaine 2012).

Furthermore, migrants have also experienced increasing precarity due to the fundamental restructuring of labour markets in Europe and other high-income countries since the 1990s. New employment practices, such as subcontracting, temporary employment, casual employment, and the 'gig economy' have caused a decline in employment conditions. For instance, since 2003 several German labour market sectors, like hospitality, catering and retail, have replaced their formerly contracted workers with *mini-jobbers*.⁷³ These 'precarious' and 'flexible' employment conditions have disproportionately affected the livelihoods of many migrant workers (Schierup *et al.* 2015), seeing that they are over-represented in these sectors:

I worked as an *Elektrotechniker* [electro technician]... when the company started moving down and collapsing in 2004 we had to change our job. They sent everyone away. That is when I started working with *Randstad* [a private sector employment

⁷³ *Mini-jobs* are classified as marginal employment and were introduced in 2003 to legalise informal employment and second jobs. Until 2012 neither employers nor workers had to pay income tax, social security or pension contribution for these 'zero-hour contracts'. Entire sectors of the German economy started to exclusively contract workers on *mini-jobs*. See: Blankenburg, S. (2012) 'Mini-jobs' don't work in Germany, and they won't work in Britain. *The Guardian*, 21 August, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/aug/21/mini-jobs-germany-britain>

agency], there was no other hope then... that is when Germany had started going somehow with the *Zeitarbeit* [temping work via employment agencies], you can't get direct job you have to go through the *Zeitarbeit*... everything started changing. You were paid with a low, low sum of money.

(Collins, 46, m, German-Nigerian in Málaga)

Although underemployment was the main reason for Collins to onward migrate, he also moved to Spain because his wife had been unable to obtain a residence permit in Germany. Like many other Nigerians I met, Collins' wife moved Spain in the hope of benefiting from one of the regularisation programmes for irregular migrants. Through the redundancy payment from his previous job and savings from Germany, Collins became self-employed in Spain. His business was going well for several years, but when we spoke in 2012 he had hardly any customers and he was considering moving elsewhere.

Table 6.1 indicates the employment rates for different nationalities and regions of birth based on data from the 2011 Census. These employment data are likely to be influenced by the economic crisis, but they reflect the situation at the time when fieldwork was conducted. Some subsamples are very small, therefore the findings should be interpreted with caution. Employment rates for third-country nationals and Nigerians without EU citizenship tend to be low, as these migrant groups are also characterised by their shorter residence periods in Europe. Third-country nationals and Nigerians who had become naturalised EU citizens show higher rates of employment, reflecting better local language skills and greater familiarity with their residence country. For the UK, at least male Nigerian onward migrants who relocated to the UK show the same levels of employment as British-Nigerians (73 per cent), while the employment rate of female Nigerian onward migrants is lower than that of British-Nigerians (Table 6.1). What is not apparent from this table is the extent of informal employment and 'side hustles' that Nigerians engaged in to supplement their living expenses and fulfil other aspirations. Activities included braiding hair for other African women, preparing cakes for celebrations, cleaning in private homes, sewing traditional dresses or loading shipments for Nigeria. Through targeted recruitment, several Nigerians I met also became involved in direct sales companies, e.g. Mary Kay, Herbalife, etc., where they lost considerable amounts of money because they were unable to sell all the products they were required to stock.

My informants also reconsidered their migration projects after receiving more information about the opportunities in other destinations. They thought that the destination context was important in determining to what extent they could make use of their capabilities and realise their aspirations. Multi-sited research studies have highlighted that even migrant groups from the same origin country show significant variations in

Table 6.1 Employment characteristics by nationality and region of birth

Nationality/Region of birth	All	Employment rate		
		total	men	women
UK				
native-born British nationals	54,513,365	73%	77%	69%
EU-born EU nationals	2,090,320	77%	82%	73%
non-EU born EU-nationals	210,090	67%	75%	59%
non-EU born non-EU nationals	2,074,285	58%	65%	51%
Nigerian-born British nationals	82,245	75%	78%	73%
Nigerian-born EU nationals	5,790	73%	78%	65%
Nigerian-born non-EU nationals	113,145	59%	62%	54%
Germany				
native-born German nationals	64,423,790	78%	82%	74%
EU-born EU nationals	1,543,680	73%	82%	65%
non-EU born EU-nationals	245,220	60%	72%	49%
non-EU born non-EU nationals	2,428,100	56%	69%	45%
Nigerian-born German nationals	6,980	70%	88%	43%
Nigerian-born EU nationals	390 u	72% u	84% u	60% u
Nigerian-born non-EU nationals	9,960	54%	66%	31%
Spain				
native-born Spanish nationals	40,647,160	57%	62%	52%
EU-born EU nationals	1,627,400	48%	53%	44%
non-EU born EU-nationals	126,275	51%	56%	46%
non-EU born non-EU nationals	2,968,640	44%	45%	42%
Nigerian-born Spanish nationals	610 u	43% u	43% u	43% u
Nigerian-born EU nationals	140 u	100% u	104% u	100% u
Nigerian-born non-EU nationals	22,720	29%	34%	23%

Source: European Statistical System, 2011 Census; *Note:* u - low reliability of results. Especially for small subsamples results may be unreliable when variables are cross-tabulated given that these are aggregated data (and not microdata) structured according to the hypercubes.

integration outcomes depending on national context, which has been partly attributed to differences in educational systems, labour markets and integration policies (Crul and Vermeulen 2003). Especially in Germany and Spain my informants expressed that they felt limited to do 'migrant jobs' or 'Black people's jobs' which they perceived as low-paid and demeaning. In the quote below Efem explains how she observed a segmentation of the labour market in her previous two countries of residence, which made it difficult for People of Colour to enter certain jobs.

They want to choose for them what they should be. As a coloured person you cannot go further than that. There are places in Holland and Germany they are all the same, that a Black person can never work there. Like security, a common thing everybody works here, you cannot do it there. Being a policeman is a no-go-area. They keep you at a level... Even if you want to do it. They will suppress you.

(Efem, 43, f, Nigerian-Dutch in Manchester)

It is also likely that in the UK, more Nigerians were in full-time education and therefore not counted as part of the active labour force. A study about African migrants in Italy and Spain shows that those who furthered their education in the destination countries stood a better chance of experiencing social mobility (Fokkema and de Haas 2015). But amongst my informants who lived in continental Europe hardly any first-generation migrants had been able to enter higher education, instead they recounted their unsuccessful attempts to get the academic qualifications and professional skills they gained in Nigeria recognised. They had heard, however, that this validation process was much easier in the UK.

6.2.4 In pursuit of (more) education

By contrast, it was more common for first-generation Nigerians to study at tertiary level in the UK; most had already pursued or were planning to enter higher education there in the future. The high population growth rate in Nigeria means that demand for higher education has not been met. Although more universities have been established in recent years (see Table 6.2), the instruction quality has declined and Nigerian Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) suffer from one of the worst student to lecturer ratios in the world. The lack of places at public universities has created extreme demand for academic credentials, so that young Nigerians are paying high sums to enrol at private Nigerian HEIs. In addition, every year thousands of students enrol at dubious unregistered institutions ⁷⁴ in search of the proverbial 'golden fleece'. Migration to Europe provides an alternative means of acquiring skills and qualifications. In the case of my interviewees, many had furthered their education during their time in Europe or planned to do so in future. The number of international

⁷⁴ In 2015 the National Universities Commission (NUC) released a list of 65 illegal institutions facing prosecution or investigation due to missing licences <http://guardian.ng/news/nuc-names-65-illegal-varsities-prosecutes-eight-others/>

students from Nigeria enrolled at universities throughout the world has nearly tripled between 2004 and 2014, rising from 23,476 to 75,539 (Table 6.2). Currently Nigeria is amongst the top-ten origin countries of internationally mobile students (Unesco 2016).

The UK is the most popular location for the pursuit of higher education: in 2013 there were 17,973 international students from Nigeria enrolled at British universities – constituting the third largest group of international students after 86,204 Chinese and 19,604 Indian students. Some UK institutions have been given new names by the Nigerian students: Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen is called ‘University of Ibadan UK branch’, while London Metropolitan University is referred to as ‘Lagos State University, UK branch’ (Adepoju and van der Wiel 2010: 318). But the disadvantages of British universities nowadays are the high tuition fees and an unfavourable currency exchange rate for

Table 6.2 Nigerian HEI applications, admissions and international student mobility

Year	No. of universities in Nigeria	Applications to Nigerian HEIs	Admissions to Nigerian HEIs	Admission rate for HEIs	Nigerians studying abroad
2004/05	56	841,878	122,492	15%	23,476
2005/06	74	916,371	76,984	8%	26,906
2006/07	79	803,472	88,524	11%	27,969
2007/08	90	911,653	107,370	12%	30,185
2008/09	92	1,054,060	118,691	11%	34,105
2009/10	101	1,182,381	211,991	18%	42,535
2010/11	103	1,375,671	346,605	25%	45,062
2011/12	117	1,493,609	360,170	24%	49,492
2012/13	124	1,503,933	410,157	27%	49,568
2013/14	129	1,735,810	400,269	23%	52,066
2014/15	129	1,632,172	379,793	23%	75,539
2015/16	140	1,428,379	281,993	20%	n.a.

Sources: Number of universities in Nigeria from National Universities Commission (NUC) www.nuc.edu.ng; Applicants and admissions data from Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) statistics www.jamb.gov.ng; Data on internationally mobile students from Unesco UIS database <http://data.uis.unesco.org>

Note: From 2010 onwards the centralised University Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) has been used for both university and polytechnic entry. Before 2010 the exam was used for university admission only.

Nigerians.⁷⁵ Those who apply directly from Nigeria to further their education are classified as international students and have to pay hefty tuition fees of on average nearly £12,000 per year, but this varies depending on the course and the university. While it used to be common for international students to work alongside their studies to supplement their living costs (Adi 1998; Harris 2006), tougher immigration regulations have made this a less viable option in recent years.

George spent just under a year in the UK on a student visa, before realising that his family was not in a position to pay the high international tuition fees. He then moved to Germany, where it is easier for international students to comply with financial conditions. International students without a local sponsor are required to deposit €8,000 in a blocked banked account to show evidence of their ability to finance their living costs during the academic year. But German universities do not charge any tuition fees,⁷⁶ and only a low administration fee, of around €400 per year has to be paid:

I came from a middle-class family. OK, they are not millionaires. They just want to help their son to get a better education somewhere. But my family could not meet up to the British enrolment requirements. Some money you had to pay in deposit because you are foreign, plus tuition fees for a year in advance... everything was too much. And I had an uncle over here [in Germany] and he said: 'Why don't you come over here? Maybe you can make it.' So initially I had no intentions to come to Germany. I was like... maybe I

⁷⁵ The 'been-to' generation of Nigerians who pursued tertiary education in the UK between the 1950s and 1970s found it easier to pay for their studies abroad. This was due to several reasons: the Nigerian government and private enterprises used to sponsor more international scholarships; Commonwealth citizens still benefited from visa-free entry to the UK; and tuition fees for international students remained relatively low until the 1980s. Another important factor was that living costs in the UK were more affordable, seeing that the exchange rate of the Nigerian Naira was adjusted in a one-to-one relationship with British Pound between 1960 and 1967. Yet, the institutional racism African migrants faced at the time was extreme. Adi (1998: 155) reminds us that African students petitioned the British Council to create more hostels in London, because the colour bar made it difficult for African students to arrange their own accommodation.

⁷⁶ Historically German universities have not charged tuition fees, but there was a period from 2005-2013 when some German regions (*Bundesländer*) decided to introduce tuition fees. Since then all regions abolished tuition fees for enrolment at public universities; exceptions apply to the 109 private German universities.

will go to the States, which is even more expensive! [Laughs]. I just wanted to be in an English-speaking country, but later that wasn't the case.

(George, 33, Nigerian on a postgraduate student visa in Cologne)

Another option to study in Europe without having to pay excessive international tuition fees, is for Nigerians to qualify as 'home students' in the UK. Students who hold a European passport or have a permanent residence permit in another EU member state, pay the same tuition fees as 'home' and EU students. Other factors that made the UK an attractive destination for university studies were the easier recognition of Nigerian secondary school qualifications, English language instruction, the possibility to study part-time while working and the high regard for British qualifications in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world. Amongst my research participants the pursuit of educational opportunities, especially at the tertiary level, therefore featured as an important motivation for onward migration towards the UK. Several informants only stayed in the UK for the duration of their higher education degree and later returned to their previous European country of residence. Three informants onward migrated 'virtually' and enrolled for online distance learning degrees with the British Open University; they only came to the UK for exams.

In the next quote, Uchenna compares his experiences in Bonn and London, where at the time of the interview he had lived for 9 years each. In London Uchenna pursued undergraduate and post-graduate studies, while also working part-time in a skilled manual job in logistics.

I contrasted the facilities, the amenities, the behaviour of the people, and the cleanliness and for these areas Germany comes out tops, in my opinion. But when it comes to opportunities to improve yourself, Britain was and it still is easier for me and some other Africans, who wanted to improve themselves. After working here for one year, I applied to study and I got so much encouragement. I was being begged to improve myself... any office I went to, like UCAS [Universities and Colleges Admissions Service] or the Citizens Advice Bureau. Also if you want to open a business or go to the bank the emphasis is on you *per se*, not on your skin colour. In Germany I would love to say... well it's my country, I love the way it is. But at the same time the institutions and the way things work there, will make you feel excluded.

(Uchenna, 44, m, German-Nigerian in London)

For Uchenna the UK represented a place where he was able to further his education and earn a stable livelihood. At the same time Uchenna continued to have strong feelings of belonging towards Germany after residing in the UK for nearly a decade, and despite recalling many instances where he felt excluded in Germany.

Especially Nigerian women with nursing qualifications who had lived in other parts Europe preferred to relocate to the UK in order to further their professional qualifications and to find a job at their skill level. After living in Italy for 8 years, Joy was now training for additional certifications in nursing:

In Italy there are few opportunities... due to racism foreigners are doing the menial jobs. My first expectation was to be reunited with my husband and to raise a family... the gap [of a long-distance relationship] was so much, you cannot raise a proper home like that. I was also hoping to get a proper job and settle in Italy and then go back to Nigeria one day. But in the aspect of my career it was cut off... because of the language barrier and the curriculum. I ended up nearly losing everything in my career. In Nigeria I was a nurse [...] When I tried to exchange my licence to see where I can fit in, they gave me a care job [...] I worked in Italy for many years. But I wanted something more. New knowledge and new technologies and go back to my profession.

(Joy, 38, f, Nigerian-Italian in London)

Of course, there are ethical questions surrounding the recruitment of healthcare workers from low-income countries, given that it can contribute to 'brain drain' (Raghuram 2009). The British National Health Service (NHS) has adopted a formal 'code of practice' that forbids its employees to actively recruit healthcare workers from a specified list of low-income countries that experience severe shortages of medical staff.⁷⁷ Nigeria features on this list, and even though there might not be any active recruitment in the country, individuals wanting to migrate to the UK on their own initiative are not deterred by this NHS policy. Thus the number of doctors and nurses from Nigeria has been steadily increasing in the UK. There has been a high demand for medical staff abroad, and Nigerian doctors are attracted by better salaries and working conditions (Hagopian *et al.* 2005). In 2007 the emigration rates for Nigerian doctors and nurses were estimated at 13.6 per cent and 11.7 per cent, respectively (Healy and Oikelome 2007).

It is likely that the most recent hike of tuition fees in 2012, which enables English universities to charge home students up to £9,000 annually for undergraduate studies, will make this intra-European migration study trajectory less attractive. Free training for nurses in the UK has also been scrapped. Nigerians already have started enrolling for degrees at other study destinations where the programmes are taught in English, tuition fees are lower and living costs are more affordable. In 2013 there were 11,933 Nigerian students enrolled in Ghana, 3,578 in Ukraine, 2,669 in Malaysia, 2,243 in South Africa, 1,297 in the United Arab Emirates and 820 in Finland (Unesco 2016). Five interviewees I spoke to had graduated

⁷⁷ This NHS code of practice, however, does not apply to the private healthcare sector in the UK.

from universities in Turkey, Malta, Northern Cyprus, Romania and Poland respectively, and then onward migrated to EU member states.

In Nigeria, Joseph completed a Higher National Diploma (HND), but had not been allocated his desired choice for furthering his education with a Bachelor of Science, despite successfully passing the Nigerian centralised university admissions exam (UTME). That is why he started looking online for options to study abroad:

The higher you reach, the better you get in life. To get a more solid position in society, in terms of income and respect, everybody just wants to be a graduate, Master's or PhD, whatever... We believe that's the only way we think we can make money in life. All my folks are educationalists, my two parents and my older brothers. If you study abroad and come back home, you are better off than those who studied back home in Nigeria. That makes people have this desire... that is very important. So I went online, searching for where the tuition fees are not so expensive and where the visa application is not as tedious. I figured Cyprus is a tourist island, good food, nice... Then I applied for a programme called Civil Engineering for four years. I already had my HND degree from Nigeria and my BSc in Civil Engineering from Cyprus [...] But I still wanted to taste the European world, the clubbing, the partying, the girls... Then I thought, where can I go to for my next degree... America has too much gun violence [...] Then I came here for a MSc... Actually I don't like the UK, it's too expensive...

(Joseph, 30, m, on a student visa in London)

From what Joseph explained about seeking out a destination with less stringent visa policies, it could be possible to assume that Nigerians who study at the periphery of Europe, are following a stepwise migration pattern. Meaning that they first move to an easier-to-reach-location before trying to enter more desirable destination countries (Konadu-Agyemang 1999). But at least for Joseph and the other students I spoke to, they did not have a concrete final destination in mind at the start of their journey. Indeed, during the interview Joseph told me that he sits down about every two years in order to 'dream' about what he would like to achieve. These repeated conscious reflections about how he envisaged his life is also the reason that he chose the nickname 'Joseph the Dreamer', a figure from the bible he identified with. While in Northern Cyprus Joseph received financial rewards from his Cypriot university for recruiting more Nigerian students.⁷⁸ This is a common strategy for universities to increase their recruitment and can set in motion a chain migration. Joseph's quote also shows the changeability involved in migration trajectories due to wider structural changes and individual circumstances. Even though the United States used to

⁷⁸ Northern Cyprus now has established 10 universities that mainly attract international students and, in light of the embargoes, this sector represents an important source of revenue. In his novel *The Falconer*, Chigozie Obioma tells the story of the young Nigerian student Jay who studied in Northern Cyprus, for which the author draws on his own experiences of completing his undergraduate degree at Cyprus International University.

rank fairly high in many Nigerian migrants' list of most desirable destinations, my informants often commented on the media coverage through which they learnt about gun violence and the lack of affordable healthcare in the USA. Informants made clear that these two issues had negatively affected their view of the USA. And although Joseph did not necessarily enjoy living in London at first, he completed his postgraduate degree, got married and now is working in a management role in the British construction sector.

6.2.5 Transposing aspirations to the next generation

Migrants do not only evaluate their migration project in terms of the immediate benefits they can reap for themselves. Onward migrants are typically older than first-time migrants and some of my informants by that stage had established their own family or reunited with family members who had stayed put in Nigeria. Therefore, a considerable number of my research participants were also considering how best to enhance the future of the next generation. My informants saw their own migration projects, including potential onward migrations, as a means to also improve the prospects of their children.

