



IOM International Organization for Migration

# CALAIS “JUNGLE”: AFGHANS IN TRANSIT

A snap-shot report on Afghan migrants in the Calais “Jungle” pre-dismantelment on 24 October 2016.

## DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX (DTM)

November 2016



# I. BACKGROUND

The project “Data collection to enable the better understanding of migration flows from Afghanistan and Pakistan towards Europe” was designed by IOM DTM and is funded by DFID (UK). The IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), is a set of tools and methodologies to enable systematic and regular primary data collection, analysis and dissemination on human mobility and forced migration (both internal and cross-borders) and is currently deployed in over 30 countries positioning IOM as a key contributor to humanitarian response in natural disasters, conflicts, and complex emergencies alike. In order to increase the understanding of migration flows from Afghanistan and Pakistan towards Europe different field locations for data collection were chosen: Afghanistan, Pakistan as countries of origin/departure, several countries along the Balkan route, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and France (Calais) as transit countries, as well as the Netherlands and the UK as destination countries. The data collection in each of the field location aims to shed light on eight thematic areas which have been designed under this project:

## THEMATIC AREAS

<b>1</b> Migrant profiles	<b>2</b> Migration routes and trajectories	<b>3</b> Resourcing the journey	<b>4</b> Role of intermediaries	<b>5</b> Vulnerability factors in origin transit and destination countries	<b>6</b> Migration drivers and decision making	<b>7</b> Role of the diaspora (incl. remittances)	<b>8</b> Migrant’s perceptions towards Europe
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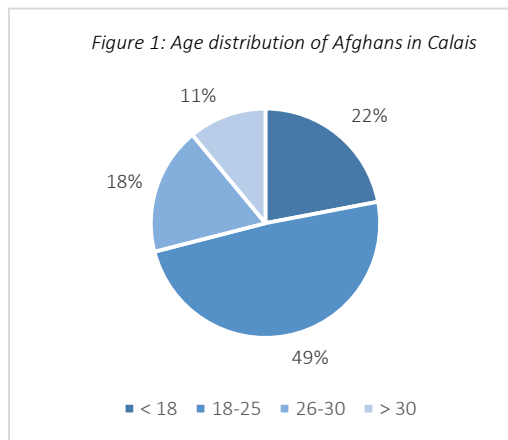
Calais was chosen as a field location under this project because of its strategic as well as geographical importance, especially for Afghan migrants in Europe that aim to reach the UK. The ‘Calais Jungle’ has a long standing history of being a transit point for migrants aiming to make their way into the UK. Under this current project, a total of 136 Afghans were interviewed between the period of October 10, 2016 and October 23, 2016. The activity was disrupted due to the dismantling of the Calais Jungle on October 24, 2016.

In this context it is important to acknowledge that the findings outlined in the next part of this snap-shot report are not representative for the whole Afghan migrant population that has recently migrated to Europe. This snap-shot report only aims to provide general findings of data collection amongst Afghans in the “Calais Jungle” during 10 -23 October 2016. Since the sample size is rather small (n=136) results should not be overinterpreted.

## II. CALAIS JUNGLE: AFGHAN MIGRANTS IN TRANSIT

### MIGRANT PROFILES

<sup>1</sup>In order to obtain a basic understanding of the demographic composition of the Afghan population in the Calais Jungle and to better understand their socio-economic backgrounds, IOM DTM collected principle data on the profile of Afghan migrants. All of the 136 Afghans that were interviewed in the “Calais Jungle” between 10 and 23 October 2016 were male. Of these 136 male Afghans, 67% were single, 30% married, 1.5% engaged and 1.5% divorced or widowers. When looking at the age



distribution of the respondents (Figure 1) the largest share of Afghan males interviewed were between 18 and 25 years old, making up almost 50 percent of the sample-size, while 22 percent were below the age of 18, roughly 18 percent were between the age of 26 and 30 and the smallest share with 11 percent were 30 years or older. With regard to the different ethnicities, the largest share is made up by Pashtuns (79%) followed by Tajiks (17%) while Hazara only made up 4 percent. The educational background is quite diverse among the sample population; 27.5 percent claim to not have completed any education, 37.5 percent have primary education and 23 percent have a secondary education. Only 3 percent obtained a bachelor degree and another 8 percent indicated to have some other form of education.

