

GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF COMPLEX EDUCATIONAL AND FORCED MIGRATION TENDENCIES: THE CASE STUDY OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

Current trends of global migration show that the absolute number of international migrants is expected to increase in the forthcoming decades. Africa is not an exception of this process where, forced migration also plays a significant role along with voluntary outflows. Therefore, the study aims to reveal these different characteristics of migratory flows from Africa to other regions by focusing on Nigeria as a case study. This state is the most important source country on the continent of both asylum seekers and tertiary-level students for Europe. Africa's 'giant' is characterized by many social and political conflicts, and - partly because of this -, by both notable internal and international migration. After a brief introduction to these internal conflicts and to the international migration from Nigeria in general, available statistics on the migration of refugees and tertiary-level students, so both voluntary and involuntary flows from Nigeria, will be analyzed. The paper includes an empirical research carried out in Debrecen, Hungary. As a result the study demonstrates that the Nigerian students having significantly better financial conditions than the Hungarian students make a notable contribution to the economy of the city by their overall spending.

Keywords: *international migration, forced migration, student migration, Nigeria, Hungary*

1. INTRODUCTION

During the history of mankind international migration had an impact on the development or fall of certain empires and states. The migration related processes and problems come into prominence time by time but without understanding the different aspects of the phenomenon we cannot make complete proposals for their conditioning. Therefore, the paper aims to provide results on the different background of voluntary and involuntary migrations.

In general Africa still moderately contributes, but in a growing ratio, to the volume of global migration. Approximately half (52%) of the nearly 34 million immigrants (2014) from Africa remained within the continent, but this rate is slightly decreasing (from 58%), mainly due to increased outflows from the rapidly growing large urban areas. Prosperous cities of the developed world with higher living standards, more resources, and a shortage of labor are now hosting a significant number of immigrants from Africa. The several historical, economic and cultural ties with Europe make the continent the most important destination for

Africans. Recently there are more (around 9-10 million) African immigrants living in Europe than in any other continent (about 7 million people) altogether (Abel and Sander, 2014).

Surveying the refugees and asylum seekers, the moderate role applies no longer, since one in four are coming from Africa, and within the internal refugees this rate is even higher with more than 30% Africans (IDMC, 2016; UNHCR, 2016a) in certain years. As a result of the socio-political instability in general, due to weak and corrupt economies, several armed conflicts are taking place in parallel with the continent's decreasing amount of natural resources, forcing millions of people to leave their home every year in Africa.

Meanwhile, it is stated by UNESCO, that African student mobility has also been increasing since the 1990s with around 10% of all international students coming from African countries (2013). The main reasons for this kind of mobility include the variety of quality education programs offered, better job opportunities for the ones having a foreign degree, scholarships covering tuition fees and flexible visa and entry requirements for third-country nationals. These all and the growing African upper-class led to the rise in the number of African students going to foreign countries for their higher education studies (Woldegiorgis and Doevenspeck, 2015).

Migration trends in the continent are similar to the Nigeria, which in 2017 was already the main country of origin of African people seeking refuge in the European Union (EU). It was already one of the major refugee sending countries along with Somalia and Eritrea for the past few years (2008-2016) (Frontex, 2017). Meanwhile, the country is also the first in the African continent regarding the number of international students studying in tertiary education abroad. About twice as many Nigerian students study in different parts of the world than Moroccan, which is the second greatest sending country of international students in Africa (UNESCO, 2016).

The purpose of the study is to present the complexity of migration from Africa to other continents (with a special attention to Europe) through the example of Nigeria. The paper reveals not only the general socio-political conflicts of the country and trends of international migration from Nigeria, but also the dynamics and characteristics of forced migration and international student mobility, two very different types of migration with similar tendencies. At the end of the article, a case study on the impact of the international migration on European regional economies is presented, in which the economic significance of student migration is illustrated through the consumption patterns of Nigerian students in the Hungarian city of Debrecen.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Social and political instability in Nigeria

Nigeria's ethnic diversity impedes the formation of a unified and efficient state; however, it causes problems that are far more significant at the social level. Only one of its consequences is the migration at intra-national and international level.