At the earlier stages of their migration project, Nigerian parents strived to acquire a permanent residence or a European passport for the second generation and 1.5 generation. They argued that the enhanced mobility rights their children gained from holding a secure legal status in Europe would afford them the best opportunities in life. All EU passports enable visa-free travel to far more countries than a Nigerian passport does, and in addition they allow settlement in any of the EU member states:

My experience was so rough, because I was a single mother. I struggled to get my paper and I applied several times and they denied me. And thank god, in 2010 they gave me papers. Since I got my own, I have been trying to get for my son. Now he is seven years old and without paper, but he was born here in Málaga [...] He can't move out of Spain, if I want to travel who am I going to leave my son with? [...] The month my son gets his document I will go back to my country or another country. It is very important for my son to have documents. So he can be able to come back here when he is grown, instead of running up and down for a visa. I want to do what makes him happy when he is grown.

(Anita, 36, f, short-term residence paper, Málaga)

In general, Nigerians thought that providing their children with an English language education was important – three parents had sent their children to British international schools while still living in Spain and Germany. Many other parents also enrolled the children they left behind in international schools in Nigeria, with the intention of bringing them to Europe once they were older. Parents believed that by cultivating the English language skills of their children, in the long-term, the next generation would be able to make

the most of opportunities and transnational ties in various countries. But when local alternatives in Europe were perceived to be inadequate, parents considered to relocate to another place or arranged for their children to move elsewhere. Research conducted with Indian engineers found that some gave up a comfortable lifestyle and high salaries in the Middle East in order to provide their children with a better education in Canada (Das Gupta 2005). Due to their extended stay in Europe, the parents I interviewed were more familiar with advantages and disadvantages of particular countries. In their view, certain places provided better or more accessible opportunities in both higher education and the labour market for their children:

And we have two kids. They are both in... they studying in the States [...] they are living in the *Internat* [boarding school]. I mean the education is free here... and that means no school fees for them. But being in the States it saves them unnecessary harassment. The impression I have here [in Germany] – if you try too hard to make it... it's not even appreciated. It's like, you are too ambitious. And that puts them off... Kids don't even want to try, you know.

(Charles, 67, m, Nigerian-German in Cologne)

Aside from the onward migration that parents engaged in or arranged for the benefit of their children, there were also a number of 1.5 and second-generation Nigerians who onward migrated by themselves. Previous studies have highlighted how some second-generation migrants 'actualise' their parents' unfulfilled desire to return to their homeland (Christou and King 2014). In these cases, the ancestral homeland has become an idealised place within the families' discursive practices and the children often have fond memories of the places they visited throughout their childhood on family holidays. In migration scholarship the way that migrants envisage their migration project ending in their origin country is referred to as the 'myth of return' (Anwar 1979; Safran 1991), but it might also be possible to speak of a 'myth of onward migration'.⁷⁹ Within families the *unreached* destinations of the parents' generation can attain a mythical status, similar to that of the ancestral homeland Nigeria. At times family holidays to these other destinations reinforce the positive associations some second-generation migrants have with these places. The UK in particular held an unrivalled appeal within the Nigerian 'diaspora space', alongside other destinations such as the US and Canada:

⁷⁹ Melissa Kelly gave a paper on this generational perspective in relation to onward migration and we discussed this topic at length at the workshop on 'Global Onward Migration', which was organised at COMPAS, Oxford by Ayumi Takenaka in September 2014. Also see Kelly (2017)

London was always highly regarded, I'm not sure why my father didn't make it here. [...] Recently my mother told me, his dream was always to do a PhD in London... I'm not sure if he ever told me that. A couple of years ago I would have never dreamt of doing a PhD, but now I'm doing exactly that.

(Damilola, 36, f, German-Nigerian in London)

The Nigerian 1.5 and second generation in Europe grew up with mobility experiences and connections to various places. Many became onward migrants at earlier stages of their life course, because they generally acquired a European passport at a young age via their parents. The 1.5 and second generation moved on to places where they felt they could belong, as well as achieve their life aspirations. Like many other first-generation migrants, their parents' generation usually had fewer expectations to develop feelings of belonging in their destination countries. Discrimination and racism were something that the older generations frequently experienced in Europe and had grown to expect, but it was also something they hoped to shield their children from by either onward migrating with them or facilitating their children's move to another country.

6.3 Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to explore the drivers of Nigerian onward migration. To this end I analysed the interactions of aspirations and capabilities in structuring the onward mobilities of Nigerian migrants in Europe. The findings presented in this chapter suggest that the informants interviewed as part of this study migrated to Europe due to their aspirations to build a stable livelihood, further their education or escape poverty. Some attempted to realise their ambitions within Nigeria or the wider region, by relocating to another city or another country in West Africa, but ultimately they decided that emigration to Europe was the better option. Europe was perceived to be easier to reach than other destinations like the USA or Canada; nonetheless, visa and immigration policies still posed significant barriers to my informants' emigration. This means that the Nigerians who came to Europe constitute a highly selected group of migrants, who usually had sufficient capabilities to leave Nigeria. Those who came to Europe to join family members usually benefited from more stable residence permits. However, Nigerians who came to Europe on student visas and tourist visas, entered irregularly or were trafficked often struggled for several years to regularise their legal status and find work that was commensurate with their skills.

This research extends our knowledge of how both temporal and spatial dimensions influence migration trajectories. This study highlights that the factors that drive migration can differ considerably along the migration project and the life cycle. At the beginning of their stays in Europe, most Nigerians were concerned with gaining a stable legal status in Europe; whilst later they were also focused on enhancing their capabilities by accumulating economic and cultural resources. Many onward migrated in the hope of finding a better-paid job and improved working conditions. Furthermore, this study found that, for Nigerians who were residing in different EU countries, one common motivation for onward migration in the direction of the UK was the pursuit of higher education. The evidence from this study also suggests that, once Nigerians started their own families or were able to bring their families to Europe, the enhancement of the lives of their children also became a motivation for onward migration.

Although this chapter has presented various drivers for international migration and onward migration amongst Nigerians, it is important to stress that the informants I spoke to often had complex and inter-related motivations for migrating. Furthermore, when my informants considered relocating, they often weighed up the opportunity of return migration, against the other options of staying put in the current country of residence and onward migrating elsewhere. The reason that many Nigerians considered onward migration rather than a return to Nigeria, is that those individuals believed that there had not been a meaningful improvement of conditions in their origin country since they left. These findings expand our understanding of the determinants of African migrations that typically focus on the motivations of individuals at earlier stages in their life cycle when they still reside in their country of origin. By analysing how migrant decision-making evolves throughout the migration project and life course, this chapter contributes new insights to research about the drivers of international migration and onward migration.

Chapter 7

Patterns of Onward Migration and Multi-Sited Transnationalism

Transnationalism is concerned with understanding migrants' and non-migrants' connections and practices that transcend the boundaries of the nation-state. Although there is considerable ambiguity about the defining features of transnationalism, most empirical studies in the field have focused on transnational mobility and ties that connect individuals, communities and institutions in a particular origin country, region or place with migrants in destinations abroad. In other words, previous multi-sited research has focused on transnational connections between the 'homeland' and a particular diasporic destination. However, this conceptualisation of transnationalism does not capture the experience of onward migrants who have lived in several countries and thus formed transnational ties laterally across multiple locations and also remain engaged with their origin country. The lives of onward migrants are characterised by complex, multi-directional and dynamic movements, alongside further 'enfolded mobilities' that are local and international, embodied and virtual, and real and imagined (Hannam *et al.* 2006, Williams *et al.* 2011).

In order to visualise the onward migration patterns of my informants, I did a 'sequence analysis' of their migration histories (Castagnone 2011). For the 45 informants I remained in touch with, it was also possible to add a further 6 international moves that took place after the interview date and August 2016. For the purpose of the sequence analysis all international migrations of at least one-year duration were visualised chronologically. I separately analysed moves of shorter duration and internal migrations, which also inform the interpretation of the findings. By comparing and contrasting the patterns that emerged in the sequence analysis with the themes I identified in the interview data, it was possible to further analyse the data concerning other variables, such as age, gender, migration cohort, legal status and transnational family ties.

From the sequence analysis (Figure 7.1), three main mobility patterns can be observed amongst my informants: a) the preference for the UK as a destination for onward migration, b) the emergence of new destinations for those who engage in several onward migrations, c) and return and circular migrations to a previous country of residence and Nigeria. It is worth noting again though, that the fieldwork focused on only three destination

countries in Europe, therefore the migration patterns I describe here are not fully representative of the wider intra-European migration patterns of Nigerian migrants. In addition, the observations are right-censored, because I was not able to stay in touch with all of my informants and therefore some might have returned or onward migrated to another country since the interviews were conducted.

Based on my findings I develop the concept of 'multi-sited transnationalism', in order to more adequately account for the transnational mobilities and translocal connections of onward migrants. Through the analysis of the trajectories and narratives of my interviewees, this chapter seeks to understand the various ways in which onward migration and multi-sited transnationalism can affect the individual migrants and (re)shape transnational families. The central research question of this chapter therefore is concerned with the patterns of onward migration and in turn understanding the impact on families' evolving transnational identities, ties and practices. I will present the empirical findings using a relational approach that highlights how onward migration is embedded in wider structures and the life-cycle. The findings contribute new insights into how the repertoires of family life are transformed in the context of international migration.

7.1 Diverse trajectories and changing understandings of 'belonging'

Individual migrants employ significant *agency* when pursuing their migration projects within the constraints placed upon them. Onward migration is the result of a series of choices that migrants make, which produce complex and evolving migration trajectories. One of the main patterns in Figure 7.1 is the gravitation towards the UK that is evident in the onward migrations. Out of the individuals who onward migrated after having resided in a first member state, 38 per cent opted to relocate to the UK for their next step. Except for three, all informants who onward migrated to the UK had been resident in Europe for an extended period of time and therefore held EU passports, which facilitated this movement. A large number of onward migrants in the UK had been residing in Germany before and previous countries of residence included Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Austria and Ireland.

Interviewees mentioned various reasons for relocating. The UK was seen as a better place to look for employment especially for those who had been unemployed before; several individuals wanted to further their education; and those who started a family felt that it was better to raise their children in the UK. Thus, particular stages in the life-course were important in shaping onward migration. Furthermore, the wider structural context also influenced onward migration patterns. Migrants who previously lived in Italy, Spain or

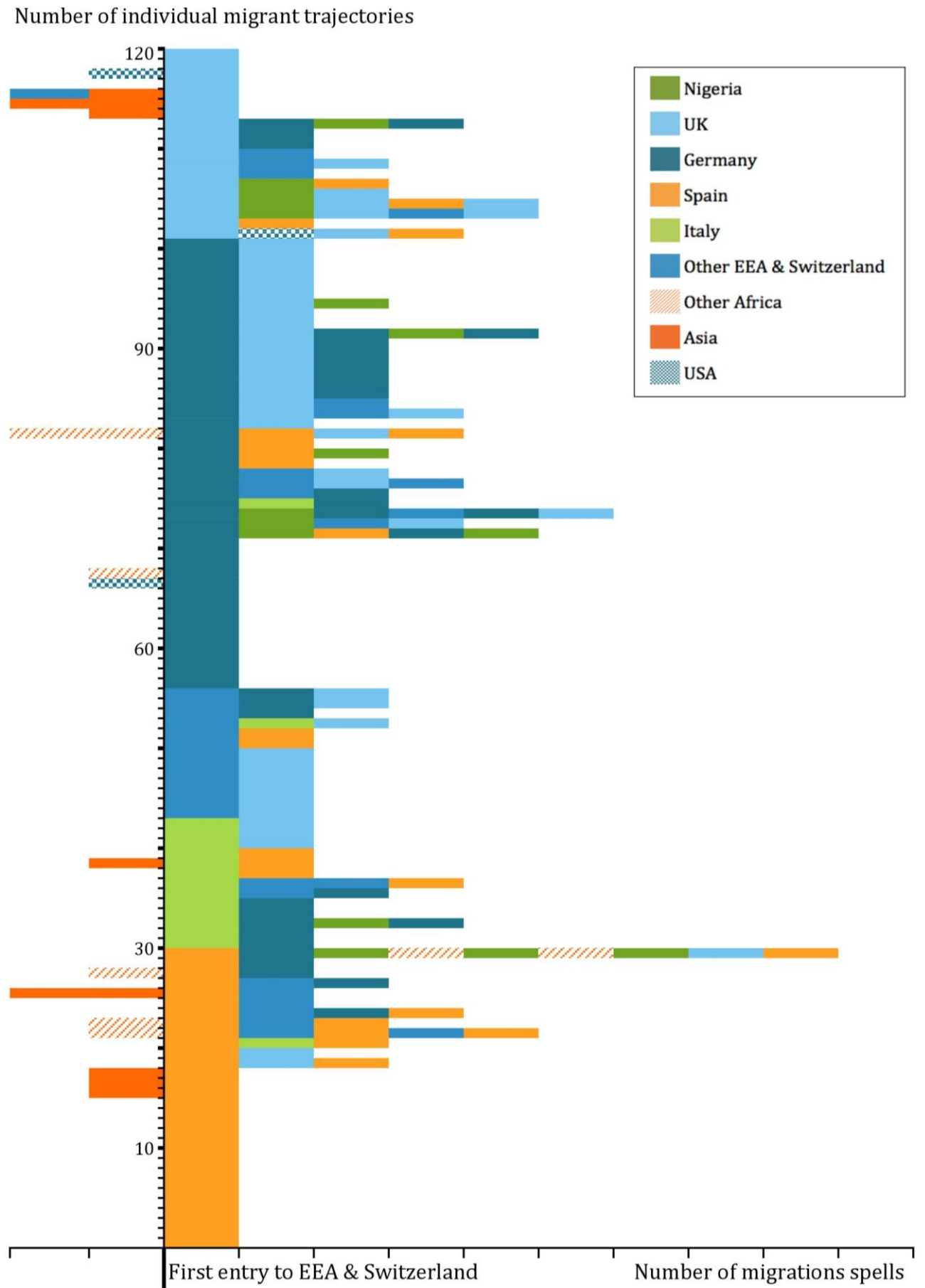


Figure 7.1 Migration trajectories of interviewees (n=120)

Ireland mentioned that they had been very content and had even purchased houses there. Their onward mobilities mainly occurred because they felt that during the financial crisis it was impossible for them to gain a livelihood. My findings are therefore influenced by the global economic crisis, which also made Nigerians feel 'pushed' or 'forced' to leave their previous country of residence.

Aside from the aforementioned influences at the micro and macro-level, migrant communities as a whole also contribute to the *active construction* of transnational space. Concepts such as the 'transnational social field' (Basch *et al.* 1994) help us understand the simultaneities of diasporic life, through the ways in which intimacies and everyday practices are often extended across space and time. Voigt-Graf (2004) illustrates the diverse nature of transnational networks by developing different spatial models for the three Indian migrant communities which are part of her research. Similarly, amongst the Nigerians I spoke to it was possible to discern variations in transnational networks associated with the different migration histories of the various ethno-regional groups. For instance, Nigerians originating from Edo State tended to have several social ties with Italy, whereas the Yoruba had more close family members in the UK. Through onward migration the shape of these established and overlapping transnational networks is becoming re-configured.

In addition, it is possible to identify distinct hierarchies of places, determined respectively by their popularity and the size of the diasporic population. This echoes Massey's concept of power geometry (Massey 1993), whereby the power of individuals is dependent on their place in relation to wider flows and networks. The ranking of places is particularly apparent in the way that individuals and families who did not move to the UK but to other destinations, still aimed to progressively relocate upward within a perceived hierarchy of places (Ahrens *et al.* 2016; Paul 2011; Voigt-Graf 2004). When considering where to move, my participants often weighed up the wider communities' favoured destinations against their personal aspirations and circumstances. Within Europe, Nigerian migrants tended to think of the UK, and especially London, as the most desirable location. Overall, however, Nigerian diasporans rated the United States and Canada more highly.

At times the decision to onward migrate was a compromise between several options. My informants at times also mentioned that they briefly contemplated a return to Nigeria, but usually quickly discarded that option. They felt that the situation in their origin country had not improved, and should they return they would have to face many of the same issues that had compelled them to emigrate. The findings suggest that where conditions for a return are unfavourable or problematic, relocating to a 'diasporic node' with a vibrant ethnic community that reproduces most elements of the 'cultural hearth' can appear like a good alternative or make a return unnecessary (Voigt-Graf 2004). In Europe, one of the

main Nigerian diasporic nodes certainly is London. When leaving Peckham Rye station in South London, material representations of Nigerian and Yoruba culture are highly visible. The area is affectionately called 'Little Lagos' due to the shops stocking yams, okra and Nigerian herbs, the restaurants selling suya meat and other typical dishes, bustling hairdressers and barber shops, market stalls displaying Nollywood films, and the colourfully dressed attendants rushing to the African churches and mosques.

In Adébáyò's case, he and his partner needed to find a location that fitted in with both their career needs and wider family and transnational ties:

I left [Germany] because I was getting married. We knew each other in Nigeria, we went to the same primary school... we bumped into each other at a party in London... [...] Actually at that point I was contemplating moving to Nigeria because my parents were also returning [...] My wife she is a solicitor and it would have been a lot harder for her to move out and come to Germany, because she doesn't speak the language and because of the qualifications. Whereas I have an IT background and I already spoke English... There also is a bigger Nigerian concentration in and around London and that's why it was a great fit. Six months ago my work transferred me to Switzerland. Well I work there during the week and I fly home [to London] during weekends... Now I could go back to Germany, but I might also move elsewhere. My wife wants to move back to the US, she's a dual British-American citizen... she's a third-generation Nigerian, born in the UK and who moved to the US for a while. She's tired of the UK and she wants to move back to the US.

(Adébáyò, German-Nigerian in Basel and London, 31, m)

This extract illustrates that onward migrants who moved to London also benefited from the city's status as a 'global city', that is part of a network through which capital and highly-paid migrants are said to move without much interference of states (Sassen 2001). After Adébáyò left an IT job in Germany and secured a highly-paid position within a week of his arrival in London, this city propelled him into a global talent circuit, which later resulted in him becoming a posted worker in Switzerland. Multi-national companies with head offices in London are likely to recruit onward migrants with relevant professional skills, because they also possess a unique set of language skills that the local British workforce tends to lack.⁸⁰ Yet, apart from those with professional skills, most of my interviewees were employed in low-paid service jobs in London, given that this is where most new jobs were being created over the last years (Dyer *et al.* 2011; McGregor 2007).

⁸⁰ In the lead-up to the 'Brexit' negotiations, however, British politicians repeatedly have called the rights of EU citizens and other migrants residing in the UK into question, creating uncertainty whether they will be allowed to reside and work in the country in future. In October 2016 the Home Secretary, Amber Rudd, made a proposal that British companies should be required to draw up lists of foreign workers they employ, in order for them to be publicly shamed for not giving more jobs to British workers.

At the same time there are important counter-flows to be observed in the direction of Southern Europe, which appear to contradict the logic of the hierarchy of places amongst Nigerian diaspora. In general, moves from Northern Europe to Spain or Italy were related to lacking legal status. Only two individuals had other motivations for relocating to Spain, one Nigerian engaged in large-scale trading activities and another who moved there temporarily for a career break with her family. In Spain five special regularisation programmes were carried out between 1985 and 2001, and then a 'normalisation' programme in 2005. Italy also provided repeated opportunities for migrants to regularise their legal status. Some informants were fortunate to move to Spain just before a regularisation was carried out and were regularised fairly quickly. But in 2008 all member states signed the European Council's European Pact on Immigration and Asylum, which also includes an agreement designed to prevent Southern European countries from carrying out more collective regularisations (Doc. 13440/08), since it was hoped that this will lower their 'calling effect' for irregular migrants. Since then Spain and Italy have implemented case-by-case regularisation programmes, which require irregular migrants to find an employer who is willing to hire them. These more recent settlement programmes require more time for migrants to regularise their status and mean that some onward migrants became immobile in Spain for longer than they intended.