IOM DTM also collected information on the origins of the target population, as the broader scope of this project is not only intended to understand the situation of Afghans in Calais but also the socio-demographic situation of Afghan migrants before departure. Migration is a long existing normality in Afghanistan, and large numbers of Afghans live in neighboring countries such as Iran and Pakistan. This is also reflected in this sample size, of the Afghans interviewed: the large majority lived in Afghanistan prior to migration (85%), the other 15% lived in Iran (10%), Tukey (1.5%), Pakistan (1%), and various EU countries (2.5%).

Whilst only focusing on the 85 percent that left from Afghanistan, table 1 shows that those Afghans interviewed in Calais started their journey from five major provinces:

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<sup>1</sup> All numbers indicated as well as the tables and figures displayed in this report were all self-created by the DTM project team using STATA

Table 1: Top 5 provinces of departure

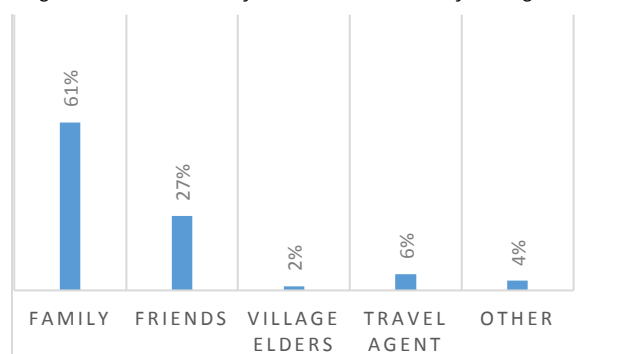
Province	Share
1. Nangarhar	25%
2. Kabul	21%
3. Laghman	11%
4. Logar	9%
5. Kunduz & Baghlan	8%
6. Other 12 provinces mentioned	18%

### MIGRATION ROUTES AND ROLE OF INTERMEDIARIES

Under this project, IOM DTM aims to increase the knowledge base on the routes Afghans use to and in Europe and the role intermediaries play in facilitating the journey. The data shows that the majority of Afghans that were interviewed in the “Calais Jungle” left from Afghanistan and first crossed the border into Iran (68%). For those Afghans that lived in Iran prior to departure the largest share (71%) had Turkey as their first transit country. All Afghans that lived in Pakistan prior to their migration, stated that Iran was their first transit country. The most common route used by Afghans in Calais was through Iran to Turkey followed by the Western Balkan route to enter into Europe.

In order to understand the broader scope on how Afghans make their way to Europe, data was collected to increase the understanding on who incentivizes the migration and whether Afghans receive support from relatives or friends in Afghanistan. Figure 2 shows that family (61%) and friends (27%) play a major role in finding intermediaries to facilitate migration to

Figure 2: Network to find intermediaries for migration



Europe. Observations made during the data collection reveal that as migrant’s age and agency develops, more information is naturally provided by friends with greater influence in arranging intermediaries, especially for those Afghans that lived in Iran or Pakistan prior to migration to Europe. Although often assumed, village elders (1.5%) did not seem to play an important facilitation role for Afghans in Calais. Interviews revealed that in various cases village elders only were asked for permission in the final stages of ‘migration arrangements’ or for a ceremonial blessing.

The roles intermediaries or smugglers play in facilitating the journey were collected in form of open-questions; therefore the results are of qualitative nature. Qualitative analysis reveal that travel arrangements used by Afghans in Calais resulted in the fact that many migrants were often “handed over” which could lead to the involvement of up to thirty smugglers for the whole journey. Data and observations furthermore show that the journey before reaching Greece or Bulgaria was most often dominated by rapid transit in crammed cars or trucks, or with cases of being locked in smuggler "guesthouses" to avoid detection or with the purpose to intimidate migrants and their families. Most Afghans leave directly from Nimruz to Iran or via Balochistan (Baluchistan) in Pakistan. Interviewees recall smugglers in Pakistan and eastern Iran being most often of Baloch/Baluch ethnicity. However, respondents say that after crossing over into western Iran, such as after passing through Shiraz, Isfahan or Tehran, and from then on into eastern and central Turkey, they are then handed over to Kurdish smugglers since they know better than most how to navigate the treacherous mountains in Kurdish territory. From western Turkey onwards crossing over into Greece or Bulgaria, smugglers are Afghans. More precisely; Afghans who have travelled these very same routes themselves and who developed some familiarity with the local surroundings.