Regarding the ethnic background of the state, there are more than two hundred tribes in Nigeria speaking about five hundred different languages. The northern area is inhabited by mostly livestock farmer nomads, namely the Hausa-Fulani people, the most populous Nigerian ethnic group accounting for about 30-32% of the total population of the country. The Hausa historical traditions have inherited an aristocratic system that was associated with Islamic culture in the 14th century. Later with the introduction of the Sharia law, a social-political system was born that is difficult to accommodate with the characteristics of a state-declared democratic system of present Nigeria. On the other hand, the Yoruba population of the country lives in the southwestern region, which is a generally more

industrialized area with major trading cities. They are essentially characterized by a democratic system based on Christian values. There are also a significant number of Christian Igbo people in the southeastern parts of the country forming the third largest ethnic group in Nigeria. Following the military coup of 1966, Igbos founded the Republic of Biafra in 1967, which led to a massacre by the Nigerian army and to the outmigration of about 1 million ethnic Igbo inhabitants from the area. Today it could be stated that the Igbos are now reintegrated into the society of Nigeria, and do not form a strong and significant group that would be enough to regain political power to become the leading formation in the Nigerian government (Neszmélyi, 2016).

Continuous ethnic and religious conflicts are also apparent in the political sphere. The actions promoting social cohesion are regularly baulked or inhibited if they originate from representatives of adumbrated groups. The leaders of the southern territories favoring Christian values mostly make a stand for certain measures – that can be considered as democratic – to obtain the population of the areas dominated by Islam not to benefit with further advantages. In order to enforce these different political wills, corruption, which is predominantly present in the most diverse areas of society, is still a huge problem in Nigeria. This can be seen both in the absence of redistribution of income from the oil industry and in the administration of state and federal offices. Moreover, it has an effect on access to basic needs including jobs, education and general goods. Access to the job market is strongly influenced by ethnicity even for those holding a university degree as well. The best legal practice of the past decades is the assignment of government positions according to geographic zones which is based on a sort of rotation system. It allows every major group representative to be responsible for performing the political tasks for a given period; however, its implementation is often not practiced (Gabriel, A. et al., 2006).

In the case of Nigeria, social fragmentation is further enhanced by the fact that following the abolition of the British colonial rule, the administrative boundaries of emerging independent states were formed disregarding their religious and ethnic composition. Thus, the conflicts already identified became more concentrated in a smaller geographic area. In addition to social conflicts, the oppressed ethnic and religious groups being confronting with the govern leads to their migration to more secure areas of the country or, depending on their financial possibilities and relationships, to other states or continents (Neszmélyi, 2016).

All these together have a major impact on many economic and migration tendencies, which will be analyzed by revealing the two aspects of migration from Nigeria with a completely different background, namely refugee and international student migration. Before that, the paper introduces contemporary trends of migration in case of Nigeria.

2.2 Historic trends of Nigerian migration

Nigeria with a population of nearly 200 million people is constantly changing due to the above mentioned conflicts followed also by increased internal and international migration. Already after the independence of 1960, public administration was reorganized into federal states from three separate regions which led to the immediate migration of those employed in the public sector. The internal migration continued with the recognition of Abuja as the capital city of the state in 1991 with approximately 200,000 people from the public and service sectors moving from Lagos. To this day, one of the world's largest population growths is ongoing in Abuja, with its population rising to almost 800,000 in 2006 and 1,2 million in 2011. The other general tendency is to move from the northern (mainly northwestern) arid regions of the Sahel (Kano, Sokoto, Katsina state being the most affected) to the southwestern coasts (Lagos and Ibadan) where ports, industrial facilities, university centers and fertile agricultural lands can be found, so that living conditions are way better.

Indigenous tribes, however, do not allow other ethnic groups from distant lands and other (mostly Muslim) religions to gain better positions, often treating them as foreigners in their own country (Mberu and Pongou, 2010; Amrevurayire and Ojeh, 2016; Neszmélyi, 2012, 2016, Teká et al. 2017).