Overall, transnational migrant networks are constantly being transformed, with some locations becoming more important and others losing relevance. In my informants' narratives I found continuous re-evaluations of their 'cognitive maps'. Interviewees often used their transnational ties to gain information and compare the circumstances in their previous and current place of residence, while also contemplating new destinations and the option of returning to their country of origin (Bang Nielsen 2004). Furthermore, Voigt-Graf (2004) argues that where cultural links to the cultural hearth are lost, migrant communities might also come to regard a place where they have lived for an extended amount of time as the 'new centre'. This was the case for some Indo-Fijian twice migrants, who, after migrating to Australia, regarded Fiji as their 'new centre' because they no longer maintained strong kinship ties to India. Similarly, Bhachu (1985) argues that Indians, who were brought to East Africa as indentured labour migrants and then later resettled in the UK, showed great variation in the strength of kinship ties and intensity of daily transnational activities that linked them to either Gujarat or East Africa.

Seeing that my research was concerned with first generation and 1.5 generation Nigerians, most of them still regarded Nigeria as their homeland and cultural hearth. The emergence of a new centre is a process that usually spans various generations. Nonetheless, there was evidence within the narratives of some of my interviewees that their

understanding of 'home' had changed during their migration project. The next informant, Ayọ, was 'left behind' in Nigeria by her parents and followed them as an adolescent to complete her secondary schooling in the UK. This migration path is common amongst the 1.5 generation Nigerians in the UK, seeing that the similarity between the Nigerian and British education system allows for these relatively smooth educational transitions:

I go back home to... well I call London home now [laughs]. I go back home to London quite regularly, because my parents still live in London and my brother lives in Switzerland... We all go to Nigeria for Christmas, of course... My mother has probably lived in the UK for most of her life. She goes back to Nigeria for vacations and weddings and stuff like that. But I think she is more attached to the UK, than Nigeria. I guess where you grow up, now that she has made her life in the UK. When she goes back she doesn't feel... so like... She is Nigerian, she loves Nigeria and she would do anything for Nigeria, but she has more friends and family in the UK now. She has a job, she is working. But they go back home to visit.

(Ayọ, 27, f, British-Nigerian in Düsseldorf)

Ayọ also had ambitions to work in Asia and mentioned that she had applied for PhD programmes in Australia, where she hoped to move with her husband and children. Nonetheless, Ayọ's story is not the norm, her experience was more common amongst the 1.5 generation who had entered Europe with more stable residence permits due to family reunification and gained European educational qualifications.

7.2 New transnational ties, 'emplaced' mobilities and fluid identities

Within migration studies, transnational ties are typically perceived to be those social connections that migrants and their 'left behind' family and kin maintain between the origin and destination country. Yet migrants also form new social ties during their migration project, which can diversify their transnational connections and trajectories. I have already outlined the socio-historical factors which hampered the opportunities of Nigerian youth to achieve social adulthood and contributed to the emergence of migration as an attractive option. Thus age played an important role for Nigerian pioneer migrants, but another factor is also the family status of aspirant migrants. In general, it is easier for Nigerians to embark on a migration project while they are single and have no dependents. First, immigration channels towards Europe have become more selective since the 1990s, meaning that individuals who arrive as students, migrant workers, asylum seekers or irregular migrants, find it both difficult and costly to bring spouses and children. Second, international migration from Africa in many cases is a collective decision in which family members

contribute to the cost of those emigrating and also need to come to an agreement regarding the care provisions for those staying put (Øien 2006).

With regard to the geographical location of these new relationships, recent research conducted with African migrants has highlighted the importance of social connections that are formed *during* the journey (Kastner 2014; Schapendonk 2012; Suter 2012). Female migrants migrating towards Europe via the desert and sea can be exposed to violence and rape. Kastner (2014) observed that Nigerian single women who migrate overland to reach Spain form new pragmatic (intimate) relationships in the *in-between spaces* that connect the origin and destination countries.⁸¹ Kastner argues that the resulting pregnancies can protect the women from sexual and other harassment while on the road through Morocco and to some degree also from deportation on arrival in Spain. Nigerians who travelled to Europe 'on foot' therefore may have social ties in several places – in their country of origin Nigeria, on the road in Africa and at their country of residence in Europe.

At the beginning of my interview with Sonia, she identified as a single mother though later Sonia also mentioned her son's father, whom she left behind in Morocco 7 years previously. She remained in touch with her partner via mobile phone. Due to the economic crisis Sonia was struggling to provide for her children who stayed in Nigeria and her son who was born in Spain. The transnational connections of Sonia's nuclear family thus spanned three countries. Not being able to send remittances to cover the basic needs of her family in Nigeria caused Sonia great distress, as she felt she was not meeting West African expectations of her role as a mother and international migrant (Coe 2014: 27).

Things are not easy for me and my son. Even as I am sitting here now, to pay my house rent is very difficult for me. Imagine someone who don't have work, how will he pay his rent or feed the children or buy the clothes? I used to work in a factory, but I lost my job and *ayuda* [social welfare] has finished. [...] Now I can't even send my mother money to chop [eat]. I didn't even send money for Christmas. If you are in Europe and you cannot send money to your family and children it is very bad [...] As we are sitting here we just came out from the Caritas [Catholic charity] for help or food. They say there is nothing, nothing.

(Sonia, 43, f, Nigerian with Spanish permanent residence permit in Málaga)

⁸¹ Other anthropological studies describe popular discourses concerning pre-marital and extra-marital sexual relationships in Nigeria (Cornwall 2001; Maier 2012). Since the colonial period and also influenced by religion, moralising comments have been made about 'wayward women', who are married women that run after men with money, as well as 'useless husbands', who are unable to 'provide' for their family. Local press also features caricatured figures of urban life such as 'acadas' (female university students who seek wealthy lovers), 'razor blades' (women who bleed men for their money) and 'jaguas' (women who like men with expensive cars such as Jaguars) (Cornwall 2001; Maier 2012).

Despite the considerable attention this 'new migration' to Europe received in the 1990s, in general only a small proportion of Africans travelled to Europe over land and sea. Other research suggests that the majority of African migrants entered Europe on a valid visa and then overstayed (Black *et al.* 2006). The same is true for the informants in my sample, where only 12 individuals arrived in Europe via this route. Yet, there is evidence that this migration overland and sea has become more important for Nigerians recently. During the so-called refugee 'crisis' 10,135 and 18,145 Nigerians applied for asylum in Italy in 2014 and 2015 respectively, but due to the large backlogs so far only a few dozen Nigerians have been granted positive decisions (Eurostat 2016, also see Figure 4.2). During 2016 the asylum applications from Nigerians have remained high in Italy and also started to rise in Germany. It is likely that a substantial number of Nigerians was residing in Northern Africa for several years as migrant workers and decided to flee the unrest in Libya and Tunisia following the Arab Spring. Others might have come from Nigeria to seek protection in Europe due to the violent attacks by Islamist group Boko Haram and the increasingly precarious socio-economic situation in their origin country. Furthermore, it may be an opportune time to attempt to cross the Mediterranean seeing that Muammar Gadhafi no longer controls the migration route between Libya and Italy, the way he used to as part of the bilateral and multilateral agreements the EU signed with neighbouring regions in order to 'externalise' its borders (Carrera 2007). Therefore, on the whole these recently arrived Nigerians are more likely to have transnational connections to the African countries they transited and resided in (Crawley *et al.* 2016).

Nigerians also started new intimate relationships after arriving in Europe. Many of these relationships were motivated by romantic feelings, but in other relationships more pragmatic considerations concerning legal status also played a role. Especially my informants in Germany often mentioned that marriage with a European national offered them the best prospects of being issued a residence permit. In order to meet 'white women' several of my informants went to salsa clubs and I joined them on a few occasions (also see Partridge 2008). There were also many Nigerian-owned bars and clubs in Germany that alluded in their names to these relationships (see Figure 7.1). Fleischer (2011) highlights that, according to German statistics, Nigerian men in Germany are less inclined to intermarriage than other sub-Saharan African men, such as Cameroonians.⁸² Nevertheless, during my fieldwork I found that a high proportion of the Nigerians who lived in Western and Northern Europe attained EU citizenship by marrying an EU national. Several

⁸² Although these figures are not necessarily accurate because bi-national couples often marry abroad in Denmark where there are fewer bureaucratic hurdles (Fleischer 2011).

individuals told me that they resented the apparent need to 'go through' another person to secure their legal status. In Spain, the formation of pragmatic conjugal relationships with an EU national had been less common in the past, seeing that there were sufficient alternative means for migrants to regularise their status. But during my fieldwork in Spain during 2012, Nigerians also mentioned that more individuals were looking for legally resident spouses to arrange 'sham marriages' – considering that the high unemployment rates during economic crisis made it very difficult to regularise through a work contract.



Illustrations 7.1 Nigerian-owned bars in Berlin and Dortmund

Overall, in my sample 29 Nigerians were married to native-born EU citizens. The overwhelming majority of them were keen to emphasise that they married 'for love' and not 'for papers'. Research conducted about migrant integration in Europe has typically included research about the inter-marriages of third-country nationals with local native-born residents. Such relationships are analysed, because they are regarded as both a driver and an outcome of successful integration. However, I would also like to highlight other conjugal relationships - beyond those formed with native-born EU citizens. In Spain the bi-national relationships were especially diverse, given that the country is a destination for both tourists from Northern Europe and migrant workers from Eastern Europe. As a result many Nigerians experienced 'emplaced mobility' (Brickell 2011: 26) through their spouses, meaning that interviewees formed new translocal and transnational ties via their partners – without necessarily leaving their place of residence. Rather than seeing intermarriage solely as an indicator of integration in the destination country, I argue that these new relationships also can transform migrants' transnational orientations.

In the following quote Maxwell recounts how he met his Czech spouse after arriving in the Canary Islands. For Maxwell life began when he became married. This step marks several transitions: the shift from undocumented asylum seeker to a residence permit holder; the passing from youth to adult with his own home; the beginning of life in the Igbo value system realised through marriage; and his biblical reference of enduring hardship and then experiencing joy. Maxwell and his wife later moved to the Netherlands with their son.

Our interview took place during one of Maxwell's business trips to Spain, on which he was purchasing items he could ship to Nigeria via the import-export company he had established in the Netherlands.

Some people they find good wife... like me, I have good wife and a son. Then we start living and the life change, because you can now pay for your house. Then you... as the bible says: 'The sorrow may be endured for the night, but in the morning there is joy'. Once you are legal then there is joy. It takes many years to settle these things... My wife is also a foreigner, she is not an indigene⁸³ here. My wife is from Czech Republic [...] When the crisis started in 2008... it was difficult to manage things and I needed to change the country [...] Spain is my home in Europe, but Amsterdam is also good as a foreigner because they don't discriminate so much.

(Maxwell, 32, m, Czech-Nigerian in Amsterdam)

Maxwell's enhanced mobility rights as an EU citizen are a resource that widens his business opportunities across transnational space (Moret 2016). By contrast, his Nigerian business contact in Spain was unable to leave the country while his residence papers were being renewed. Thus, while 'waiting' for the bureaucratic wheels to turn, he offered his local knowledge and contacts to international traders, who were time-poor. Maxwell had to return to Amsterdam quickly. In the Netherlands he perceived the cost of childcare to be high, which made it difficult for him and his wife to work full-time. Maxwell therefore asked me about the cost of childcare in the UK and elsewhere, and he was keen to ask me questions about my own experience of growing up bilingually. His son spoke Czech and English, plus Maxwell also had managed to teach him some Igbo. At the nursery in Amsterdam his son had learnt to speak Dutch, but Maxwell was concerned that his son might not become fully fluent in English.

The next informant, Ayọ, also recounts her experiences of transnational ties and mobilities that span various countries. Ayọ has close family members in several European countries, her job for a German company requires her to travel extensively, and Ayọ frequently takes holidays abroad with her family. At the time of our interview Ayọ's partner was in Namibia with their toddlers:

I travel for work and for vacation. Germany is close to everywhere. I have been around Europe quite a lot. I don't want to brag... but I have been to Italy... to Spain, Prague... Turkey, Bulgaria, the Netherlands... and for work as well, I am actually going to Poland on Wednesday for work. Then next week I am working in Sweden. My partner is on

⁸³ In Nigeria *indigene* does not refer to a national identity, but is instead understood as ethno-regional belonging (Kraxberger 2005). Ethnicity plays an important role in diaspora; in most cities I visited during my fieldwork there were migrant associations for the various Nigerian ethnic groups, but it was less common for me to find a 'Nigerian Union' or 'Nigerian Association'.

vacation in Namibia with our children... he's taking his paternity leave for 3 months with them. I can't wait for them to be back. I keep saying: 'Send me pictures on Whatsapp. I need to see the children, send me a picture!'

(Ayo, 27, f, British-Nigerian in Düsseldorf)

The experiences of Maxwell and Ayo illustrate how conjugal relationships and onward migration can introduce new transnational connections for migrants and their descendants. Their children are growing up in a place which is the origin country of neither of their parents. Therefore, these children may relate to and identify with, to varying degrees, the country they grew up in, as well as the ancestral homelands of their parents.

Onward migrants, in general, are difficult to place along simple social identity binaries. Bhabha (1994) developed the concept of 'third space', in order to challenge existing categorical binary structures, such as us/them and colonial/postcolonial. Bhabha (1994) further defines 'third space' as characterised by 'hybridity' and multiple subject-positions, a contingent space that always is in-between and continuously becoming. Yet, I agree with the criticism that the concepts of transnationalism and 'third space' have often described space as immaterial, liquid and metaphorical. There have been calls to 'ground' research on transnationalism (Mitchell 2007). The following examples of the experiences of onward migrants and their descendants show how transnational space and identifications are experienced, contested and re-conceived.

Damilola was born in Germany and then lived in Lagos with her parents for several years. When she returned to Germany, she was the only mixed-race person in her school and wider circle of friends:

I wanted to live my reality as a bi-cultural and bi-national person and I always felt that that was easier outside of Germany and Nigeria. I studied in the Netherlands, but after I finished the country was too small and boring [...] I am interested in multicultural and art [...] I wanted a visual normality, more people that looked like me... it was not really for economic reasons, more cultural reasons [...] London is a virtual space where I can re-invent myself... it's not restricted to that binary... or the figure of the tragic hybrid person stuck between one and the other.

(Damilola, 36, f, German-Nigerian in London)

Much like other 1.5 and second-generation migrants, Damilola believed that onward migration allowed her to find a place where she could express herself the way she wanted. London is a space where she feels less bound by essentialised understandings of what it means to be 'German' or 'Nigerian', and in addition she can live her queer sexual orientation.

Nonetheless, other informants also mentioned situations after onward migration, where contested social realities manifested themselves. Vanessa's children were very

young when she suggested to her husband that the family should relocate from the Ruhr region in Germany to Manchester. Vanessa had noticed that her children were being pushed around on the playground. Furthermore, she was also disappointed that she was unable to form friendships with other parents. They decided it was best for the family to onward migrate, before their children became aware of the instances of everyday racism in Germany. At their new school in Manchester other pupils repeatedly questioned the way Vanessa's children explained their cultural heritage and belonging.

Like now, to be honest, my children don't think they are Nigerians. They believe that they are Europeans... No, they believe they are German. Because wherever we are going now with that passport, they know they are German. So you can never take away something that someone is holding and say: 'You are not from here'. You are wasting your time for that. Fine they know that: 'Oh, my parents are Africans and they came from Nigeria'. But they know that: 'Germany, I'm born there'. So you can never take that away from them. My children in school they ask them: 'Where are you from?' And they say: 'I am German'. So they ask them: 'German? How come you have brown skin?' That is when they said: 'Yeah, I have brown skin and I am German.' And sometimes they say: 'But *Mama*, why did my friend ask me why I have brown skin and said I'm not German?' And I say: 'Yes, you are German. But you're African anyway. Your origin is African.' I said: 'Where your mother and father came from, that's where you are from. But you are German anyway.'

(Vanessa, 39, f, German-Nigerian in Manchester)

For my informants, onward migration therefore oftentimes led to the formation of transnational ties and social identifications that were situated not just *in-between*, but *beyond* the binary of origin and destination countries. The increasing diversity of destinations chosen by migrants who undertook several onward migrations, can be partly related to the new transnational connections they formed and their enhanced mobility rights as European citizens. The next section illustrates how migration control impinges on the formation of multi-local transnational families and their opportunities for family unification.

7.3 Continuous reconfigurations of transnational family lives

Instead of only considering conjugal relationships and households, it is now more common to regard families as constituted of complex webs of relationships that can span across generations and locations (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994). During the interviews with my informants I was struck by their accounts of the geographical re-constellations of their transnational families throughout space and time. Research into transnationalism is replete with examples that analyse the cross-border activities of migrants and their apparently

immobile 'left-behind' family members. Fewer studies consider the power structures that contribute to the evolving opportunities for mobility and immobility amongst transnational families (Carling 2008; Coe 2014; Paul 2011) and mutually contingent social and geographical mobility of family members (Mata-Codesal 2015). The configurations of my informants' transnational families responded to the processes of bordering that were continuously evolving – creating both 'closures' and 'openings'.

Migration and labour market policies often mirror a context of institutionalised discrimination, which marginalises migrants on the basis of embodied characteristics, such as age, gender, 'race', nationality or ability. Increasingly restrictive US immigration legislation, for instance, has caused parents and children to be separated for longer and more indefinite periods of time (Coe 2014; Dreby 2010). Nigerian parents generally opted to leave their children behind seeing that as pioneer migrants they could not rely on relatives and kin to share the caregiving responsibilities within the destination country while they themselves had to manage long working hours. Riccio (2008) demonstrates that the opportunities for transnational families to reunite are to a great extent determined by immigration legislation, but that additional factors also contribute to variation across migrant groups. Given that member states are heavily restricting most other modes of migration, family migration currently makes up a considerable proportion of total immigration, particularly in those member states with large and established migrant communities.

The opportunities that migrants encounter to enter and settle in destination countries, in turn influence the subsequent migration patterns of trailing family members. In a comparative study of West Africans in Italy, Riccio (2008) shows how migrants' long-term plans impact on their transnational activities and their desire for migration with the purpose of family formation in destination countries. While Ghanaian men in Italy tended to bring their family to Europe when possible, Senegalese men preferred to visit their family on extended stays during the summer, because they ultimately envisaged returning to their country of origin (Riccio 2008). Based on my limited sample I argue that Nigerians preferred to have their family members join them when possible, because they generally did not envision the situation in their origin country to improve in the foreseeable future. In Spain it was relatively easy to meet the stipulations for family reunification, as these required an individual to have legal residence and be allowed to stay at least one more year, and to have adequate housing and enough income to provide for the family. The latter varies by province, but usually is around €300 a month per relative (González-Ferrer 2011: 197). In other member states, these requirements are far more demanding. In the UK, for instance, migrants who want to sponsor a dependant for family reunification need to have a

permanent residence permit and at least an income of £1,550 per month before they are eligible to apply.⁸⁴ In recent years, member states have begun to further stratify rights to family migration contingent on income thresholds, years of residence, level of integration and other criteria (Carling 2008).