Respondents reported during the interviews that when crossing mountains, mainly between Iran and Turkey, smugglers ride horses while migrants follow by walking. Migrants can allegedly opt for riding horse-back too, which is however not included in the smuggling deal and imposes extra costs. The landscape is rugged and many have reported seeing dead bodies along the route. Stories reveal that those migrants that cannot keep up with the tempo of walking imposed by the smuggler often get beaten up harshly. Various respondents furthermore witnessed sick or weak migrants being abandoned by smugglers along the route. Even though migrants are told to bring water and food for these lengthy crossings, provisions can also be purchased from smugglers, most often in a care-pack of cookies, nutrition bars, and dates, paid for in US dollars.

## VULNERABILITIES

Assumptions on abuse and human rights violations for (Afghan) migrants along the route are widely spread among the international community, however in many cases ‘hard’ evidence is missing. Therefore, in order to raise awareness as well as to establish more evidence-based data about the fact that migrants are often exposed to various threats along the routes, DTM IOM aimed to collect information on vulnerabilities and problems Afghans face along their journey. Despite the large qualitative nature of those questions this data reveals numerous stories of physical abuse, sexual violence, theft, as well as harassments along the

route. The perpetrators are often the smugglers themselves or their affiliates, in addition border officials or national police (in various countries along the route) are also frequently mentioned by the respondents. The majority of respondents’ reports incidents of detention, beatings, being sprayed or chased by dogs, while a smaller group furthermore reports the confiscation of food, money, phones, clothes and other personal property. Moreover various Afghans in Calais have reported abduction for ransom early-on in the journey. This occurs particularly in Kerman and other parts of eastern Iran, often by Balochi bandits and affiliates of smugglers, if not the smugglers themselves who use abduction practices to gain additional money by forcing respective families in Afghanistan to pay for their releases.

**RESOURCING THE JOURNEY**

To further broaden the understanding of Afghan migration to Europe, IOM DTM also collects information that explores both aspirations as well as capacities that actually make it possible for an individual to take the step to migrate. When looking at economic capacities of Afghan migrants in the “Calais Jungle”, IOM DTM has collected information on how journeys to Europe were financed. Under the survey four main sources have been identified:

*Table 2: Top 5 sources of how migrants finance their journey*

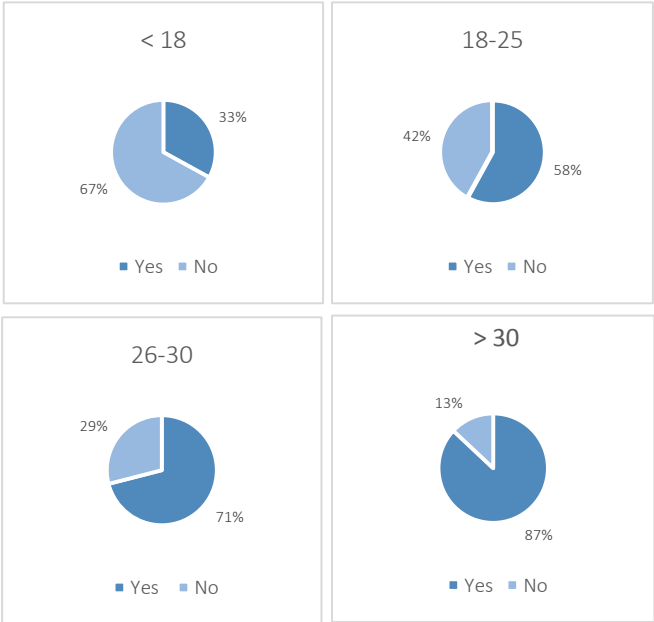
<i>Source</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1. Sold Land	31%
2. Borrowed money	25%
3. Savings	22%
4. Sold assets	17.5%
5. Sold house	1.5%
6. Other	3%

Data-outputs related to the actual costs of the journey varied greatly and show that modes of transportation and quality of falsified documentation (if used at all) have great influence on the final amounts paid by Afghan migrants. The data further shows that 86 percent of the respondents paid for their journey in US\$ and not in local currencies or Euro, creating the assumption that the “business of migration” from Afghanistan to Europe is dominated by US\$. From the interviews it also became clear that in almost all reported cases - from Afghanistan all the way to Calais - the currency for intermediaries and travel arrangements were made in US dollars, whilst individual smugglers in each country use local currencies. The cost of crossing from Calais to the UK, however, then switches to pounds.