Regarding outbound migration, firstly in the years following the independence of 1960, Nigerians started migrating to the United Kingdom (UK) for the first time only for a temporary stay and mainly for educational purposes. From the 1970s onwards, due to the economic stagnation of the country, more and more people chose the UK as well as the United States (USA), where they settled for longer periods of time, and in addition to university studies, seeking employment was also a priority of Nigerians in case of both countries of destination. From the middle of the 1980s, this process became even more intense, when due to the currency devalued by the IMF loan, less-paid professionals began to emigrate in large numbers. Only from the end of the 1990s, the people with worse educational background joined them increasingly, who migrated mainly to other European countries such as Italy or Spain. The UK and the USA are still attractive to the educated Nigerian labor force as well as the Gulf States and Saudi Arabia mainly to doctors and other medical professionals (Mberu and Pongou, 2010; UN, 2016; Ahrens et al., 2016).

From the immigration statistics of the recent years (2008-2017), migration from the Sub-Saharan African region to Europe has been pushed to Italy by the reinforced Spanish border control with Moroccan assistance, while the number of legally arrived migrants to for example the UK has dropped over the past years (Eurostat, 2018). From this, we can conclude that other countries of destination became more favorable (i. e. Ireland), or that it has become easier, for example, referring to the threat of Boko Haram as an asylum seeker rather than relying on traditional legal channels to get to the EU (*Figure 1*). This could be also demonstrated by the fact that the main migratory routes from the states affected by Boko Haram’s attacks (most notably Borno and partly Yobe and Adamawa) are leading to the neighboring Chad and Cameroon and not to Niger, which is the main route to Europe for Africans and especially for Nigerians (International Organization for Migration, 2016a).

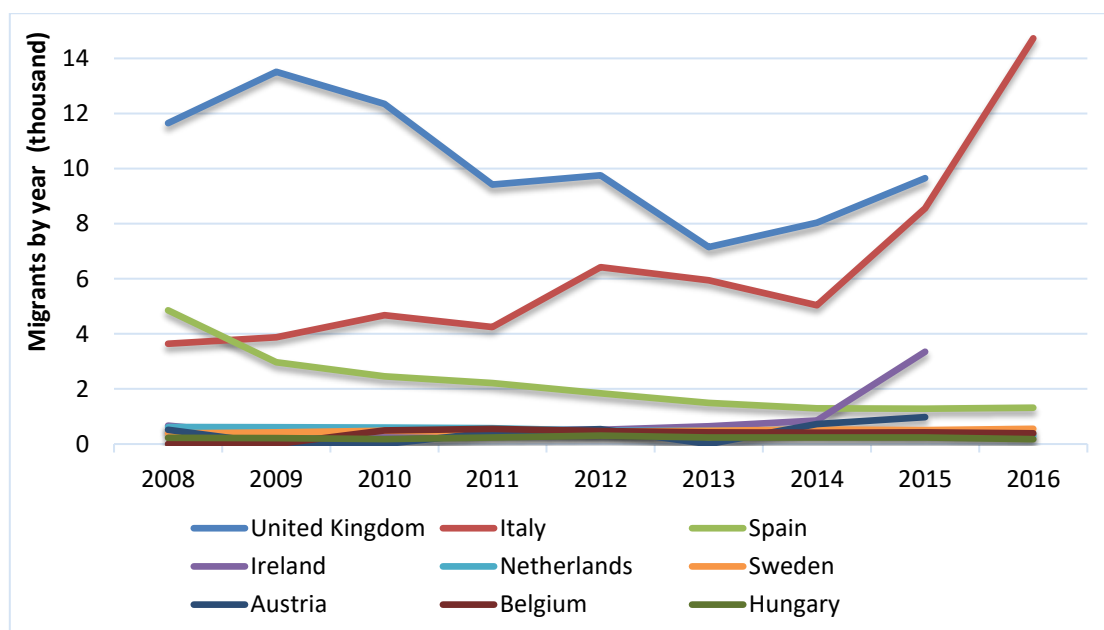


Figure 1. Number of newly registered Nigerian immigrants in certain EU member states between 2008-2016 (Authors, based on Eurostat, 2018).