In some destinations family reasons nonetheless constitute the most common grounds for Nigerian citizens to receive authorisation to stay. Between 2009 and 2015 in Germany, on average 73 per cent of first residence permits issued to Nigerians were due to family reasons; and in Spain family reasons accounted for an average 67 per cent over the same period (Figure 6.1).⁸⁵ In Germany and Spain the initial male dominance in Nigerian migration patterns meant that many Nigerian women in these destinations received family visas via their male Nigerian partner. In total, 7 women arrived as 'trailing wives' and 5 migrated independently and later entered a relationship with a Nigerian partner. But in other destination countries Nigerian women dominated the initial migration flows of professionals, labour migrants, asylum seekers and victims of trafficking. For instance, Italy and the Republic of Ireland are the only member states with a majority of legally resident Nigerian women. In Italy, Nigerian women initially worked harvesting tomatoes before trafficking networks brought large numbers of women there for prostitution, many of whom were later regularised (Carling 2006; Plambech 2016; van Dijk 2001). The rapid influx of Nigerian women to Ireland, was purportedly due to a landmark case⁸⁶ involving a Nigerian migrant who overstayed his visa and appealed his deportation order based on the principle that his Irish-born children had a right to care and parentage. Reynolds (2006) posits that more recently Nigerian women's household responsibilities are also contributing to the rise in professional women migrating to the US, the UK and Canada and this may explain why the flow of trailing spouses to these particular destinations is relatively gender-balanced.

The reunion with children in Europe after several years of separation represented a time of transformation for the transnational family. All of the interviewed 13 young people

⁸⁴ It should be noted that the Directive 2003/86/EC on Family Reunification does not apply to all member states, i.e. the UK, Ireland and Denmark opted out of this Directive.

⁸⁵ The other recorded reasons for first residence permits to be issued include: work; education; refugee status or subsidiary protection; humanitarian and other reasons (Eurostat 2016).

⁸⁶ The *Fajujonu and Ors v. Minister for Justice* appeal was dismissed, but the Supreme Court held 'that where non-nationals had resided for an appreciable time and become a family unit within the State with children who were Irish citizens, then such Irish citizens had a constitutional right to the company, care and parentage of their parents within the family unit'. However, a 2004 referendum changed Irish citizenship legislation. This resulted in the principle of *ius soli* becoming more diluted and after 1 January 2005 children were no longer entitled to Irish citizenship based on birth. Also see Iroh (2006) and Kómoláfé (2008).

who had come to join their parents, the so-called 1.5 generation, arrived in Europe as teenagers to complete their secondary school education and apply for higher education; although three of the parents mentioned that they brought children at a younger age. Fosterage is common in West Africa, where young children stay with other relatives and patrons who will enhance their development; therefore similar arrangements are also made for 'left-behind' children of migrants (Bledsoe and Sow 2011; Kufakurinani *et al.* 2014). On the one hand, the delayed arrival of children in Europe in their late teens is the result of the complicated bureaucratic process associated with family reunification and legal requirements according to which children usually need to be under 18 years old to still be considered as dependent minors (Veale and Andres 2014). On the other hand, many migrant parents also believe that leaving their children in the country of origin throughout their early childhood allows access to more affordable childcare provision and keeps teenagers away from the temptations in Europe that can lead young minds astray (Coe 2014).

Research about international migration associated with family formation of couples or the reunification of parents with their left-behind children is fairly common in the academic literature (for a review see Carling *et al.* 2012). Far fewer studies focus on the experience of siblings who grew up in two different countries and are anxious for the family to reunite (Coe 2014; Veale and Andres 2014). When Nigerian parents decide to leave their eldest children behind in Nigeria, at times more children are born in Europe. When some siblings remain in Nigeria and other siblings live in Europe, they thus grow up in two different countries and keep in touch via social media, phone calls and occasional visits (Veale and Andres 2014).

Adediji is a young Nigerian whom I interviewed in Düsseldorf and his transnational family underwent several geographical re-constellations after we remained in touch. Adediji's experience illustrates particularly well how family reunification and onward migration oftentimes take place by different family members in a temporally-lagged fashion, because certain family members are unable or unwilling to relocate together (Ahrens *et al.* 2016).

I was schooling in Lagos and I was living there with my grandparents. My parents came to Nigeria every December, most especially my father came for one month from the end of December until January and then moved back. My mum came once in three years or four years. After almost 15 years they brought us down to Germany in 2001. At the same time my father, he moved to London in 2005... He believes that the life in London is better than in Germany. After two, three years he came to take my mother and my younger sisters. They are all living there now. My sisters they were born here. I have three sisters and I am the oldest. My junior sister, we both came together from Nigeria, but next month she is planning to move to London. She went there to visit my parents

and she seems to like it. Now she applied to some universities... now she has to find a place to live [...] I stayed here because I was still in university. When I went to London, I didn't like it that much. The life in Germany is easy, not that crowded. I am used to it somehow. [...] I can still do my Masters there. But I still miss them, that's why I visit them when I can.

(Adediji, 25, m, German-Nigerian in Düsseldorf)

I later met up with Adediji on two more occasions when he was visiting his family in East London. In his suitcase Adediji had brought canned Goulasch soup that his youngest sisters had grown fond of in Germany. Meanwhile Adediji and I were savouring the hot Nigerian pepper soup his mother prepared for us. The family had satellite TV and his youngest sisters continued watching the German channels they grew up with. The next time we met up in London Adediji was setting up a British bank account with another German-Nigerian friend. Eight years after his father's departure to London, Adediji decided to also join his family in London and is currently completing his undergraduate studies there. The experience of Adediji and his family shows that renewed distancing and separation can occur within migrant families when members decide to onward migrate. Onward migration is at times realised by the whole migrant family at once, but more commonly it leads to the (re-)emergence of multi-local households.

However, children and partners were not only 'left behind' in Nigeria. During the financial crisis many Nigerians who previously resided in Spain, Italy or Greece started seeking a (temporary) livelihood in Northern Europe, often leaving their children behind in the care of other relatives and friends (Ahrens 2013). In most cases, these onward migrants had national short-term or permanent residence permits, which only allowed them to relocate within the Schengen area for a maximum of three months as tourists. They therefore did not have the right to seek employment in another member state. Not all of these 'semi-legal' onward mobilities are depicted in Figure 7.1, because they often involved stays of under a year. The reason that children had to stay put was mainly due to administrative delays, which meant that many children lacked residence permits and therefore were not allowed to move to another member state. A recent article revealed that close to 500,000 children under the age of 15 were residing in Spain undocumented in 2013 (González Ferrer 2014). Given the often temporary nature of these onward mobilities, the parents preferred not to disrupt the schooling of their children in Spain.⁸⁷ In addition,

⁸⁷ In Spain undocumented children are allowed to attend school, as long as they are below 16 years of age. Other member states vary in their regulations concerning the education of undocumented children.

parents usually had more close contacts in Spain, whom they trusted to take on these caregiving responsibilities.

Two further trajectories of Nigerian adolescents need to be highlighted. The first is that of parents choosing to send their children back to their country of origin and the other is that of children being sent to another destination. I will take up both these occurrences in turn. Within studies of transnational parenthood, the practice of sending children back to the country of origin, or the threat of doing so, has been interpreted as a 'deliberate strategy of child rearing' (Orellana *et al.* 2001: 572). Parents portray the return to the country of origin as the ultimate punishment for children or teenagers who do not 'behave' or conform to the parents' authority and wishes (Coe 2014; Guarnizo and Smith 1998). Seeing that many Nigerian parents experienced corporal punishment as part of their upbringing and it remains legal in Nigeria at home and in the school to this date, parents are often unsure how to deal with their unruly children in Europe, where physical punishment is not accepted by society and in some countries is prohibited by law. According to my informants, relatively few of these threats are acted upon; but the possibility of invoking 'transnational disciplining' (Orellana *et al.* 2001, 583) serves as an important strategy for parents to bring their offspring's behaviour in line.

In the following quote Peter explains how the destination countries and the prevailing institutional understandings of 'good parenting' strategies can also influence the children's transnational trajectories. After living in Germany for 16 years, Peter was able to bring his eldest son from Nigeria, who was then aged ten. After three or four years his son started staying out overnight and truanting from school. A German social worker became involved, but did not endorse Peter's idea to send his son back to Nigeria. In the end the son was placed into care against the parents' wishes and remained there for three years.

Some teachers teaching them in the *Heim* [children's home] they told me that I should talk to my boy he is very intelligent this is not the right place for him. I should get him out of here before it is too late [...] I got advice from a lawyer that the only way I can take him out, I have to convince my son that: 'Look we relocate to the UK would you like to come out of the *Heim* so that we can change the environment?' He said: yes, he accepts. They released him to us and we brought him here [...] In the UK here the school authority advised me that they knew I am from Nigeria and they have seen a lot of kids misbehaving in this form, but when their parents send them back to Africa they changed. They advised me the best thing for me is to take this kid out of here. And the social worker came to my house here about to talk the issue [...] They called many times. They sent a delegate to be monitoring him from school when he goes out [...] About three years ago I discovered the best thing we need to do is to take this boy back to Nigeria. I invited him one day if he would like to go on holiday to Nigeria and then he accepted. And I take him home and I fixed him in boarding school in Nigeria. When I came back here the social worker asked me: 'Where is he?'. Then I gave the paper of the school, the paper I used to pay for the school fees to take care of him in Nigeria. I presented it to the social worker here, they went to convert the money everything to pounds and they came

back to me and look... this is a very... they were so surprised. They can see that I am really looking for the future for this boy. [...] I tried to get a better school, better world for him. Because, his situation cannot be solved here. Because the way he used to be... when I was young like his age, I did the same thing. I believe I am the right person who should know how to change him, not the government. And they accepted with me. Now... the boy now gets an admission to university this year in Nigeria.

(Peter, 47, m, German-Nigerian in South East England)

During the interview Peter received a phone call from family friends who visit his son at the boarding school every weekend. Peter also regularly calls his son and goes to see him twice a year in Nigeria.

But of course, not all children were sent back to Nigeria as a form of punishment. Parents also considered taking their children to Nigeria, because they thought it was safer, this was especially true in London. One of the plays, *Pandora's Box* (Solanke 2012), which I saw during my fieldwork in London, centres on a Nigerian mother who returns to Lagos on a family holiday and agonises about whether to leave her son behind at a boarding school. She fears that her son might become involved with local gangs or fall victim of crime. This was also a concern expressed by other informants who said they noticed a growing number of adolescents with Nigerian names appearing in news reports in London.⁸⁸ The play also picks up on another concern of parents living in diaspora, namely that children might lose their African culture in Europe (McGregor 2008). This is why some parents send their teenage children to their ancestral homeland to become re-acquainted with Nigerian culture and languages. A growing number of second-generation Nigerians return to Nigeria for a 'year abroad' or 'gap year' to participate in the National Youth Service Corps.

Another less common strategy was for Nigerian parents to send their children to another country while they themselves stayed behind. Similar trajectories have also been described in the case of South Korean parents who chose to send their 'parachute kids' to the US, while remaining behind in the country of origin. Ong (1999) argues that these families hope to use the knowledge their children acquire to facilitate the parents' entrance to the country at a later stage or formation of networks that aid future business. Yet my informants did not mention such business considerations, their main objective was related to the education of their children.

⁸⁸ The November 2013 cover of the British diaspora monthly newspaper *Nigerian Watch* featured pictures of 30 young Nigerians who had died or were convicted as a result of gang violence in London www.nigerianwatch.com

7.4 'Returning' and visiting friends and relatives in Europe and Nigeria

Due to their migration trajectory, onward migrants have transnational ties in several places and this also shapes their subsequent multi-directional 'mobilities' – some of which are directed towards their previous place(s) of residence, entirely new destinations or the origin country (Williams *et al.* 2011). The transnational connections include family members, as well as acquaintances that migrants make along the way. Migrants work hard to maintain their transnational relations, by keeping in touch via phone, email and sending remittances (Tan and Yeoh 2011; Vertovec 2004). But their stories cannot always be seen as celebrations of 'dual lives: speaking two languages, having homes in two countries, and making a living through continuous regular contact across borders' (Portes *et al.* 1999: 217). Furthermore, transnational family ties and onward mobilities are shaped by gendered roles performed in the country of origin and destination countries. Some Nigerians onward migrated following the break-up from a partner, but others relocated and continued in a long-distance relationship where frequent shuttling between European countries enabled them to stay in touch. Out of the informants I spoke to, the formation of multi-local families within Europe was especially common amongst Nigerian men who previously resided in Germany and relocated to England. In order to further their education and careers many decided to onward migrate to the UK, seeking out opportunities that were unavailable to them in Germany due to 'institutional racism and racist stereotyping' against people of African descent (Ahrens *et al.* 2016; OHCHR 2017).

Throughout the nine years Uchenna was working and studying in London, he chose to rent shared accommodation strategically close to one of the London airports, which allowed quick door-to-door travel for his monthly trips to visit his daughter in Germany. Every morning Uchenna sent his daughter text messages (sms) from his mobile phone in which he emphasised the importance of education. During the interview he made a point of reading some recent text messages out loud. It appeared as though he wanted to show how seriously he takes his parenting responsibilities in spite of his ex-partner and in-laws accusing him of 'running away' when he first mentioned his wish to relocate to London:

Hello my golden baby, good morning. Hope you slept well and your tummy feels better. And do not forget to read. I love you, Papa.

Good morning, the school week ends today, hope that you learn something new. I wish you a happy weekend and have fun. But remember to read your books and to help your mum. I love you, Papa

Good morning my golden baby, I hope you had a nice sleep. Today begins a new school week. Listen well and take notes. I love you, Papa

Good morning, my golden one. One school week has already passed. I hope you have improved your knowledge. You take your schooling very seriously. I wish you a lovely and happy weekend. We will see each other on Tuesday. I love you, Papa.⁸⁹

(Uchenna, 44, m, German-Nigerian in London)

Nine of the German-Nigerian men who onward migrated to the UK then 'returned' to Germany after a couple of years. These individuals often felt that their quality of life was better in Germany, seeing that living expenses were lower and working hours more regular. But they also came back to Germany, because their children were now teenagers and they felt it was better to be closer to them.

The separation from friends and relatives can give rise to feelings of loss, sadness, isolation and failure. As Svasek (2008) argues, the emotions involved in transnational migration have been under-researched until now. Not all migrants are able to stay in touch as frequently as they would like to. In addition, transnational mobility is not equally accessible to all migrants, because legal status, economic resources, household structure and gender relations can all constitute impediments to international mobility (Al-Ali and Koser 2002). Some migrants are unable to visit friends and relatives in their origin country and other destinations while they are undocumented, or need to save up for long-distance trips. Therefore, legal status and financial resources play a role in the degree to which migrants can maintain familial relationships in person.

Existing friendships and family ties are nurtured, but migrants also form new connections along the way. Bryceson and Vuorela propose that transnational families can be regarded as 'imagined communities' (2002: 19) because they are highly relative and do not constitute fixed entities. 'Imagining a family means giving it a definition which might conflict with the nation states' definition of legitimate immigrant families', meaning that at times migrants' notion of their family can include a range of relatives such as distant cousins or indeed fictive relations such as 'godparents' (Bryceson and Vuorela 2002: 10). The emergence of such new social ties at times is also due to the geographical distance between Europe and Nigeria, because not all migrants are able to afford the travel costs for return trips to their origin country.

The following participant, Vanessa, mentioned that her children were about to finish primary school and had actually never visited Nigeria. However, they still visited close

⁸⁹ The last text message is translated from German. Original: *Guten Morgen, meine Goldene. Eine Schulwoche ist schon vorbei. Ich hoffe Deine Kenntnisse ist besser geworden. Du nimmst Deine Schule sehr ernst. Ich wünsche Dir eine sehr schöne glückliche Wochenende. Wir sehen uns am Dienstag. I love you, Papa.*

German friends during the school holidays. One of their 'adopted relatives' is the children's German godmother, and they also visit an older German couple whom her children refer to with the German words for grandmother and grandfather.

Every holiday we still go [to Germany]. Their godmother is a German woman, you understand, and we still also go to see *Oma*. My two children is born there. They take that place as their home. Their passport is the same, we all still have German passport... they say let's go and see *Oma* and *Opa*... they are not my real father and mother... but I took them as my own. On Mother's Day I will send a card for *Oma* and on Father's Day we will send one to *Opa*...

(Vanessa, 39, f, German-Nigerian in Manchester)

Some of my informants had not managed to permanently onward migrate, but visiting friends and family enabled them to assess other destinations. For some individuals, like Ehiosu, the onward migrations of members of her social network had also diversified her 'reachable' destinations. Ehiosu had visited several European countries for shorter and longer periods of time, usually she stayed with family members and other acquaintances. In the instances when Ehiosu was able to find work or a way of furthering her studies, she decided to extend her visits. Her best friend in Sweden was organising a Nigerian Independence Day party and before Ehiosu's trip we went shopping in Madrid for a green dress she could wear on the occasion:

I don't really like Spain, but I don't really have any alternative, so I just wait until I get what I want and then see if I can move to any country [...] I moved to England. It is good for the youth because there are opportunities. I was studying my foundation year for nursing in the UK and I was supposed to transfer to Texas, University of Texas. But there was issues with the visa and the school admission was cancelled... In Spain they don't encourage we the immigrants at all. [...] My cousin was born here and she studied here, but they did not give her the job she was supposed to get and now she is in Canada [...] When I was in Sweden they encourage you to study, because the fee for university is free, they will open the door for you and you are highly welcome [...] I was staying with a family with a woman and her children, but when she went back to Africa I had to move out. After that I stayed with my good friend and I was doing the Swedish language course but then I had a problem [...] Germany and France they are good countries... in Frankfurt I worked in a hostel with drunk and homeless people doing cleaning and administer the drugs. I did a language course and then I was hoping I can work in a hospital... My uncle is in Frankfurt working for an international bank, they transferred him from London to work in Germany.

(Ehiosu, 24, f, Nigerian with Spanish residence papers in Madrid)

After the interview Ehiosu asked me to read over her online application for an au-pair agency in the US that she was about to send off. Ehiosu was continuously looking for ways

to leave Spain and her visits to friends and relatives abroad served as a way of realising her ambitions.



Illustration 7.2 Ad for daily flights to Lagos and extra baggage allowance with Arik Air

Around a dozen Nigerians I spoke to ran trading businesses and therefore frequently travelled to Nigeria; their business trips were often combined with family visits. This, however, was usually a privilege of Nigerian men who operated large import-export businesses through which they shipped cargo to Nigeria. I also met two women who were suitcase traders; their frequent traveller status afforded them extra baggage allowances on their flights between Europe and Nigeria. Arik Air, a Nigerian airline, advertised its 64kg baggage allowance in London neighbourhoods with high concentrations of Nigerian migrants (Illustration 7.2). Many others exported goods or a vehicle on an irregular basis, as and when they could afford to do so. This meant that the majority travelled to Nigeria less frequently, seeing that they needed to save up for the trip and the gifts they were expected to bring for their relatives.

The interview with Faith took place in her bedroom surrounded by suitcases that were stacked high under the ceiling and contained some of the items she was intending to take along with her on her imminent trip to Nigeria. Faith was extremely happy she was traveling to Nigeria at the end of the year, now that she was pregnant with her first child:

When your father see that you are close to 30 and you are not yet married, oh god... it is war on phone and if you come home it is war: 'What are you still waiting for?' Every time I go to Africa it is always stress: 'You are here, alone, again, hah! You promised the next time you said you come here with kids. Now you are here, alone, hah. Don't come back here without baby...' If you call them on phone that is the first thing they will tell you: 'It is time to get married and we want to see your children' [...] But it is not easy in Europe to have kids, because you are alone. You need to work to get money for feeding. Like Africa you can have kids and leave it for your grandad or your grandmom... or your sister and you go to work. And they would take care of the kids like the way when you are around. But here you are alone, you can't do baby the way they want you to do it. You have to work first to get money and to say that you have a little now [...] My dad grandchildren is close to 20 now, but he still want more. Half of my brother and sisters live outside Nigeria and half live there. Sometimes they all will bring their children and my dad will just sit in the middle. Then they will eat together, playing and beating him around. That is what is making him happy now, he is close to 80. We travel December time, because that is when the Binis are doing their Igue festival. Also they are happy that their eyes is going to see the next year. They say: 'Let me kill foal and goat... call all my children and grandchildren and pray together.' We the Africans the most important time to travel to us is that December. That is New Year and Christmas celebrations with your family... And you also see friends, long-time friends that you didn't see since before.