MIGRATION DRIVERS AND DECISION MAKING

For decades ‘motivations for migration’ and the decision making process have been studied. Due to its often changing nature, IOM DTM aims to collect data that reflects current migration drivers of Afghans to Europe. Respondents in Calais were asked why they chose to migrate and 77 percent of the respondents named security threats and violence as one of the main reason for leaving Afghanistan. Over 44 percent also named national security and lack of job opportunities (21%) as important factors for out-migration. The quantitative data on reasons for migration was also cross-referenced with qualitative questions that focused on particular events and out-migration triggers. The qualitative data also confirms that lack of security on individual and/or community level is the main reason for out-migration. Other ‘triggers’ included national security, governance and lack of economic opportunities. A small group of respondents, mainly minors, furthermore highlighted that their migration ‘trigger’ was based upon the decision of one or more family members that made the migration decision for him.

Figure 3: Relationship between age and the individual decision to migrate



Whilst looking at external data, various scholars state that migration is used as a household coping strategy. Sending one family member with a certain intention to Europe, such as looking for employment abroad in order to send remittances or to initiate family reunification, is sometimes used on a household level as risk mitigation in Afghanistan. The quantitative nature of the questions in this survey on whether the migrant took the decision to migrate himself or if another actor was involved in this process shows a clear correlation with the age of the migrant. Approximately 42 percent of the respondents stated that they did not make the decision to migrate themselves, while respectively 58 percent indicated the decision was taken by themselves, decision were made by either the father (60%), both parents (21%), an uncle (12%) or brothers, cousins or members of the community (7%). Whilst drawing on the relationship between age groups and whether the migrants took the decision to leave themselves or not, figure three shows that the younger the migrants, the more

likely the decision to migrate is not made on an individual level<sup>2</sup>. Approximately 66 percent of Afghans aged under 18 did not make the migration decision on an individual level but had family members making this decision for him.

## ROLE OF THE DIASPORA

This project further aims to explore the potential linkage between out-migration and the Afghan diaspora. Therefore, the question arises whether diasporas play an important role in incentivizing migration of those “left behind” in the origin countries. It is assumed that especially the Afghan diaspora within Europe send back large amounts of remittances every year, unfortunately significant data-gaps exists that link those remittances to potential outmigration.

This survey tried to obtain data to better understand the relationship between the Afghans in Calais and friends and families in Europe. The survey showed that 30 percent of the respondents had either family or friends in Europe, while the other 70 percent claimed to not have any family or friends linkages in Europe. Whilst trying to obtain information if any of the respondents received money from their relatives and friends in Europe prior to their journey, the sample shows that only 41 out of the 136 responded to those questions. Of those replies 63 percent of the Afghans in the ‘Calais Jungle’ stated that they did not receive any money prior their journey from relatives and friends in Europe while only 37 percent (15 respondents out of 136) did. Furthermore, under this sample population, the diaspora did not seem to play a significant role in information dissemination, since only 2 percent of the respondents stated that they gathered information on migration through family and friends in Europe. In final the data did not show a strong correlation between the desired destination country and the countries where respondents stated to have ties with family and friends.

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<sup>2</sup> This data does not provide answers to the question why households made those decisions and therefore no assumptions can be made related to household level risk mitigation.