3. ANALYSIS

3.1 Characteristics of Nigerian internal displacement and refugee migration

The first subchapter addresses the dynamics of Nigerian forced migration as a relevant aspect of human mobility from a European perspective. As in almost all states, forcibly displaced people mostly seek shelter within their own country. Besides the natural disasters, this movement in Nigeria, is mainly due to the migration of Christians from the northern Muslim majority states with Sharia law (Mayer Á., 2013), and also to the Islamist group Boko Haram's militant activities mainly in the northeastern Borno state (Besenyo J. and Mayer, 2015). As a result, the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) has reached 1.8 million with predominantly Kanuri or Hausa-Fulani origin (*Figure 2*). Such a compulsive migration is not a new phenomenon. During the Biafran war of 1967-70 about 1 million Igbo left their homes in the south-eastern part of the country, and in the early 2000s, due to the Niger-delta oil conflicts, nearly more than 500 thousand people had to seek a secure place to stay. Another major population movement was the transfer of the Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon in 2008 when some 750,000 migrated to the remaining parts of Nigeria. The state has no capacities for the long-term reintegration of these internally displaced persons, so they are almost entirely relegated to the host community and international humanitarian organizations (Mberu and Pongou, 2010; Oyeniya, 2013; UN OCHA, 2017).

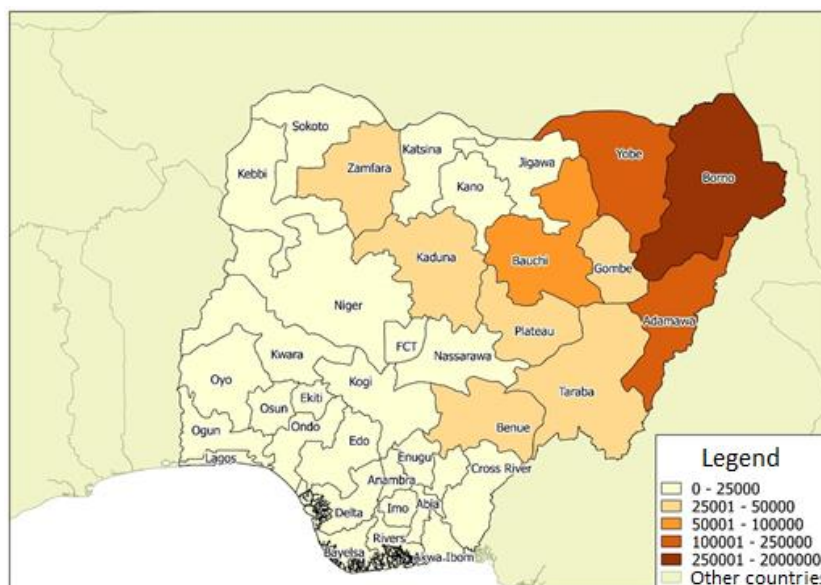


Figure 2. Number of internally displaced people by federal states in Nigeria in 2018 (Authors, based on IOM, 2016).

Considering only refugees living abroad, it can be stated that the number of asylum applications submitted by Nigerians was really low until 1990, and from that time on, a few thousand people began to migrate to the UK because of the political oppression by the military regimes (Mberu and Pongou, 2010). Since then (1994-2017), the size of each wave of refugee migration and the main destination countries are shown in *Figure 3*.