(Faith, 34, f, Italian-Nigerian in Berlin)

December was the most popular month for return visits to Nigeria, because the dry season made the trips to the villages easier and countless diasporans coincided in Lagos for various festivities. For Faith, returning to Nigeria therefore was not just a possibility to see her close family members who stayed behind. Return trips at the end of the calendar year, in particular, were an opportunity to see friends and family who lived dispersed across many different countries.

Only two individuals I interviewed had reached retirement age and they were uncertain whether they would return to Nigeria permanently. For the moment they envisaged spending their time between several locations and thus circulating as long as their health permitted. Although all of Rachael's children lived in the UK, she had remained in Germany:

This is my own assessment. So they all studied in the UK and are working there, although born here [...] When they were younger we all went to Nigeria and I took up an appointment there, but then I came back to further my studies. The children were at home [in Nigeria]. We left them to finish school, although now they are all in the UK [...] And my company is registered here as well as in the UK. I thought my daughter would continue it, but she is not so interested. So I pay taxes here and there. It has its advantages; I can have some pension here and there.

(Rachael, 64, f, German-Nigerian in Berlin)

The familial practices for elderly care are much less flexible and Nigerian parents still expect their first or last son or daughter to take care of them (Okoye 2012). The first-born child is

raised receiving special attention, and in return is expected to take on the responsibility of caring for the parents in old age. But these perceptions about caregiving-roles in relation to the elderly in Nigeria have also been transformed through changing demands of the labour market, rural-urban migration and international migration.

The humorous message in Box 7.1 illustrates how Nigerians associate and utilise particular destinations for the pursuit of endeavours at certain life-stages:

Figure 7.2 Nigerian temporal and spatial imaginaries

When NIGERIANS loot money, they keep it in SWISS BANKS; When they're sick-They go to INDIA or GERMANY; When they want to invest AMERICA; When they want to buy Mansions LONDON/CANADA. They go to DUBAI for shopping and PARIS or BAHAMAS for holidays. When educating their children, they select EUROPE. When they want to repent - ISREAL OR SAUDI ARABIA. But when they DIE, they all want to be BURIED in NIGERIA. I beg, help me ask them; NIGERIA na CEMETERY?

Source: Text message sent to author's mobile phone in April 2013.

This message, partly written in Nigerian Pidgin, questions the tendency of, presumably affluent, Nigerians to satisfy their worldly needs primarily outside of Nigeria. While at the same time Nigerians are portrayed as succumbing to the powerful social expectation to be buried 'at home' in their ancestral villages where elaborate funeral ceremonies are performed. Thereby the unknown author of this message implicitly criticises that Nigeria is favoured as a burial ground, but not for other endeavours throughout their lives.

7.5 Summary

The main goal of this chapter was to determine the patterns of Nigerian onward migration towards and within Europe. By conducting a sequence analysis of the migration histories of my informants, I showed that there are three main mobility patterns. First, it was possible to identify a preference for relocation in the direction of the UK. Onward mobilities towards other destinations also indicated that interviewees tended to move upwards within the Nigerian migrant communities' hierarchy of 'diasporic nodes' (Voigt-Graf 2004). In instances where informants appeared to move against this logic, it was almost exclusively due to the need to secure legal status. The second major finding was that onward migration destinations became more diverse for those informants who relocated several times. This can be explained with new social ties that informants formed throughout their stay in

Europe and the enhanced mobility rights as EU citizens that they attained over time. Furthermore, it was also evident that onward migration geographically re-configured migrants' transnational families, because individual household members often relocated in a temporally-lagged fashion, thus giving rise to multi-local households. Finally, onward migration occurred alongside other 'enfolded mobilities' (Williams *et al.* 2011) for the purpose of visiting family and relatives in Nigeria and other destinations, as well as 'return' visits to the previous European country of residence.

This research extends our knowledge of transnationalism, because it highlights the complex, multi-directional and diverse transnational ties that migrants form throughout their migration projects. I have also showed in this chapter how immigration legislation, practices of bordering and migrant's legal status impinge on the transnational trajectories and transnational practices of migrants. Multi-sited transnationalism, however, does not only encourage us to re-examine our understanding of the emplacement of transnational practices. Transnational identities are also constantly evolving, and cannot be presented as permanent constructions. Bhabha (1994) suggests that identities are 'hybrid' due to the particular set of social affinities of every individual and negotiated in a 'third space'. Following an onward migration, these understandings of identity undergo further re-negotiation and re-definition, allowing yet more pluralities of realities and identifications to emerge.

Chapter 8

Constructions and Perceptions of Wellbeing

Onward migrants, like other migrants, are hoping to improve their own life-chances and wellbeing, and those of their families, by relocating. While the previous chapters have analysed the motivations and patterns of Nigerian intra-European onward migration, this chapter now turns to the outcomes that this particular type of migration trajectory can produce. Within the field of migration studies, the outcomes of international migration are generally analysed in terms of demographic, economic and sociological effects that either assess the *integration* of migrants in the destination country or their *development* impact in the origin country. These measures tend to follow state-centric definitions of 'success', and rarely take on board the views of migrants and what they hope to achieve through migration.

There is an established literature on human wellbeing that sets out to more holistically capture how individuals themselves define what 'living well' means to them (see Gough and McGregor 2007). The wellbeing approach overlaps to some extent with Sen's vision of human development, which proposed to move beyond 'beings' and 'doings', but there also are important differences (Sen 2009). According to the 'three-dimensional wellbeing approach' the different dimensions of wellbeing should not be studied separately, instead it proposes to focus on the 'interactions between beings, doings *and* feelings' (Sumner and Mallet 2011). When adapting this wellbeing approach for migrants, I suggest that following aspects need to be considered. First, there is 'material wellbeing', that is shaped by conditions, such as health, accommodation and working conditions, which may affect migrants' standard of living. Furthermore 'relational wellbeing' is determined by intimate relationships, as well as connections with family and other (in)formal support networks. For migrants this might also include considerations about how safe they feel to interact with others. Finally, 'perceptual wellbeing' is reflected in the individual's assessment of these social conditions, i.e. their perceptions, values and experiences of wellbeing. This can, for instance, include individuals' satisfaction with their migration project and ability to support family members (elsewhere), as well as their assessment of their situation in the destination country. Through the combination of both objective and subjective elements, it is possible to recognise the role of social construction in wellbeing, which is both a state and a process.

My emphasis on the way in which individuals understand and experience wellbeing as socially constructed has particular relevance and specificities in the case of the Nigerian research participants. It is important to note here that nearly all of my informants were Christians, except for three, and that they were socialised in Nigeria during the 1990s when Pentecostal churches were already very popular (Mohan 2000).⁹⁰ Many of the Nigerian-led churches I attended throughout my fieldwork propagated 'prosperity gospel', which also has had a strong influence on Nigerian society more widely (Meyer 2004). Believers can draw upon divine prosperity in two ways: they are expected to 'tithe' a proportion of their income to their church ('sowing in order to receive') and to give 'positive confessions' in church about the challenges they have overcome (speaking things into being) (Anderson 2013). Pentecostal churches appeal to young people who aspire to progress in life and individuals believe that they can achieve their goals through God-given miracles. Prosperity gospel emphasises practices that enhance the dual spiritual and economic wellbeing of the congregation (Knibbe 2009). Pentecostal churches create their own transnational networks by 'planting' new churches in various places with the aim of linking their members spiritually and materially.

At the same time, ethno-religious aspects also need to be considered in order to more comprehensively understand the lived experiences of Nigerians. Several studies have illustrated that there are close affinities of Yoruba and Igbo cosmology and thought evident within religious and everyday practices in the Nigerian diaspora. By drawing on notions such as 'finite time' (*mgbe*) (Onah and Leman 2005), 'destiny' (*chi*) (Reynolds 2004), 'peace' (or 'wellbeing', *àlàáfíà*) (Botticello 2009) and 'power' (*agbára*) (Harris 2006), these studies illustrate the strong influence of ethnic cosmology on the aspirations and trajectories of individuals in the migration context. The experiences of Edo diasporans have remained only partially researched; thus far, studies have focused on sensationalist explanations of so-called 'voodoo' rituals performed to keep sexworkers compliant (van Dijk 2001).

In this chapter I aim to contribute to the literature on migrant wellbeing by applying this approach to the study of onward migration. My analysis explores the role that wellbeing plays in migration trajectories – with regard to the selection of destinations, the experiences of settlement and subsequent decisions to onward migrate. To do justice to the complexity and subjectivity inherent in determining wellbeing, I mainly focus on the narratives of my interviewees that centre around their relationships with others, their ability to accumulate

⁹⁰ There is no universally accepted definition of 'Pentecostalism' and the term has been used to explain very diverse sets of practices and doctrines. In this chapter, 'Pentecostalism' refers to forms of Christianity that prioritise the embodied, personal experience of God and the Holy Spirit, through practices such as prophecy, healing and the speaking in tongues (Anderson 2013).

and utilise resources, and their capacity to exercise agency over their decisions. The next sections present the empirical data which trace the diverse ways in which wellbeing is constructed and fractured by focusing on three connected themes: agency, living conditions, and connections with society and families. I hereby illustrate the various wellbeing outcomes, also paying attention to the gendered and generational status positions that arise from emplacements in several locations.

8.1 Social constructions of enhanced wellbeing

The values and actions of individuals are shaped by the social structures in which they are embedded – ranging from the family to communities, through to their country of residence, as well as other places they maintain transnational ties with. These contexts also incorporate migrants into contingent power relationships and influence which material, social and cultural resources individuals can access (Massey 1994). By taking account of social structures I recognise that my informants are differently enabled and constrained across space and over time, but that at the same times these conditions are ever-evolving, fluid and relational. Amongst those who onward migrated, there were a considerable number of participants who said they experienced an improvement in their wellbeing for themselves and their families. Informants did not necessarily feel they had ‘made it’ – an often used expression denoting material success and social upward mobility – but they believed their prospects had improved following their relocation. In their previous country of residence, some had been working in jobs where they felt they were not able to make use of their full potential. Onward migration allowed many interviewees to find employment where they could fulfil their ‘competency’ (Ryan and Deci 2001). Especially for those who previously had been unemployed, joining the labour force improved their subjective wellbeing, even in cases where they initially were working in low-paid jobs.

Oludolapo was granted asylum in the Netherlands and had been working there for several years. He later got married to a Dutch national and they started a family together. After becoming unemployed he was applying for jobs for 3 years but was never called for an interview. Once Oludolapo received his Dutch passport, he decided to relocate to London, while his wife preferred to stay in the Netherlands.

I actually came here because I lost my job in the Netherlands. I was doing *fabriek* [factory] work making windows and doors [...] Then I came here for the first time to check how things are and the second time I decided to stay. I started working here as security... and now I started to set up my company, something I was not able to do in the Netherlands. Here in the UK you can easily open your company.

(Oludolapo, m, Dutch-Nigerian in London)

Oludolapo had just established a cleaning business and proudly showed me the flyers he had been distributing in North London. His job as a security guard was not too demanding and allowed him to further develop his business. Oludolapo employed two members of staff and had great hopes that his cleaning business would thrive. Many Nigerians aspired to have their own business and be their own boss.

There are considerable differences across Europe to what extent migrants can find employment at a level commensurate with their skills and knowledge. In many countries even the second-generation migrants, who have obtained local educational qualifications, are doing jobs for which they are over-qualified. Table 8.1 shows the results from a Labour Force Survey ad-hoc module for 2014 in which individuals who were employed were asked to provide their own subjective impression about whether they were over-qualified in their current job. In Spain subjective over-qualification is very high both amongst the native-born population and the foreign-born population. Meanwhile, in Germany and the UK the perceived over-qualification is highest amongst first-generation migrants with university-level education.

Table 8.1 Subjective over-qualification of employees (15-64y) by migration status and educational attainment level

	Educational Attainment Level (ISCED 2011)			
	Less than primary to lower secondary	Upper secondary and post-secondary	Tertiary	All ISCED 2011 levels
UK total over-qualification	11.7	20.7	25.1	20.7
Native-born	10.9	19.5	23.4	19.3
Second generation	13.1	21.8	25.3	21.9
First generation	17.8	28.9	31.5	28.5
Germany total over-qualification	6.5	10.6	11.9	10.4
Native-born	6.0	9.7	9.8	9.4
Second generation	:	11.8	:	10.5
First generation	7.5	17.5	25.7	16.6
Spain total over-qualification	37.1	53.5	58.2	50.3
Native-born	37.6	50.9	57.2	49.7
Second generation	51.8	49.8	58.5	54.5
First generation	34.7	63.0	67.7	54.1
EEA & Switz. total over-qualification	12.4	19.5	22.1	19.4
Native-born	11.0	18.6	20.8	18.4
Second generation	19.3	21.5	23.8	19.7
First generation	17.9	26.5	31.3	23.9

Source: European Statistical System, LFS ad-hoc module on Migration and Labour Market, 2014

Note: Not available = :

Several other informants stressed that onward migration facilitated improved wellbeing, such as personal growth and 'flourishing'. Vanessa provided an example of a friend's daughter, for whom onward migration was a 'breakthrough' that allowed her to reach her 'predestined purpose' in life. The belief in destiny is particularly strong amongst the Igbo.

I met a friend here, her girl is doing well now. The family came from Germany because [the school] told her she should go and do *Ausbildung* [apprenticeship] for hairdressing. Her mom said: 'Over my dead body, I know my daughter is bright enough to be whatever she wants to be.' Today she is a medical doctor in London. Just imagine... Germany was taking her where her destiny is not.

(Vanessa, 39, f, German-Nigerian in Manchester)

By contrast, other informants enhanced their wellbeing in surprising ways and unexpected places. For Ayọ a relocation to Germany did not spell an improvement in her material wellbeing and she was undecided what to do. She had applied for several jobs and her intended destination was the USA. On the way back to the airport, after attending a job interview in Duisburg, she decided to take a stroll in nearby Düsseldorf and had a positive feeling about the place. Ayọ was struck by how much more relaxed people were, and that life appeared slower-paced than in London.

I was actually tired of the UK... maybe it's the Nigerian in me that we have to go everywhere in the world. Actually I wanted to go to the US, Germany was not on my top list. But you know how hard it is, you need a work permit to apply for a job and you need a job to get a work permit. I am so glad I didn't go to the US, with all that happened with the redundancies and the economy I could have been back in the UK. I had a job, but I was looking for a job somewhere. So I pasted my CV practically everywhere [online] and the company found me. The company wanted someone to take over a project in Nigeria. [...] I came around May for my interview and it was kind of sunny and just an amazing atmosphere... and you could see people sitting outside having a drink. Which is something I did not see in the UK, because everyone is too busy making ends meet. I fell in love with the atmosphere and it was very clean, compared to London... Yeah it was just love at first sight. Then I took the job. I didn't know anybody here and I didn't know the language... I thought I will do it anyway; it was an adventure.

(Ayọ, 27, f, British-Nigerian in Düsseldorf)

It seems that onward migration to Germany certainly enhanced Ayọ's perceptual wellbeing. At the time of our interview Ayọ had been living in Düsseldorf for four years, and despite not having completely mastered the German language she was very content, she had made friends and become very active in a Nigerian church.

Wellbeing also is influenced by ever-changing family and wider kinship ties. By engaging in onward migration some of my interviewees were able to be closer to some

family and friends, but they equally stressed that they had social ties in a variety of European countries. Thus being closer to some extended family members, often meant being further away from others. The classical meaning of 'diaspora' implies the scattering of a population, caused by some forced or traumatic historical event. Other studies on intra-European onward mobilities have focused on migrant communities that mostly entered Europe as refugees (Kelly 2013; Lindley and Van Hear 2007; van Liempt 2011). Given that refugees experience a migration process towards Europe that often does not allow them to reach their preferred destination, this can result in their families living dispersed across several countries. In addition, the dispersal policies for asylum-seekers within destination countries may reinforce feelings of isolation, because refugees from the same origin country might be placed in different remote regions (Robinson *et al.* 2003). Yet, due to the increasingly selective EU immigration policies, my informants who entered Europe as migrant workers, international students or tourists were by no means free to choose their destination. The need to take advantage of particular short-stay visas or scholarships, can have a similar effect of scattering. For other individuals, an onward move could be understood as facilitating a reunification with friends and relatives.

For many informants, their contact with fellow diasporans and experiencing a 'Nigerian' way of life were important, so that onward migration had a positive impact on their relational wellbeing. All over the world Nigerian diaspora hubs of varying sizes have become implanted. Although orientation towards the homeland was long seen as a defining feature of diasporas, it has been conceded that even for members of the 'classic' Jewish diaspora, their Jewish identity is now experienced in the diaspora and a 'return' to Israel is rarely contemplated (Cohen 2008). Here we hear again from Maxwell, who had a big smile on his face when he was telling me about all the Nigerian ingredients he could buy now that he had moved from Spain to Amsterdam.

They have our food more, they have everything [laughs]. It's like in Africa! And in Amsterdam the food is cheaper and everything is fresh... In my house I prepare Nigerian food, and we all eat. My wife eat and my child also eat African food. My [Czech] wife can also cook, she can cook this egusi soup, and jollof rice, draw soup, okra soup and she can make fufu for me, she can do everything. I also eat white people food, sometimes she prepares her food and I will eat it. But my favourite is this my African food.

(Maxwell, 32, m, Czech-Nigerian in Amsterdam)

For Maxwell the particular 'translocality' of Amsterdam is produced through the availability of African foods, which is linked to other transnational practices and flows related to trade, transport and diasporas (Brickell and Datta 2011; Mitchell 1997). Given that all my fieldwork focused on places with relatively large concentrations of Nigerian migrants, my

sample is likely to over-represent those who actively sought these (re)connections with their fellow diasporans and 'home' culture. Yet, closer analysis of the 2011 Census data suggest that 'diaspora re-grouping' appears to play a role in some of the intra-European onward mobilities amongst other migrant communities (Van Hear 1998; van Liempt 2011). In many member states non-EU born migrants who attained an EU passport have relocated to places with established migrant communities from their own origin country.



Illustrations 8.1 Reachout event by Nigerian church in Piccadilly Gardens and Wizkid concert in Manchester

Particular destinations also offer opportunities to be part of wider kinship networks and established Black or religious communities. This was especially important for those who had previously lived in places where they were faced with discrimination and racism, which had caused them considerable psychological stress. Adébáyò, another informant, emphasised that onward migration was not only particular to Nigerians. Out of Adébáyò's around 30 university friends of African origin only two stayed in Germany, all the others had onward migrated to look for work in the UK and US, as well as Belgium and France – all destinations with large Black and minority ethnic communities.⁹¹

⁹¹ Interestingly, there also have been many young French nationals of African origin moving to London. This indicates that onward migration cannot be solely explained as a gravitation to the former colonial metropolis or determined by a shared language. In the 2012 BBC radio programme *The French East End*, presenter Lucy Ash comments on the increase of new pupils arriving from France at London's largest sixth-form college, the New Vic in Newham. The new French pupils are mainly non-white students whose families originate from France's former colonies or Overseas Departments, such as La Reunion, Guadeloupe and Algeria. The pupils said that they crossed the channel because they experienced racial discrimination in the French school system and believed that learning English would improve their chances of finding a job. In order to bring their English language skills up to scratch for the A-level exams the school was providing extra language classes. In his book *De la Cité à la City*, Hamid Senni also recounts his personal experience of growing up on a run-down suburban estate (*cité*) in Valence, the racism he experienced when searching for employment, and his eventual decision to move to the financial sector of London.