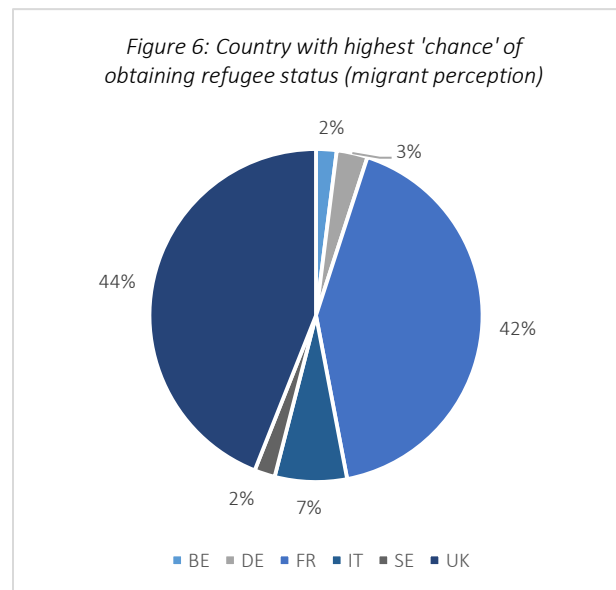
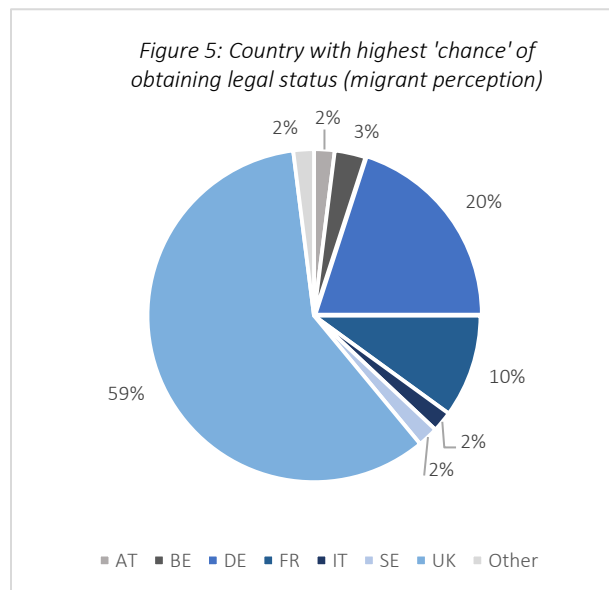
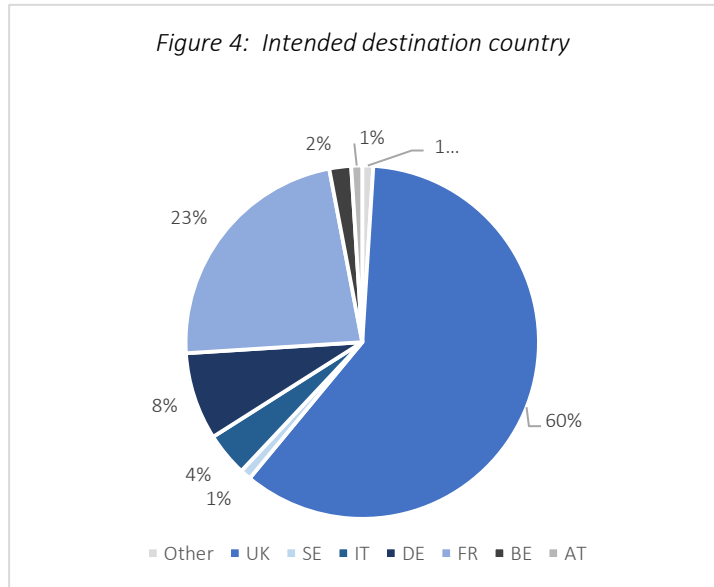


## MIGRANTS PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS EUROPE

During the data-collection in Calais, IOM DTM also gathered information on intended final destination countries and why Afghans aimed to settle in that particular country. Looking at the intended destination countries of the sample population it becomes clear that the largest share (60%) named the UK as their desired country of destination. France, being the second popular choice with 23 percent and Germany being third with 8 percent.

Respondents listed three main reasons why

they selected those countries as final destination: 1. country with highest opportunity to obtain refugee status (43%), 2. country with highest opportunity for gaining a legal status (29%) and 3. country with work opportunities (11%). The first two reasons are outlined in greater detail in figure 5 and 6:



As shown in figure 5, the highest opportunity to obtain legal status is presumed to be in the UK (59%), in Germany (20%) and in France (10%). The respondents have the perception that the UK (44%) and France (43%) are the countries where refugee statuses is ‘easier to obtain’ and the UK is perceived as the country where there are most work opportunities (100%).