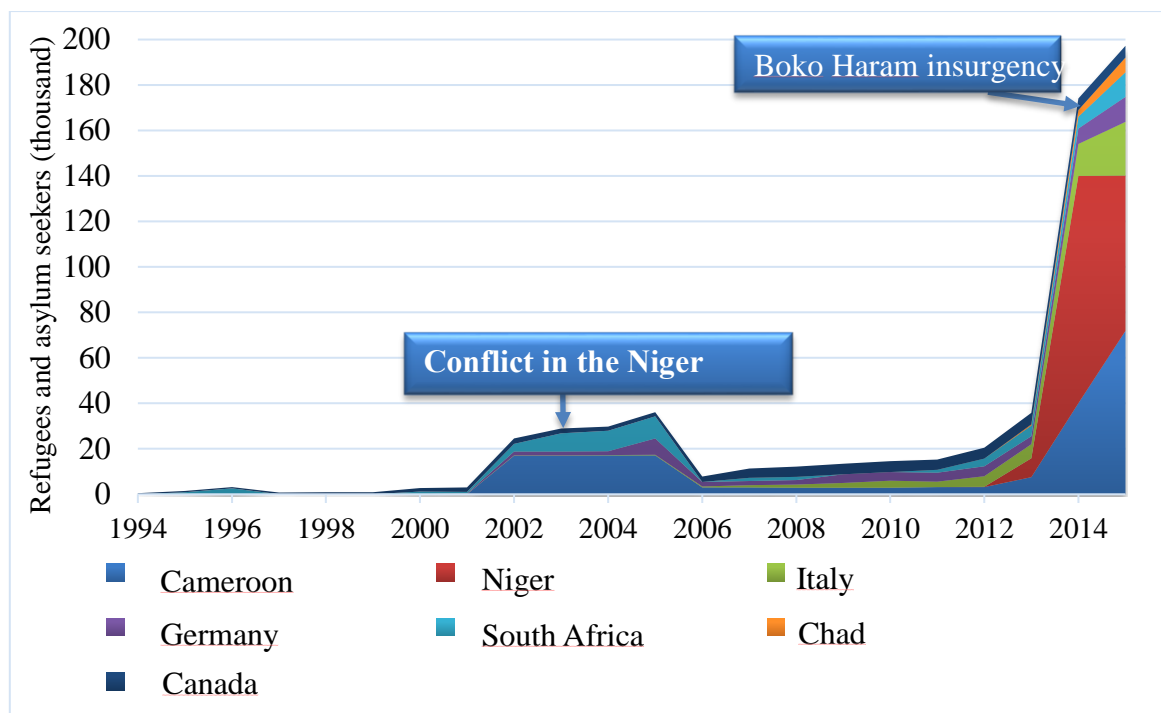


Figure 3. Number of Nigerian refugees and asylum seekers by the most notable countries of asylum between 1994-2015 (Authors, based on UNHCR, 2016b).

According to the figure above, after the democratization of 1999, the long-oppressed conflicts suddenly forced tens of thousands of people to leave their homeland. For the first time in 2000-2001, a total number of 30-40 thousand refugees fled mainly to Cameroon and to South Africa due to ethnic clashes between the Hausa-Fulani and the Mambila tribes, and since 2002, due to the oil conflict of the Niger Delta. The Islamist group Boko Haram has been increasingly intensified its violent militant activity in the country's northeastern Borno state since 2014. As a result of these military actions, a total of 140 thousand refugees escaped to the neighboring countries but in Europe the greatest amount of refugees were also the Nigerian asylum seekers in 2017.) (Frontex, 2018). Due to the larger number of international migrants, besides Italy (24,000 Nigerian refugees and asylum seekers live here), Germany (with about 10,000 refugees) also appeared as a new European target country (Figure 4) (UNHCR, 2016b).