After onward migrating to the UK, Efem explained that she felt more accepted by British society than she had been in the Netherlands and Germany. She also hoped that onward migration to the UK would provide better life chances for her children. Efem is married to a Dutch national, but she felt her children were being discriminated by other parents in the Netherlands when they did not receive invitations for birthday parties. She moved to a small town in Germany for a year, but she was frustrated when police officers stopped her every day for an entire month while she was driving her children to school. Efem felt the police were racially profiling her, because she was driving an expensive car. Shortly after this particular experience Efem and the children moved to Manchester. Even though Efem felt more accepted by the wider British society, she had not been able to find a job that she enjoyed and living apart from her husband was taking its toll. The way Efem framed her onward migration was that it mainly served the enhancement of her children's wellbeing and their future prospects, which as a mother she saw as her responsibility. Nonetheless, it also is apparent that her perceptual wellbeing has significantly improved in Manchester:

We feel more at home here [in Manchester]. First of all, the language... whenever they are speaking we understand them. I was in Holland for 22 years and I still have problems understanding that language in detail. So when you are speaking and they don't want to interact with you, they bring out the most difficult one. And accepting us, we are like second-class citizens there. But here it is not like that, we are not second-class citizens. Whether they like it or not, you can discriminate me and I will call a lawyer and I don't have to pay... I will tell them this person has discriminated me by saying: 'Why are you here, go back to your country' [...]

(Efem, 43, f, Dutch-Nigerian in Manchester)

Efem mentioned that she would not discourage her children from returning to the Netherlands – after all they hold Dutch passports. But she believed that it was important for her children to grow up in a place where she could better defend them from ill-treatment and racism, because she had fluent command of English and more trust that anti-discrimination legislation would be implemented.

Other participants did not experience overt racism, but said that other interactions and practices in destination countries made them feel excluded. Peter recalled that, after 22 years of residing in Germany, he had grown accustomed to being treated as an 'outsider' despite holding German citizenship. One particular incident made him realise how little acceptance he experienced from German society and its institutions. He had booked an appointment at the unemployment office in Berlin to discuss his intention to move to the UK and request the continued payment of his German unemployment benefits while

searching for a job in the UK.⁹² The civil servant responded that she would gladly arrange for the payments of Peter's unemployment benefits to assist his job search in the UK, but that he 'should come back home to Germany, if things didn't work out there'. It was not the fact that the woman pointed out to him that he could come back to Germany that surprised Peter.⁹³ What moved Peter to tears was the woman's choice of words. In all the years that he lived in Germany, and even after becoming a German citizen, not a single German person had ever acknowledged that Germany was Peter's *home*.

Despite the overall enhancement to their families' wellbeing after onward migration, parents continued to evaluate their new surroundings. Many interviewees said that their children had been safer in their previous country of residence. Especially in London, my informants felt that their children were not able to go out by themselves to play, plus juggling full-time jobs with school runs was difficult in a big city. But the informants also qualified their statements by adding local comparisons. Regarding their perceptions of danger and stress, for instance, they contrasted different London neighbourhoods and rural versus urban settings. In the rural area in Northern Italy where Joy and her family had lived previously, she said it was normal for her children to walk home from school by themselves, and she was also able to leave her children in the care of her Italian neighbours. It was her cousin that had helped them find accommodation in East London, but Joy was planning to move her family to a smaller town in Essex once she had finished her nursing course.⁹⁴

In Italy the relationships there is more intimate. If you live here in Plaistow... your children go to the school around you and that is where everybody attends... it's not like you can send your children to school in Barking, it's not like that in Italy... so if you are living around a school the children will stay in that community. So it's more intimate... The neighbours' children will go to the same school, they all come back at the same time. And you interact with the Italian mothers and others... where I lived in Italy it was something like the countryside, there were not many foreigners around.

(Joy, f, 38, Italian-Nigerian in London)

⁹² Peter was the only research informant who mentioned that he was successful in 'transnationalising' his unemployment benefits. In general, to receive social security benefits individuals need to stay in the country that pays their benefits. However, under certain conditions EU citizens can move to another member state to look for work and continue to receive their unemployment benefits from the country where they became unemployed.

⁹³ He was aware of the regulations which state that EU citizens can resume receipt of any remaining entitlements to unemployment benefits, if the job search abroad is unsuccessful, provided they return to the country where they became unemployed within three months.

⁹⁴ Joy's intended move away from the capital is part of a wider trend, whereby more Nigerian-born residents now live outside London. The 2001 Census showed that 88,378 respondents resident in the UK were born in Nigeria, of whom 78 per cent lived in London. By the time of the 2011 Census only 57 per cent out of 201,185 Nigerian-born respondents were living in London.

Usman had been in living in Germany for five years before coming to the UK in 2001. He recounted how, on moving to London, he was able to find a job and that he felt at ease in the city, but since becoming a father he had come to view London in a different light.

The security in Germany is one hundred per cent better than here [in the UK], this place is non-sense. Because you are scared of going to the park here in London... Like in summer now, you want to walk freely with your kids and go to the park, it's a little bit dangerous here [...]. In Germany you can train up a child well there... but here [in London] it is not like that. Peckham is a very, very rough area... Let me give you an example: If you have a child from Peckham and a child from Chelsea, you will see the difference. The aggressiveness in Germany is not there, but here everyone is aggressive. Here you see a little child of 14 or 15 that has a knife at home. They have a long way to go here... If you check the crime ratio, it is ten times higher in the UK.

(Usman, m, 45, British-Nigerian in London)

Following these examples that illustrate how different contexts have shaped the migration outcomes of onward movers, it is also appropriate to consider how onward movers shaped the places they moved to. There is one particular example where onward migrants had a visible impact on their destination communities, even though Nigerian onward movers mostly did not understand themselves as a distinct migrant community, nor held dedicated meetings. Therefore, in most respects onward movers are best described as a hidden and dispersed population. However, during my fieldwork in Manchester I did come across a concentration of shops owned and frequented by onward migrants. The particular areas they moved to were Harpurhey and Moston, located in North Manchester. These adjacent neighbourhoods had been in decline for several years with many of the shops on Moston Lane left boarded up, because former businesses had been repeatedly burgled. Some of the Nigerian shopkeepers I spoke to moved there from London and were attracted by the lower accommodation and living costs. But most of the onward movers came there directly from continental Europe, arguing that London was too congested and crowded for them. Key informants I interviewed at the Citizens' Advice Bureau and the local education authority, confirmed that they were aware of the arrival of this particular migrant group and had provided advice regarding housing and schooling to individuals who had visited the area prior to their relocation. Moston Lane is now being dubbed the 'Little Lagos' of Manchester, due to the number of restaurants, barber shops, dressmakers, bars and corner shops that have opened on this high street. Even though the businesses serve the Nigerian and Caribbean communities living in the wider surrounding areas, the local community also benefits from the revival of this part of Manchester.

8.2 Constrained agency and other barriers to wellbeing

Depending on the positionalities, resources and relationships within which people are embedded, they have access to different opportunities for agency. Even though most onward migrants were able to improve their situation by relocating to another place or country, some informants experienced a worsening of their wellbeing over time. It is apparent that they faced various constraints that hindered them in realising their aspirations for migration or settlement. Although this chapter focuses on those informants who onward migrated, it is important to stress that not only mobility can enhance migrants' wellbeing, it is equally important for migrants to settle in order to accumulate and validate resources. Several studies highlight the precariousness of migration careers; despite their best efforts, migrants may struggle to overcome the challenges posed by immigration restrictions and labour market conditions (Andall 2006; van Nieuwenhuyze 2009). In her work, Andall (2006) draws attention to the situation of Ghanaian migrants in Europe who settle into a state of 'migration mobility', meaning that they are continuously mobile and do not manage to gain a stable foothold in any country. A feeling of exhaustion and disillusionment can set in during this turbulent migration that resembles a game of 'snakes and ladders', where some advances can be instantly undone and migrants might even be thrown back to their starting point against their wishes due to deportation policies. But even when individuals face considerable constraints they still retain some agency to decide about meaningful action.

Over the last two decades Ben had undertaken numerous migration attempts to several destinations, but immigration restrictions and 'deportability' (De Genova 2002) had frustrated his ambitions of settlement in Europe. I spoke to him in a remote neighbourhood south of the Madrid metropolitan area where Ben was selling the homeless newspaper *La Farola* in front of a supermarket and assisting shoppers to load their groceries into their cars in return for small coins. During his first stay in Europe he wanted to 'make fast money', but spent half his time in prison and in a detention centre before being deported back to Nigeria in 1995. Then he set out on three separate trips to Cape Verde, Libya and Mauritius with the aim of establishing a trading business, though visa restrictions prevented him from settling in any of these places and he decided to leave. In between his stays abroad Ben spent 7 years in Nigeria trying to run a market stall, which was eventually demolished during the urban renewal programmes that displaced an estimated 2 million people (Mberu and Pongou 2010). In 2005, Ben went to Sweden and overstayed his visa. 'After a while', he said jokingly, 'the spirit of travelling must have entered my system'. Even though Ben frames his continued migration attempts as an adventurous way of life, it is also clear that his

determination to migrate was linked to the fact that he had already invested a considerable amount of his financial resources in his migration project and then lost his livelihood in Nigeria. When he came to Spain in 2006, he arranged for his Nigerian wife to join him in 2008. The couple were living in a shared apartment and had enough to eat due to the expired food they received from the supermarkets where they were begging. But due to the economic crisis Ben saw no hope to find a job with which he could regularise their legal status. On numerous occasions the police had threatened to deport him, but he had boldly informed them that he was still awaiting the outcome of an appeal with the Spanish immigration office and they 'should not bother paying the flight', he would leave on his own accord soon after 'finishing a few things'. Nonetheless, Ben's condition of deportability was still apparent in the way he selected a suitable place for our interview and the phone call he made to inform his wife about his whereabouts.

Informants who eventually managed to regularise their residence status gained a sense of permanence and their narratives generally reflected improved wellbeing. This is because having residence papers enables migrants to find better-paid jobs, better housing, etc. It therefore is important to analyse how different functional needs are connected. The fulfilment of one functional need can have a multiplying effect, enhancing the wellbeing of migrants in other areas of their lives. The reverse is also true. When certain functional needs are not met, this has ramifications in other parts of individual's lives that can negatively affect their overall wellbeing.

Some onward migrants experienced periods of extreme precarity, because they could only exert limited choice over the timing and destination of their relocation and were underprepared in terms of resources. The economic crisis, in particular, drove various migrant communities in Southern European into considering a return or onward migration (Ahrens 2013; Mas Giralt 2016). Even though these countries initially had not necessarily been the preferred destinations for Nigerian migrants, many decided to postpone an onward migration or settle for a 'second best' option when they encountered favourable conditions (Schapendonk 2013). Given that the duration and severity of the economic crisis were unexpected, Nigerians at first tried to weather the financial crisis hoping that the situation would improve. Although some could claim a limited amount of unemployment insurance after losing their jobs, these provisions were generally not sufficient to set aside savings (Mas Giralt 2016). As the crisis persisted and onward migration became a last resort, individuals often had very limited economic resources to finance their journeys and

the adjustment phase in their new country of residence.⁹⁵ In addition, the mobility rights of third-country nationals within the EU are tied to their legal status. Those Nigerians wishing to relocate to the UK had to wait to become naturalised European citizens, seeing that the UK is not one of the Schengen countries. In any case, the majority of Nigerians in Spain only have short-term residence papers or national permanent residence papers, which means that they can only travel for a maximum of 90 days to Schengen member countries and they do not have the legal right to work in another member state, which resulted in many Nigerians relocating semi-legally (Ahrens 2013). Only individuals who held the relatively new EU directive long-term residence permit were allowed to relocate indefinitely to other Schengen member states and seek employment. But their chances of finding employment were severely hampered by the fact that other Schengen member states could refuse to issue work permits to third-country nationals with EU directive long-term residence. In addition, by relocating to another Schengen country they were crossing another linguistic barrier, seeing that none of the Schengen states, except for Malta, have English as their official language.⁹⁶

Onward migration in which migrants have limited agency to decide when and where to relocate, and which does not meet their functional needs to be able to speak the local language, can have substantial negative knock-on effects. The case of Osas illustrates the impacts that limited agency in the onward migration can have in terms of human wellbeing. Osas arrived in Italy in 2000 after losing her job as a caterer in a canteen in Benin City and realising that her attempts to sell food on the market generated insufficient income to support her two children. In Italy she first did various informal cleaning jobs until one of her employers helped her to apply for a residence permit. Then she qualified as a caregiver for the elderly in 2006 and sent sufficient remittances to enable her daughter to graduate from university. Meanwhile her son was resentful and stopped answering Osas' phone calls when it became apparent that she would be unable to enrol him at university after losing her job during the recession:

⁹⁵ In contrast to the experience of Peter, who we heard from in the previous section, informants in Málaga told me that they could not draw their Spanish unemployment insurance *in absentia* to allow them to search for work abroad. For EU citizens, like Peter, it is easier to transnationalise their social security rights. Third-country nationals, however, can only 'export' certain social security rights, plus the regulations and practices vary across member states. In Spain the Supreme Court handed down a judgement on an appeal (STS 7817/2012) on 18 October 2012, stating that third-country nationals in receipt of unemployment benefits can travel abroad for up to 15 days in every year, but this requires prior authorisation. For trips abroad lasting between 15 and 90 days the unemployment benefits are suspended for the time of their absence and resumed on re-entry to Spain.

⁹⁶ With the exception of the Republic of Ireland, but this country was also severely affected by the economic crisis and therefore at the time not considered a good option to find employment.

There was no job in Italy for a long time, for two years I was without job. It was really difficult, so I decided to travel out of Italy to look for a job for another place. I went to Rome to apply in Britain embassy for them to give me visa, but they said no. Then I decided to travel to Norway and I showed them my *permesso di soggiorno* [EU long-term residence permit], but they said no I can't work in that country. After some months I came to Germany and now I'm here for one year plus. When I came to Germany I did not know anybody, I heard it in Italy that Cologne is like Lagos in my country... it is a very open place, so I came here on my own [...] The problem is I do not have a home. The *Ausländerbehörde* [foreigners' office] told me that I should look for two jobs for €400 each and they will give me permission to work. That money will be enough for me to pay my house and take care of myself. Then I found one job at McDonald's and one cleaning and took the paper to the office. So within a few months they sent me a letter saying that I should come. There they told me that they don't need people from outside... like Italy, Spain or Greece to come to clean here, that they have enough foreigners cleaning for them. If I have a professional job like an engineer, doctor, or nurse... then I told them that I am an assistant... I take care of old people... in Italy I did a course. And then they told me that I should apply and find someone that will write contract for me. The minimum money that I should get is from €800. But at the interviews they always say that I need to learn *Deutsch* and go for language school. Now I found a free course, but without a house it is difficult to concentrate on the language.

(Osas, 44, f, Nigerian with an Italian EU long-term residence permit in Cologne)

Care workers are in high demand in Germany and actively being recruited from abroad. Even though Osas holds the EU directive long-term residence card with the right to work in any Schengen country and had relevant Italian care qualifications, she was initially unable to secure employment because of her insufficient German language skills. Osas passed through a phase of extreme precarity and sought help from three African-led churches before receiving assistance from an intercultural NGO. After 2.5 years in Germany, Osas called me overjoyed to say that she found a job in elderly care in another German region, only to then become increasingly anxious when her work permit had still not been issued four months later. Amongst the female participants I spoke to in Spain, several also held nursing qualifications, but were unable to practise their profession. The UK was the most favoured destination amongst those who could onward migrate, as they knew their Nigerian qualifications would be recognised. This option was only open to those who were naturalised EU citizens, as short-term and permanent residence papers did not allow free movement to the UK as a non-Schengen country.

When my informants encountered difficulties in continental Europe, many believed that their situations would significantly improve once they relocated to the UK. The Nigerians I interviewed repeatedly mentioned that the 'language barrier' in other European countries and the fact they were in 'a foreign land' were impeding their employment prospects and other opportunities in life. Similar to other post-colonial migrants, my informants often referred to England as the 'motherland'. Hereby they signalled their perceived affinity with British culture due to Nigeria's history as a former British colony.

Many Nigerians assumed that their fluency in English and tacit knowledge of British social norms and values, would make it easier for them to find better jobs in the UK. In addition, they believed the relative success of Nigerian diasporans in the UK and the achievements of other migrant groups, such as the Indian migrant community, were an indication of better opportunities for people of colour. Therefore, some participants expressed disappointment when on arrival to the UK these opportunities did not materialise or played out differently than expected.



Illustrations 8.2 Nigerian churches in Madrid and London

Franklin had lived in the German Ruhr region for 16 years and worked as a train driver, when he was tempted to relocate to Manchester based on success stories of Nigerian friends who had bought houses and cars. With his German passport it was easy for him to move to Manchester where he anticipated to ‘enjoy the general atmosphere and meet more Nigerians’. However, after one year he returned back to Germany because he believed that his friends were leading an ‘artificial lifestyle’ since they were only able to acquire their material resources due to the easier access to bank credit in Britain. The long working hours prevented him from seeing his friends and when going out for drinks on the weekends he found himself paying for their rounds of drinks. His British-Nigerian friends had ‘no money left in their pocket’ due to their high mortgage and loan repayments and he also asserted, that ‘we Nigerians in Germany send more money home’ to Nigeria.

During my fieldwork I encountered many Nigerians who returned to Germany from the UK because they did not like the lifestyle, which involved higher living costs and longer working hours in at times multiple jobs, especially in London (Dyer *et al.* 2011). It was not necessarily the ‘big city life’ they struggled with, given that many were born in Lagos or spent considerable time there. Instead they came to realise that, since leaving Nigeria, they had grown accustomed to a slower, quieter and safer lifestyle elsewhere in Europe.

Here we hear again from Uchenna who relocated from Bonn to study in London. His material wellbeing needs were met in London and he had been able to complete two degrees in London while working part-time; nonetheless, he felt worse off in perceptual terms. Through his studies he had also become more aware of class divisions in British society. These new insights made him reflect critically on his long working hours and the cramped accommodation he shared with other British workers:

Since I live in UK, I applied to so many things I could have not dreamt of doing in Germany. But let me put it this way, my body is in the UK and my soul is in Germany. I don't know... I just don't know. I cannot say I am comfortable here, I like it here, but I am not *comfortable* here. The lifestyle or the life I have here does not suit my concept of the life I would like to live. I want 8 hours, I rest, I bathe... I believe those facilities are here but I cannot avail myself of them or enjoy them. Sometimes I have to work 14 or 15 hours a day and then also go to school.

(Uchenna, 44, m, German-Nigerian in London)

At the time of the interview in 2012, Uchenna expressed a wish to return to Germany. Because we remained in touch, Uchenna informed me that he indeed moved back to his former place of residence in mid-2016. This also enabled Uchenna to be closer to his daughter, who had remained in Germany with his ex-wife.