Unfortunately, perceptions migrants have regarding various EU countries is often not compatible with reality. In order to obtain more in-depth understanding of migration decision-making, Afghans in Calais were asked whether they had changed their intended destination along the route and if so why. The sample size shows that 39 percent of the respondents indicated that they changed their country of destination along the route for various reasons, such as:

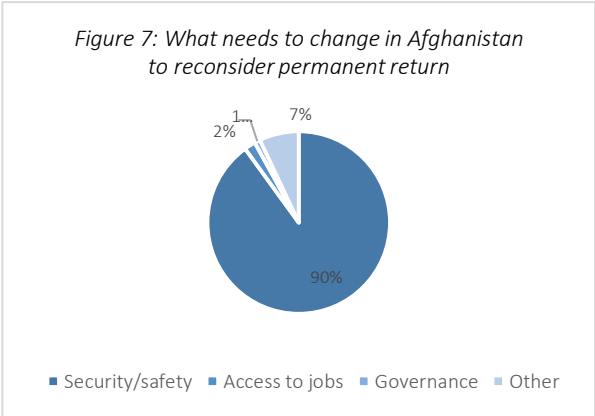
Table 3: Top 5 reasons for changing country of destination en route

Reason	Percent
1. The respondent failed to get asylum in the intended destination country	41%
2. The respondent obtained information (from other migrants) that asylum “is easier to get in another country”	26%
3. The respondent just followed other migrants	8.5%
4. The respondent did not “like”/felt welcomed in the country where asylum was granted	15%
5. Difficulties to reach the intended destination country, so the respondent changed to “easier country”	8.5%

Qualitative questions evolving around the understanding of asylum procedures in Europe reveal that the majority of respondents have a limited understanding of conventions, laws, procedures related to asylum and refugee status.

**OUTLOOK**

In final, Afghans in Calais were asked what needs to change in Afghanistan for them to return to their country of origin. As outlined in figure 7, the majority of respondents (90%) listed security and safety in Afghanistan as the most pressing issue. This is compatible with the previous findings on migration drivers from Afghanistan as well as with the triggers respondents indicated that caused them to leave their home-country.



National security and the threat of violence was named by almost every respondent amongst all the different reasons.

Since migration is often linked to networks with the argument that people often follow other migrants or make use of relationships with migrants in destination countries for information or other services, the survey included a question whether the Afghans that were interviewed would actually advise others to follow their path. The data showed that of the 136 respondents, 100 Afghan migrants (73.5%) actually stated that they would not advise friends or family to migrate, while only 36 (26.5%) responded with a yes. However, of those respondents that would positively advise others to migrate, the majority highlighted that others should only migrate when there is “no other option”.

The reasons why they would advise against migration were answered in form of open-ended questions. The main findings are briefly mentioned below. Afghans in Calais indicated that the abuse that they faced during the journey was experienced much more traumatic than some of the security problems they faced in Afghanistan. Words like humiliation and dishonor were frequently used by Afghans in the ‘Calais Jungle’. Others also stated that the living conditions in Calais are perceived as worse than in Afghanistan and they therefore do not see a point in migrating. Furthermore, the lack of jobs and study opportunities in Europe were named. Death was quite an important factor for Afghan migrants to negatively advise others, since many have seen fellow migrants die along the route and they frankly stated that they rather die in Afghanistan than in Calais. Another argument made was that many just do not see a future in Europe and do not see the point of coming if there are no prospects. Various quotes of Afghan migrants in the “Calais Jungle” are reflected on page 14 of this snap-shot report.

### III. CONCLUSIONS

#### MAIN FINDINGS

The data collection activity in the “Calais Jungle” has shown that the sample size predominantly consists of single Afghan males between the age of 18 and 25 years. The largest share of those interviewed lived in Afghanistan prior to their departure and almost half of them departed from the provinces Nangarhar and Kabul. For the majority of Afghan migrants in Calais the route led from Iran to Turkey whilst using the Western Balkan route to enter into Europe.

Looking at the importance and the role of intermediaries it became apparent that extensive smuggling networks were used to reach Calais and that family members and friends in Afghanistan (form)/function as initial networks to find intermediaries to facilitate the journey to Europe. Data revealed that migrants go ‘through the hands’ of a lot of different smugglers until they reach their final destination countries. Smuggling networks seem well established throughout the journey and within Europe, mainly operated by other Afghans.

The exposure to many different smugglers as well as the travelling through many transit countries increases the risk of abuse along the journey. The majority of respondents reported some form of abuse along the route, the most common ones being beatings, theft as well as detention, experienced through smugglers, border officials or the police.