Even though onward movers were able to accomplish their educational goals in the UK, they did not always think it represented the preferred choice for other aspects of their life. The fact that onward migration often gave rise to the formation of multi-local households also shows that relocation had to be negotiated amongst family members, taking into account their respective wellbeing needs according to their life stage and illustrating the relevance of the 'New Economics of Labour Migration' theory in household migration decision-making.

8.3 Multi-dimensional interconnections of wellbeing

When considering the way wellbeing is experienced in relation to onward migration, it is important to stress that migrants transform their conception of wellbeing throughout the migration project. Wellbeing is both a state and a process, and it is multi-dimensional. This can result in tensions between universalising perspectives and specific social, temporal, generational and gendered contexts. We therefore need to understand *what* onward migrants regard as wellbeing and *how* wellbeing needs can be met. Furthermore, it is also worthwhile considering in relation to *when* and *whom* onward migrants evaluate their

wellbeing. Onward migrants in particular may utilise multiple and evolving frames of reference in order to consider the outcomes of their migration project. Therefore, the way in which onward migrants evaluate their situation is arguably more complex and potentially undergoes several shifts throughout space and time.

In addition, the meanings and understandings of wellbeing are culturally embedded (Wright 2012: 10). The initial act of migration can transform migrants' perceptions of what it means to live well, seeing that the new surroundings of their destination country may raise migrants' aspirations. But there also is a risk that further relocations upward in their personal or migrant communities' hierarchy of places can trap migrants in a 'hedonic treadmill', because they might continuously identify new aspirations and may struggle to fulfil these (Czaika and Vothknecht 2014). To resolve this tension between instances where the lived experience falls short of aspirations, onward migrants can either work harder to meet their wellbeing needs or readjust their expectations downward. The evolving assessment of wellbeing needs sometimes is also accompanied by further onward, return or circular mobility.

Previous research about migrant wellbeing has mainly analysed how migrants perceive their wellbeing in relation to their pre-migration circumstances, as well as how the situation for the migrant's left-behind family members changes over time (Wright 2012). Yet onward migrants tend to compare their current wellbeing experience to numerous places that represent both previous and anticipated states of wellbeing – in the origin country, in the previous country of residence and other potential destinations. Generally, onward migrants not only evaluate their own progress, but also compare themselves to a variety of other reference groups – their family and peers they left behind in Nigeria, the local fellow diasporans, other local migrant groups, the local native-born population, or communities resident in other diasporic hubs.

In the following quote Bright expresses frustration at the fact that his non-migrant siblings and peers had outpaced him in enhancing their wellbeing back in Nigeria in the time he spent abroad. He completed his Bachelor in Electrical Engineering in Nigeria and five years later started his journey to Europe against the wishes of his middle-class family. After travelling through various African countries for three years, he then arrived in Spain and successfully claimed asylum in Melilla. Initially he operated machines in a bottling plant near Barcelona, and after several other factory jobs he then became a truck driver. While on the road through Europe he got to know various countries and made a point of stopping in Nigerian eateries, which helped him expand his social network that provided access to relevant information. He eventually acquired the EU directive long-term residence permit when the economic crisis was starting to take hold of Spain. Shortly after he chose to move

to Germany rather than the Netherlands, because he assumed there would be more employment opportunities in a larger country:

There are some parents who encourage their children to go out. But I don't come from such a family, mine is school, school, school. But you know that in every family there is always someone who says: 'I can't continue'. I just tried to deviate and I wanted to come out of Nigeria, but now I am stuck. I have the paper to go back, but I don't have the money to go back. [...] I have brothers and sisters... since I have been in Europe, let's say ten year plus because I came [to Spain] in 2001... I can say for the past ten years I have been in Europe a lot of things has changed. I would not advise any of my family members to come to Europe, because Europe is a system whereby when you get in, going back is difficult, because of time wasted [...] So it takes you like four to five years to get your documents, this means that this time of your life has been wasted doing nothing only sleeping and eating, sleeping, eating. That means that the people in Nigeria they are doing something better. But here you are in a place doing nothing. So now you want to go back home and compete with people who have been schooling? No.

(Bright, 38, m, Nigerian with Spanish EU directive long-term residence permit in Düsseldorf)

Comparing his situation to that of other Nigerian diasporans, whom Bright met in Spain and Germany, he considered himself lucky, because he was granted his Spanish residence papers relatively quickly. Bright was also able to improve his employment situation by gradually enhancing his skills and he found more well-paid employment. Ultimately his qualifications and experience as a truck driver were a decisive factor for the local German authority to issue Bright with a work permit. Nonetheless, he feels that during the years he 'wasted' in Europe regularising his residence status and doing menial jobs, his siblings and peers back in Nigeria had continued to study, started families, bought properties and established businesses. Bright's experience also challenges assumptions in the academic literature about the interactions between geographic and socio-economic mobility, as well as the passivity and dependence implied by the term 'left behind' (Mata-Codezal 2015). Those who remain in Nigeria also take care of migrants abroad by sending 'reverse remittances' and at times experience more intense social mobility (Mazzucato 2009). To avoid feeling embarrassed vis-à-vis others in Nigeria, Bright said he had discarded his plans for permanent return and even avoided temporary return visits. Nieswand (2011) argues that Ghanaian international migrants experienced enhanced social status during return visits to their origin country despite doing low-paid jobs in Germany, what he terms a 'status paradox'. This was certainly the case for some of my informants, but not necessarily applicable in Bright's case, given that his family valued educational qualifications. It is possible that Bright will reconsider his decision at a later stage and feel more at ease with facing his family and friends in Nigeria. But for the moment an important part of retaining a sense of wellbeing is to limit his interaction with his social network in Nigeria.

However, it was not always the migrants' own migration experience that influences trajectories and wellbeing. The next quote shows that the emotional cost involved in migration is borne both by the migrants abroad and by the 'left-behind' relatives and children (Coe 2014). The interview excerpt also illustrates that the way in which the separation is experienced and remembered is very subjective – influenced by factors such as the child's age at separation, frequency of contact with parents abroad, satisfaction with the caregiver and length of separation (Haagsman and Mazzucato 2014). Kelvin's dad left Nigeria before his birth and his mother departed to Germany when he was six months old. She did not have the means to visit Nigeria and was only able to apply for family reunification with her two sons after their father's death in Germany. Kelvin therefore did not have the opportunity to get to know his father and he also felt that the six years he lived in Germany before onward migrating to study in England were too short to make up for the time they spent living apart from his mother.

I always got bullied in school and... So, I wish I had... I had mum or a dad to call... tell my dad somebody bullied me at school today. Even so... my granny, she was a trader and she was always busy with work, trading and stuff like that... before she gets home I was already sleeping, you know... It is really, really hard. As well... I think the issues were kind of related that parents moving out from Nigeria to Europe it kind of helped us... helped us financially, but emotionally is the worst thing... the worst experience you could have for a child. And that is not something I wish for my child... no way man. So emotionally it was really... And that is what today crossed my mind. I know my mum is really, really sorry for leaving us behind [...] We did not have a house telephone... because it was the really... the really rich people that had first got in their houses telephone. So, my mum she had to record a cassette in a recorder and she had to send us the cassette through... she post the cassette and sent it to us [with friends who travelled to Nigeria] and we had to record one and sent it back. So it was... it was a weird experience. But after time and time we had a telephone in our house. Now it was a different story because we talk all the time. I never spoke to my dad on telephone because he died before we had a telephone in our house. I cannot remember my dad's voice.

(Kelvin, 24, m, German-Nigerian in London)

Like migrant children in other studies (Dreby 2010), Kelvin mentioned more resentment towards his mother than his father. At the time of the interview Kelvin was living in the family home of a distant cousin of his dad and said he was avoiding visiting his family and friends in Germany, because he feared seeing them again would make it emotionally impossible to continue his studies in London. This reminds us that it is necessary to embed migration trajectories into the wider life course of migrants, because early childhood experiences can have an important influence on future migration decisions and transnational outlook later in life.

Migration can challenge or reinforce prevailing gender norms within the family and society. Out of all the women I interviewed, there were seven who joined their Nigerian partners in Europe, but I did not encounter any men who came to Europe as 'trailing husbands'. Some couples had tried to maintain a long-distance relationship, but ultimately decided it was better to live together in Europe. Given that women have displayed a long history of economic independence in Nigeria (Cornwall 2002), coming to Europe via this mode of migration often initially resulted in unfamiliar financial dependence on their partner. This is partly the consequence of national variations in the implementation of the EU family reunification directive (Article 2, Council Directive 2003/86/EC), which also regulates access to the labour market for family migrants (Strasser *et al.* 2012). In other cases, this was due to the women needing more time to learn the local language and getting their qualifications validated before being able to search for work.

Even though one of the defining features of normative masculinity in Nigeria are the decision-making powers accorded to the male household head, within customary Nigerian marriages, women and men pursue largely separate and individual livelihood strategies (Cornwall 2002). The ideas of the nuclear family and the male breadwinner were only later introduced through colonialism and reinforced when many Nigerians converted to Christianity. Today Nigerian families often blend different modes of family structures and livelihood strategies, which serves them well when needing to respond to different economic pressures and geographic contexts.

The women I interviewed who experienced a sudden economic dependence on arrival in Europe perceived this as very disempowering. Nnenna came to Spain because she wanted to become pregnant and for several years it had been impossible for her conceive a child during the short return visits of her husband:

When I left Nigeria actually I was working... I was thinking the main reason I left home, when my husband came back home I can't conceive. At the time he used to come back home, it was just for the period of a month, because of his working conditions then obviously he would go back. That made my mother-in-law and everybody say that 'Ah ah... You have to leave your work and go and join your husband in Spain.' What I was afraid about was learning the language. I am not that good at learning languages. I was thinking, how will I cope... staying back in the house without working. Since I was born I have not stayed idle like this.

(Nnenna, 40, f, Spanish permanent residence permit, Madrid)

Nnenna enrolled on a Spanish language course, but it was too expensive. It was not possible to continue paying for it from her husband's salary, seeing that they also had a mortgage in Spain and other financial obligations for family members in Nigeria. Even though Nnenna was occasionally able to find work during her 12 years living in Madrid, she experienced

several miscarriages and decided together with her husband that it would be better for her not to work. Overall Nnenna still was satisfied with their choices seeing that she and her husband managed to have a daughter. In Igbo culture a high value is placed on having children, which exceeds the importance of material wellbeing.⁹⁷ Once her husband received his Spanish passport in late 2014 he onward migrated to London a few months later. Together with her daughter, Nnenna eventually joined her husband in the UK in 2016 and had started applying for jobs the last time we spoke.

Another one of my informants, Joy, followed her husband to Italy, because she believed it was better for them to live together. But rather than staying in Italy permanently, Joy engaged in several circular moves back to Nigeria with her small children, in order to continue working. It was only when she managed to secure a job in Italy that Joy decided to settle in Europe. Both Joy and Nnenna developed their migration projects in different ways in order to meet the wellbeing needs of their nuclear and wider families. Even though 'trailing wives' are often depicted as passive, these experiences show how women actively negotiate their migration pathways and respond to challenges in the destination countries.

For others the pathways of how to enhance their wellbeing were less clear and involved a great deal of chance encounters. Informants had to often displace their short-term wellbeing needs, uncertain whether their struggles will be compensated by future wellbeing. Kizito, for instance, studied Fine Arts at postgraduate level in Nigeria and worked as a painter and art critic for some years. In the next quote, Kizito elaborates on how he was confronted with life as an irregular migrant in Hamburg for nine years, which meant having to do degrading jobs:

In Germany I didn't have a lot of opportunities that I would have loved to have. I went to university [in Nigeria], but... I was not able to showcase my talents in Germany. I had to work in the kitchen and I cleaned toilets and I washed dishes and carpentry... all sorts of menial jobs to keep on. While I was trying to find an opportunity as an artist. And I lived these past few years as an illegal immigrant [...] I decided to live like someone living underground. Surviving that... later I decided to move to Spain to see what I can do with myself. And now that I have two years in Spain I have an art exhibition of my creations here in Málaga ... Five libraries are going to exhibit my work... I feel like someone who has lost time in Germany. But then I also feel like the experience I got in Germany was hard but it will propel me to have a better life. Some of the artworks there were titled 'My other Self'. [...] In Germany they know me as someone who is a very good dishwasher. But that is not who I am, because I am by profession an artist [...] That is also what a lot of other

⁹⁷ From Igbo: *Nwakaego* (Child is more precious than money).

Africans and Nigerians are passing through there in Germany. You are trying to live a life that is not yours, because you do not have the document.

(Kizito, 43, m, Nigerian without residence papers in Málaga)

In Spain his Spanish language teacher helped him to have his artwork exhibited in several public libraries. The exhibition mostly included pieces he had created in Germany, where, apart from going to work, he did not venture outside of his flat much due to fear of being apprehended without residence papers. During a radio interview at a local community radio station, to which I was invited, Kizito was asked to talk about the exhibition and provided some further details. In an effort to promote his work another Nigerian mentioned that the artwork would also be for sale; however, Kizito replied on air that he was mainly honoured to have his artwork seen by a wider public and was not too concerned about selling the paintings. We stayed in touch, and Kizito told me that he now is married and continues to paint. One of his more recent artworks is entitled *The Jailor is Liberated*⁹⁸ which he created in honour of the late Nelson Mandela. In an email, Kizito sent me an image of this artwork (Illustration 8.3) together with this explanation: 'Thinking of the Anti-Apartheid struggle and racism in general, I believe that the breakdown of any wall of segregation, racism, nepotism, tribalism, slavery etc. brings liberation not just for those oppressed but also freedom to the oppressor.' In his work, Kizito uses traditional, religious, and ancient symbols from Nigeria and other countries like Egypt, China, Japan and India 'to show that humans can co-exist in harmony irrespective of creed or race'. Kizito also pointed out that 'the broken arrow sign is an ancient Indian symbol for peace. I hope that through this effort we shall have peace in this world.'



Illustration 8.3 *The Jailor is Liberated* by Kizito

⁹⁸ In Igbo: *Agbaputawo oche nga*

8.4 Summary

This chapter set out to interrogate the migration outcomes for individuals who engage in onward migration. These individuals have lived in a variety of countries and maintain transnational connections to several places. The focus on human wellbeing revealed that although a large proportion of informants reported an improvement to their perceptual wellbeing following an onward migration, others were not as satisfied with the outcome of their relocation. The extent to which onward migrants were able to construct wellbeing, develop competencies and make choices across borders, was usually linked to the degree of agency individuals could exert over their onward migration. Within the context of the EU, rights to engage in mobility and seek employment in another member state are stratified according to different types of residence permits. Third-country nationals, who acquired a European passport, generally faced the least barriers to onward migration. This in turn often also had ramifications for their subsequent experiences of settlement and human wellbeing in their new country of residence.

Using the wellbeing approach this study has drawn attention to the material, relational and perceptual dimensions of how migrants define what living well means to them. This study has highlighted the connections that migrants themselves identify in the multi-dimensional evaluations of their lives. For some onward migrants, improvements in one dimension of their wellbeing, had positive impacts on other aspects of their wellbeing. But interestingly this research also demonstrated that some participants did not necessarily enhance their material wellbeing through onward migration, but nonetheless they felt richer because they were able to develop their competencies and feel more accepted in their new country of residence. Institutional trust and safety also played an important role for migrants' perceptual wellbeing. The second major finding was that more accurate information about different EU countries enabled onward migrants to know which places were most suited for the accumulation, validation and exchange of certain resources. Through onward migration many individuals could validate certain resources, such as educational qualifications, that had not been recognised in their previous country of residence.

The findings of this study suggest that the human wellbeing approach is particularly suited for exploring the outcomes of onward migration, because it 'travels' with the migrant (Wright 2012: 9). Given that onward migration is explicitly conceptualised as an open-ended migration trajectory, the focus on human wellbeing offers insights about how migrants experience their multiple emplacements. Furthermore, human wellbeing provides a more inter-disciplinary and holistic analysis of migration outcomes, than a focus on either

integration or development. A limitation of this study is that the findings were influenced by impacts of the ongoing economic and financial crisis which started in 2008. Spain used to be a transit country that later turned into a country of settlement for Nigerian migrants; however, the recession induced significant onward mobilities from Southern Europe. It is therefore important to consider these macro-level factors in addition to the micro-level characteristics of the migrants, in order to understand how migration patterns and trajectories are shaped.

Chapter 9

Conclusions and Discussion

This final chapter serves several functions. I provide an overview of the main research findings in relation to the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. In the next section I share some general reflections on the overall thesis, and discuss how the findings relate to the broader debate around African mobilities and onward migration. Finally, I conclude with a discussion about the drawbacks of this study, as well as possible future research and policy recommendations.

9.1 Findings obtained across the research questions

In this thesis I have explored the process of onward migration by focusing on Nigerian migrants in Germany, the UK and Spain. Through a multi-sited and mixed-methods approach I was able to take an in-depth look at this under-studied migration trajectory and generate new insights. The ethnographic methods I employed and the limited statistical data available about onward migrants preclude any statistical representativeness. Nevertheless, onward migration forms part of continuously evolving Nigerian migration strategies and patterns and the insights I have gleaned from my in-depth analysis constitute, I would claim, an original and valuable research contribution.

- **What are the drivers of Nigerian intra-European onward migration?**

In order to situate the practice of onward migration, I examined the multi-faceted aspects of Nigerian migration patterns. I showed in Chapter 4 how Nigerian migration dynamics evolved over time and outlined three distinctive post-colonial migration phases. I argued that increasing numbers of young Nigerians have started forming migration aspirations, due to high unemployment rates, a deterioration in the quality of education, growing corruption, rising living costs and different forms of violence that have contributed to a rapid decline of living standards in the country. Similar to other youths in the Middle East and other parts of Africa, young people in Nigeria find it hard to attain markers of social adulthood. Unlike previous generations that reached adulthood in newly-independent Nigeria, the youth today struggles to secure a stable livelihood, build a home, start their own

family and provide for their family and kin. Therefore young Nigerians see themselves 'stuck' and unable to achieve the social markers of adulthood (Honwana 2012; Singerman 2007). Emigration is thus regarded as one possible strategy through which young Nigerians can hope to realise their personal ambitions and fulfil the expectations of their families.

The Nigerians I interviewed used a range of migration routes and strategies to enter Europe. The vast majority of my informants arrived in Europe by plane, held valid tourist visas and then overstayed. But a significant proportion of Nigerians also came to Europe as students and family migrants. Amongst my informants only twelve individuals transited various countries on their way towards Europe and crossed the Mediterranean (Carling 2006; Collyer 2007). Until now the onward mobilities of Africans within and beyond Europe have remained relatively under-studied. The available data suggest, however, that onward migration has formed part of intra-European migration patterns for several decades (Chapter 5).

Based on a literature review of migration theories (Chapter 2), I proposed a conceptual framework to analyse the drivers of onward migration, taking into account the policies and regulations at the macro-level, as well as the networks and cultural perspectives at the meso-level. At the core of this framework is migrants' pursuit of improved human wellbeing based on a function of evolving aspirations and capabilities of the migrants during their migration project. Individuals with sufficient capabilities – such as financial resources, contacts, information, etc. – are more likely to realise their aspirations for (onward) migration.

Through an analysis of the policies and practices operating at various scales – from the supra-national, national, regional right down to the consular level – I illustrated their respective impacts on the various stages of the migration process. Since high-income countries implemented more selective visa policies in the 1990s, it has become more difficult and unpredictable for Nigerian nationals to realise their migration ambitions. But the barriers have not completely stopped immigration to Europe; they rather function as filters that make emigration more challenging and selective (Chapter 5). I argued that immigration and visa policies not only create 'closures', they also generate 'openings'. Enhanced access to information through the internet and other means of communication allows migrants to learn about particular openings such as study opportunities or labour market conditions (Kleist and Thorsen 2017; Vertovec 2004). Furthermore, I analysed how socio-economic transformations and continuities in the different destination countries impacted on the migrant decision-making process. After extended periods of residence in Europe, informants opted to relocate, because socio-economic changes in the initial country of settlement had negatively impacted their lives. For instance, the flexibilisation and

precarisation of work contracts in many European countries since the 1990s, as well as the onset of the global financial crisis compelled migrants to relocate elsewhere to find employment (Chapter 6). Meanwhile, other onward migrants reported that growing anti-immigrant rhetoric in wider public discourse had contributed to their decision to relocate.

In addition, I assessed the relevance of networks throughout the migration trajectory. In Chapter 6, I highlighted how various networks not only encouraged but also facilitated Nigerian emigration. For instance, global media and co-ethnic social networks raised the aspirations of young people in Nigeria and often also created an unrealistic image that in Europe the 'money grows on trees'. But once in Europe migrants did not have to rely solely on these networks for information, as they usually could undertake preparatory trips before onward migrating. Thus, new friendships and relationships that informants formed in Europe, so-called 'weak ties' (Granovetter 1973), expanded their social networks in turn augmenting the number of 'reachable' destinations (Chapter 7). Nevertheless, policy changes and social networks do not fully explain the whole range of determinants of intra-European onward mobility.

Given that I conceptualise onward migration as an open-ended and multi-directional migration trajectory, I found it fruitful to consider how the aspirations and capabilities influence onward migration. Analysing onward migration from a migrant-centred perspective revealed how migrant decision-making evolved across space and time. On arrival in Europe, Nigerians on the whole experienced a segmented, racialised and sexualised incorporation into the labour market because their skills and knowledge were not fully recognised or undervalued. I demonstrated how access to formal employment for Nigerians varied significantly across member states (Chapter 6). Many informants therefore onward migrated with the ambition of furthering their education and finding better (paid) employment. Importantly, onward migration was also related to different life course events. Having established their own families, Nigerians not only relocated in order to improve their own lives, they were equally concerned about enhancing the life prospects of their children and shielding them from discrimination.

The findings of this study thus suggest that the drivers and determinants of (onward) migration are multi-dimensional, dynamic and relational. Commonly, migrant decision-making is studied in the country of origin by taking into account the policies, networks and aspirations that affected emigration. I have demonstrated that throughout their migration project migrants continuously evaluate the possibilities of staying, returning and onward migrating. Therefore it is important to consider how the act of migration transforms migrant decision-making during the life course and the migration project.

- **What are the patterns of intra-European onward migration?**

The trajectories of my informants suggest that Nigerian intra-European onward migration follows multiform migration patterns, which are accompanied by other internal and non-migratory mobilities. Through a sequence analysis of the international migration trajectories of my informants, I was able to compare and contrast their spatial trajectories. There were several patterns that emerged. First, the trajectories of my informants indicated a trend of relocation in the direction of the UK. I therefore argued that the pattern of diversification of Nigerian emigration beyond colonial patterns, is complemented by a partial convergence of migration trajectories towards former imperial metropolises and diasporic hubs (Chapter 7). This trend of converging migration trajectories in the direction of the UK is normally overlooked, because in the analysis of immigration statistics the migrants' country of birth is often assumed to be their former place of residence.

Furthermore, the migration trajectories of my informants tended to follow an underlying logic that was influenced by the 'meaning' of the places produced within the Nigerian diaspora. As a result onward migrants typically tried to move upwards within the a commonly perceived hierarchy of Nigerian 'diasporic nodes' (Voigt-Graf 2004). Migrants are therefore actively involved in producing and reproducing the 'meaning' of places. These findings were supported by analysis of relevant statistical data, according to which Nigerians and other Africans are engaging in onward migration, not only in Europe but also in direction of other destinations like the USA, Canada and Australia (Chapter 5). In cases where onward migrants did not follow this logic and individuals moved to lower ranked destinations, like Spain or Italy, they generally were motivated by the need to secure a legal status. Such irregular moves often occurred in haste and without much preparation, as a reaction to expulsion orders which require individuals to leave the national territory (Chapter 6).

In addition, this study has highlighted the importance of several 'enfolded mobilities' as a means through which migrants maintained their everyday transnational lives (Williams *et al.* 2011). These mobilities at times were undertaken for pleasure, as holidays or visits to see new places on weekend trips. Informants with EU citizenship also used their enhanced mobility rights to undertake trips outside of Europe, to destinations like the USA and Canada. For others continued back-and-forth mobility between various destinations represented an important coping mechanism to secure livelihoods. Especially, those migrants who became unemployed or had to give up their businesses during the global financial crisis, engaged in shorter semi-legal mobility to North-Western Europe in

search of work (Chapter 8). For some, these 'enfolded mobilities' eventually facilitated an onward migration, seeing that informants could familiarise themselves with new places as they went through prolonged periods of preparation that involved various intensities of transnational mobility and livelihood. I suggested that Nigerians who stayed put in one country managed to fulfil their aspirations through situated practices of 'emplaced mobility' (Brickell and Datta 2011). Several informants engaged in 'virtual' and transnational mobility by enrolling in online degree courses, placing their children in international schools, attending Nigerian-led churches and socialising in Nigerian diasporic spaces.

Moreover, I suggested that onward migration geographically re-configured migrants' transnational families. Individual household members often relocated in a temporally-lagged fashion, therefore multi-local households were common amongst Nigerian onward migrants (Chapter 7). Furthermore, onward migrants maintained their transnational family ties by shuttling between several countries on a frequent basis for several years. Some eventually arranged for their families to join them at the new destination, whereas in other cases the onward migrants 'returned' to their family in the previous European country of residence. Thus, 'enfolded mobilities' were not always directed at new destinations. For the purpose of visiting family and relatives, onward migrants also travelled to their previous countries of residence. The lower travel cost for intra-European trips, made 'return' visits to previous European countries of residence more affordable than return visits to Nigeria. Second-generation migrants had visited family friends and relatives in other parts of Europe more often than they returned to their parents' 'ancestral homeland'.

Finally, I found that there was considerable variation as to how transnational identities, boundaries and space were imagined, experienced and lived. Members of the same family expressed very different feelings of transnational identity, which further evolved during the migration project. Several of my informants challenged dichotomous understandings of identity and asserted 'hybrid' identities, or multiple subject-positions, that lay beyond the categorical binary structures. When onward migrants move to a new place, I found that constructions of identity underwent further negotiations – due to renewed contestation and distinct boundary-making practices.

- **What are the outcomes of intra-European onward migration?**

The outcomes of migration are typically measured either in terms of migrants' 'integration' (or 'assimilation') in the destination country or the contributions migrants make to the

'development' of their origin country. This means that the frames through which migration outcomes are viewed distinguish between the 'here' and 'there', despite the fact that migrants often lead multi-local lives. Nieswand (2011) has highlighted the 'status paradox' that can lead migrants to be perceived as highly successful by their kin during their short return trips, while at the same time they are doing low-status jobs in Europe. In the case of onward migrants, understanding the outcomes of migration is even more complex. How do you measure the migration outcome of a 'return' to the previous European country of residence? How do you assess the migration outcome of those who remain continually mobile? Furthermore, both 'integration' and 'development' privilege state-centric measures of migration outcomes that do not necessarily take into account the aspirations that migrants hope to realise as part of their migration project (Chapter 2).

For a more holistic understanding of what it means to live well, processes of development and integration have been assessed from a wellbeing perspective (Wright 2012). Wellbeing also features prominently in the Igbo and Yoruba cosmologies as a value that is to be respected and promoted amongst individuals and kin. Furthermore, Nigerian Pentecostal churches commonly emphasise the combined spiritual and material wellbeing of its members. In my analysis, I paid close attention to how migrants define what living well means to them and how they see this notion circumscribed by others. For a more nuanced analysis, I distinguished between the material, relational and perceptual dimensions of wellbeing (Sumner and Mallet 2011; Wright 2012). Moreover, I illustrated how onward migration is characterised by various dilemmas, dreams and disappointments (Chapter 8).

This thesis has highlighted the connections that migrants identify in the multi-dimensional evaluations of their lives. For some onward migrants, improvements in one dimension of their wellbeing had positive impacts on other aspects of their life. But interestingly this research also demonstrated that some onward migrants did not necessarily enhance their material wellbeing through onward migration; nonetheless they expressed fulfilment because they were able to develop their competencies, feel safer and more accepted in their new country of residence. The second major finding was that more accurate information about different EEA member states enabled onward migrants to know which places were most suited for the accumulation, validation and exchange of certain resources. Through onward migration many individuals were able to validate certain resources, such as educational qualifications, that had not been recognised or had been under-valued in their previous country of residence.

Importantly, the findings suggest that the extent to which onward migrants were able to construct wellbeing across spatial boundaries was often linked to the degree of

agency individuals could exert over their onward migration. Within the context of Europe, rights to engage in mobility and seek employment in another member state are stratified according to different types of residence permits (Chapter 5). Third-country nationals who attained a European passport generally faced the least barriers to onward migration. This had a positive influence on their subsequent experiences of settlement and human wellbeing in their new country of residence. Others who onward migrated semi-legally with either short-term or permanent residence papers in many cases faced significant challenges in the place they were attempting to settle.

In sum, considering the outcomes of onward migration with a wellbeing approach was effective because it allowed me to see how migrants perceive the outcomes of their migration project, through a multi-dimensional and multi-local perspective. Even though material wellbeing was valued and promoted in Nigerian social contexts, such as the family and Pentecostal churches, it was not the only factor that influenced migrants' evaluations of their lives. The narratives of the informants revealed the importance of perceptual and relational factors in shaping their understandings of a 'good life' – being close to family, feeling safe and welcomed, trust in institutions, etc. While many participants were able to actualise their 'imagined futures', some individuals struggled to realise their aspirations as they were forever seeking *even greener pastures*.

9.2 Relevance of findings for migration studies

This thesis on the topic of intra-European onward migration of Nigerians contributes several new insights to migration studies. These contributions mainly extend knowledge regarding the conceptualisation of migrant decision-making, transnationalism and the evaluation of migration outcomes.

Migration used to be conceptualised as a one-off event based on a decision made at a single point in time. Yet, the 'mobilities turn' has had a profound impact on the social sciences, and increasingly mobilities and settlement are understood as interdependent and relational processes. More attention is now being paid to how people have differentiated access to mobility and migration. Nonetheless, I argue that migration drivers and migrant decision-making are all too often analysed as spatially and temporally 'fixed' in the origin countries. In order to understand the drivers of onward migration, I therefore proposed a dynamic and actor-centred approach that captures various contingent processes that influence migrants' aspirations and capabilities throughout the migration process. To this end, I analysed how changing policies and conditions in the destination countries, evolving

social networks, as well as various life-stage events affect the ways in which migrants evaluate their migration project. Conceptualising migration as a process through which migrants hope to achieve wellbeing for themselves and their families, allows us to understand why migrants continually weigh up the possibility of return migration, against the other options of staying put in the current country of residence or onward migrating elsewhere.

Furthermore, this research extends our understanding of transnationalism, because it highlights the multi-sited, multi-directional and situated nature of transnational ties and practices. Empirical research on transnationalism is often limited to the transnational links between the country of origin and one destination country. My findings highlight the importance of inter-destination transnational practices, in addition to the connections that migrants maintain with family, kin and institutions in the origin countries. Through their continued mobilities, Nigerian migrants are also actively involved in the production of transnational space. New social connections that migrants form throughout the migration project expand and diversify their transnational networks. Migrants' social networks also undergo repeated reconfigurations through the continued migration of other members of the network. Importantly, migrants also contribute to the differentially situated and embedded meanings of places. I suggested that the 'translocality' of certain places allowed migrants to satisfy their transnational aspirations without the need of physically onward migrating. Some parents enrolled their children in local international schools or studied for online degrees at British universities, which represented a form of 'virtual' onward mobility. Interestingly, onward migrants frequently 'return' to their former place(s) of residence within Europe, seeing that travel is easy and affordable.

Finally, I proposed human wellbeing as a suitable lens through which to analyse migration effects in a transnational setting. So far, the narrow economic definitions that are often applied to measure development and integration only capture a limited part of the total story of migration outcomes. The findings of this study suggest that the human wellbeing approach is particularly suited for exploring the outcomes of onward migration, because it 'travels' with the migrant (Wright 2012: 9). Given that onward migration is explicitly conceptualised as an open-ended migration trajectory, the focus on human wellbeing offers insights about how migrants experience their multiple, and often simultaneous, embodiments and emplacements. My informants typically made multi-dimensional comparisons when evaluating their situation. They considered their wellbeing relative to that of fellow diasporans or that of the family members they left behind in Nigeria, but also compared their situation to that of other migrants or native-born

Europeans. Therefore, wellbeing allows us to understand the impacts of migration from the perspective of the migrants.

9.3 Future research and policy recommendations

This section focuses on some of the drawbacks of the research design of this study, including the questions that could not be addressed and the new questions that arose. In this way my study generates a range of possibilities for future research on onward migration.

This thesis outlined three main factors that have contributed to the emergence and current shape of Nigerian onward migration towards and within Europe. First, changing visa and immigration policies since the 1990s have contributed to a growing 'diversification' of emigration flows beyond colonial patterns, which was followed by a partial 'convergence' through onward migration to more 'traditional' destination countries and other diaspora hubs. Second, a wide range of networks enabled Nigerians to overcome emigration barriers, and to a lesser extent continually evolving networks also played a role in intra-European onward mobilities. Finally, a dynamic view of aspirations and capabilities of migrants helped to assess their impact on emigration, and in addition showed their continued importance throughout the life course and migration project.

One shortcoming of this thesis is its focus on a single migrant group. Some experiences of Nigerian migrants might resonate with the experiences of other migrant groups – especially migrants originating from countries confronted with increasing barriers due to the selective visa and immigration policies implemented in Europe. Meanwhile, other findings are not as widely applicable to other migrant groups because they are linked to the particularities of the Nigerian context. One issue is that the high incidence of onward migration amongst Nigerian migrants is likely to be related to their low intentions for permanent return – due to ongoing violence, failing infrastructure, rising living costs and growing income disparities in Nigeria. This is one important contextual factor why migrants perceive a relocation to a third country as more attractive and feasible than a return migration to Nigeria. Therefore future research could be conducted with migrant groups that originate from countries with varying conditions for return. This could generate new insights concerning the extent to which the conditions in the origin country are associated with migrants' aspirations for onward migration.

Another shortcoming of this thesis was the lack of research in Nigeria. It would have been valuable to include more information about the emigration conditions and the ways in which individuals form migration aspirations in Nigeria. I did my best to convey this

information through my informants' narratives and other secondary sources, but this can only partly substitute for fieldwork in Nigeria. Research in Nigeria would have also enabled me to speak to (temporary) return migrants. Finding out about the aspirations and capabilities of return migrants would have enabled me to study how their experiences differed from those of other Nigerian migrants. It would have been particularly interesting to see how migrants who returned to Nigeria against their will viewed their migration project. Adjusting to life in Nigeria can be hard for those who voluntarily returned as well as those who were deported. Several of my informants re-emigrated to Europe, as they struggled to earn a livelihood in Nigeria.

In terms of the findings that were generated by this study, it is important to recognise the impacts of the economic and financial crisis which started in 2008. Spain used to be a transit country that later quickly transformed into a country of settlement for Nigerian migrants. However, the recession induced significant onward mobilities from Southern Europe. The continuous semi-legal mobilities that many of my informants engaged in, to create a livelihood for themselves and their families across European borders, are likely to have been more pronounced as a result of the crisis. Such macro-level shifts in addition to the micro-level motivations of the migrants need to be taken into account to understand how migration patterns and trajectories are shaped.

In terms of migration policy, more accurate migration statistics are certainly likely to enhance our understanding of onward migration. European governments thus far have focused on implementing highly selective mobility regimes, stopping irregular migrants from arriving and removing them from their territory. However, due to the concomitant demand for migrant workers across the region, these policies have largely failed to fulfil the objectives of reducing migration and deterring more migrants from arriving. Instead, ever more money is being spent on migration management and more migrants are embarking on perilous and, in many cases, fatal journeys. Therefore, ways need to be found to provide more safe and legal migration channels that address the needs of destination and origin societies alike.

Third-country nationals still have to overcome considerable hurdles and wait for long periods to attain stable residence permits in Europe. As a result, they are often unable to work and reside in the places where they could be more productive and feel more fulfilled. European governments should aim to provide tailor-made integration programmes, access to language courses and recognition of qualifications, as well as clearer and quicker pathways to stable residence permits. This would shorten the time that migrants currently spend trying to regularise their stay and enter the labour market, and enable migrants to make fuller use of their skills and knowledge.

At the moment political parties in several European states are reinforcing anti-immigrant sentiments for the purpose of short-term political gains. Currently, hardly any attention is being paid to the high proportion of immigrants who decide to *leave* their destinations by either returning to their origin country or moving elsewhere. Several studies confirm that onward migrants are positively selected on skills and a highly motivated migrant group. Rather than investing ever more resources in deterring migrants, destination countries could consider policies that would make them more attractive for particular migrant groups. More focus should be placed on policies that promote wellbeing for individuals and reduce global inequalities.

9.4 Some final words

On the countless flights, train journeys and bus rides I have taken during this PhD – doing multi-sited fieldwork, maintaining a multi-local household, visiting family members and friends, relocating for visiting fellowships and attending conferences in various countries – I always wondered how many fellow onward migrants I was sharing my journeys with. In the several places I have called home over the years, I had numerous fascinating conversations with onward migrants. And it certainly was a privilege to hear about the experiences of the Nigerian onward migrants I interviewed as part of this study. We do not share the same ‘roots’, have not travelled via the same ‘routes’ and are likely to end up in different destinations. But I felt there was a shared understanding of the complexity of our lived experiences and perspectives. We understand the effort it takes to make homes in several countries. We speak several languages more or less fluently. We perceive and enact different cultural codes.

I started this thesis with an anecdote about my encounter with Harrison who got me interested in the topic of onward migration. I conclude with another vignette from the end of my fieldwork. Having completed my multi-sited research in three countries, I was at the airport in Málaga and standing in line at the gate waiting for departure. I was nervously tucking at my hand-luggage trying to make the books, research diaries and other precious items fit neatly into the bag. Another passenger was repacking her hand-luggage in the seating area. She raised her eyebrows and glanced in the direction of the flight attendants who were about to scrutinise boarding passes and our bags before entering the airplane. The flight was fully booked and the woman I had eye contact with at the departure gate eventually came to sit next to me. Her hand-luggage was bursting at the seams, but she managed to stow it away in the overhead lockers. Becky was nervous about the take-off and

wanted to know whether I lived in Düsseldorf, the destination of our flight. It turned out that she was from Nigeria and had lived in Spain for several years. She was now going to live with her boyfriend in Germany. I told her about the research I was doing and that I had interviewed many Nigerians. The topic did not surprise Becky in the slightest seeing that she knew many Nigerians who had lived in several countries. We continued chatting about the different places we knew in Spain, her trading business and life in Germany. After we landed Becky asked me whether she could use my mobile to call her boyfriend, as she could not see him in the arrival area. We continued talking for a little while longer until her boyfriend came to collect Becky a few minutes later. Then we exchanged goodbyes and I wished her well for life in Germany.

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