The surveys revealed that reasons for out-migration were primarily linked to security and safety. Security on individual and community level was the most important reason to leave Afghanistan, followed by the security situation on national level. Other reasons that fueled the decision to migrate were mainly linked to a lack of economic opportunities and national governance. It must be acknowledged that over 40 percent of the respondents however stated that the decision to migrate was not made on an individual level. In this regard it is visible that the younger the age group the more likely it is that the migrant did not choose himself. In the context of the decision to migrate, the diaspora in Europe does not seem to play a significant role since only a very small percentage of the target-group received information on migration from the diaspora as well as they claimed to not having received any financial support from them. The most popular destination countries for Afghans in the ‘Calais Jungle’ revealed to be the UK followed by France and Germany with the argument that the chances of obtaining refugee and legal statuses as well as labor opportunities are highest in these countries.

## IMMEDIATE NEEDS AND VULNERABILITIES

From the data collection activity in Calais it became apparent that there are certain immediate needs and vulnerabilities amongst the Afghan migrant population en route to Europe. The reported cases of abuse which seem to be occurring for the large majority of migrants should be addressed to potentially enhance the protection of those Afghans travelling to Europe.

Furthermore, access to information could be drastically improved in different aspects. Migrants need to be better informed along the route (in home and transit countries), about potential destination countries in the EU, and what services and rights they will have access to within these different EU countries. Systematic information on how the Dublin and Schengen system functions is lacking and current information does draw a false picture on the chances of obtaining legal status and access to work opportunities and social services. Information on potential risks of migration do not seem to reflect the actual challenges migrants face along the route. There is also a need for better information on potential risks and threats migrants could face along the route, since current information on potential risks of migration do not seem to reflect the actual challenges Afghan migrants face along the route. This goes along with informing people of where they can obtain access to basic needs such as food, shelter and legal assistance along the route but also in the destination country. Currently referral mechanisms are missing at many transit points along the route to Europe.

In final, data collection in the 'Calais Jungle' has revealed the need for special services for vulnerable groups, in this case unaccompanied minors (UAMs). As the findings showed over 22 percent of the sample population were below the age of 18. Special provisions for UAMs, could reduce their exposure to risks such as trafficking, sexual abuse or bonded labor.

"If really in danger of death, then one should migrate if not stay in your country..."

## EUROPE

"So many migrants in Europe. There's no protection and not even any care for the under-aged..."

"Better to die at home than here. I didn't have any facial hair before arriving at the jungle. This place changes you..."

"Life of a migrant is full humiliations. You face with physical and mental violence everyday...."

"Life is hard here, it's not worth it..."

## MIGRATION

## ASYLUM

"Death is a real threat throughout the journey and I don't want anyone to experience what I did experience..."

"I can't tell my parents the reality here. I have to lie about being in Europe. If Ghani's promises were true, why would I come here..."

"It's better than getting killed by Taliban...."

## CALAIS 'JUNGLE'

"I deeply regret my decision for coming to Europe. If there was no shame on my family, I would go back to Afghanistan but I cannot..."

## UNITED KINGDOM

"Smugglers lie and it was horrible on the way, now it's just waiting and uncertainty..."

"If I knew Europe would be like this and we would end up like this here at the jungle, I wouldn't have come..."

## OPPORTUNITIES

"You do what you have to do, but people want opportunity, safety, and family... for me, that's the UK and I'm determined to go..."

"Smugglers told me life would be easy and free, that there would be work... I have lost years en route and in waiting..."

"It has wasted my time, thrown me around..."

## AFGHANISTAN

"We have internet and Facebook, we see what the outside world is like... I can't live in a prison in Afghanistan..."

## DISSAPPOINTMENT

"Roads to Europe are so deadly..."

"What choices do we have...."

International Organization for Migration  
Geneva, Switzerland  
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**CALAIS “JUNGLE”: AFGHANS IN TRANSIT.**

***A snap-shot report on Afghan migrants in the Calais “Jungle” pre-dismantelment on 24 October 2016.***

*Data used in this report was collected under IOM’s project that is collecting data to enable a better understanding of migration flows from Afghanistan and Pakistan towards Europe, a collaborative effort by DTM support team and relevant IOM field missions. The findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of IOM or its Member States. The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout the work do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IOM concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.*

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