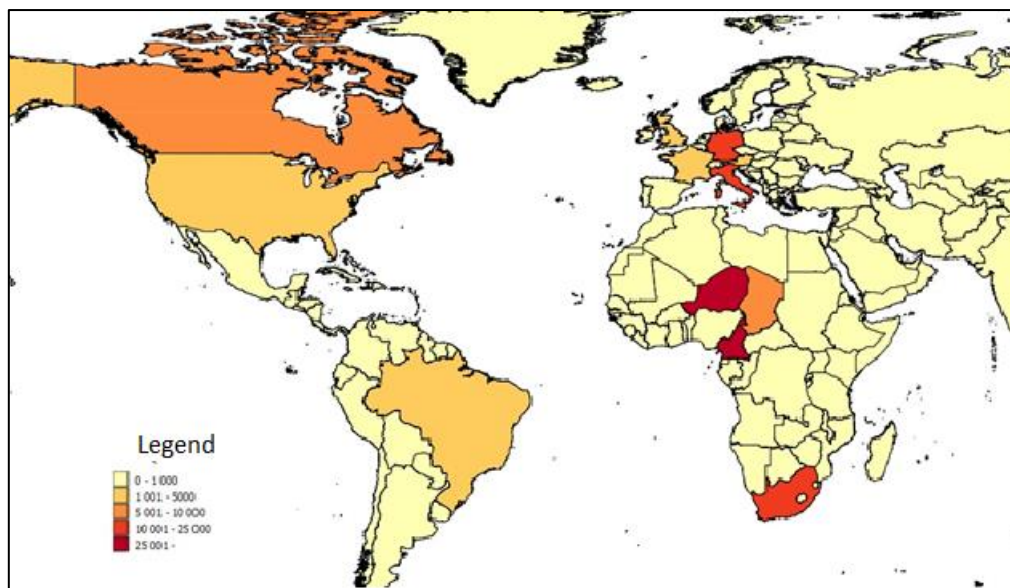


Figure 4. Number of Nigerian refugees by country of asylum in 2015
(Authors, based on UNHCR, 2016b).

In the figure below (*Figure 5*), it can be seen that - in contrast to for example the Eritreans, but especially the Somali refugees - Nigerians are quite concentrated in the region, because Italy (the main entry point for asylum seekers in Europe) and Germany are the only important host countries with over 10 thousand recognized Nigerian refugees. Their presence in Italy, especially on the islands of Lampedusa and Sicily is easily recognizable with a notable contribution to the local economy not to mention their impact on the black market. Without counting the asylum seekers a small community of Nigerian refugees live in France, in the UK (3,000 people), and in Austria (2,000) (UNHCR, 2016b).

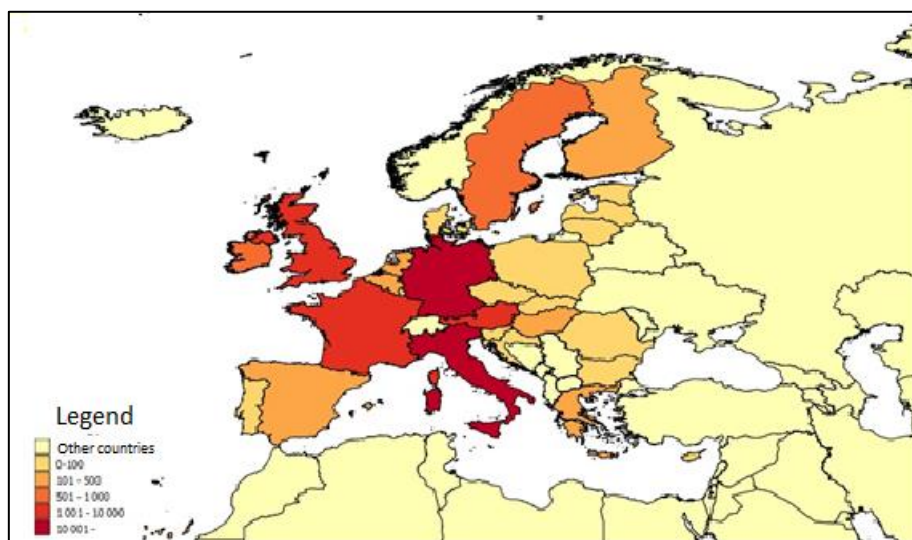


Figure 5. Combined number of Nigerian refugees in the EU member states in 2015
(Authors, based on UNHCR, 2016b).

3.2 Nigerian international migrants and refugees in Hungary

Nigerian immigration to Hungary is strongly connected to the long-existing educational ties between the two countries recognizing that most of the Nigerian immigrants were former university students. The first students arrived during the 1970s and 1980s and some of them decided to stay in Hungary even after their studies. The immigration continued until today and is now joined by businessmen from Nigeria, their diaspora in Hungary is the largest among all African nations (*Figure 6*). Considering those holding already a Hungarian citizenship, Egyptians may form a more notable community.

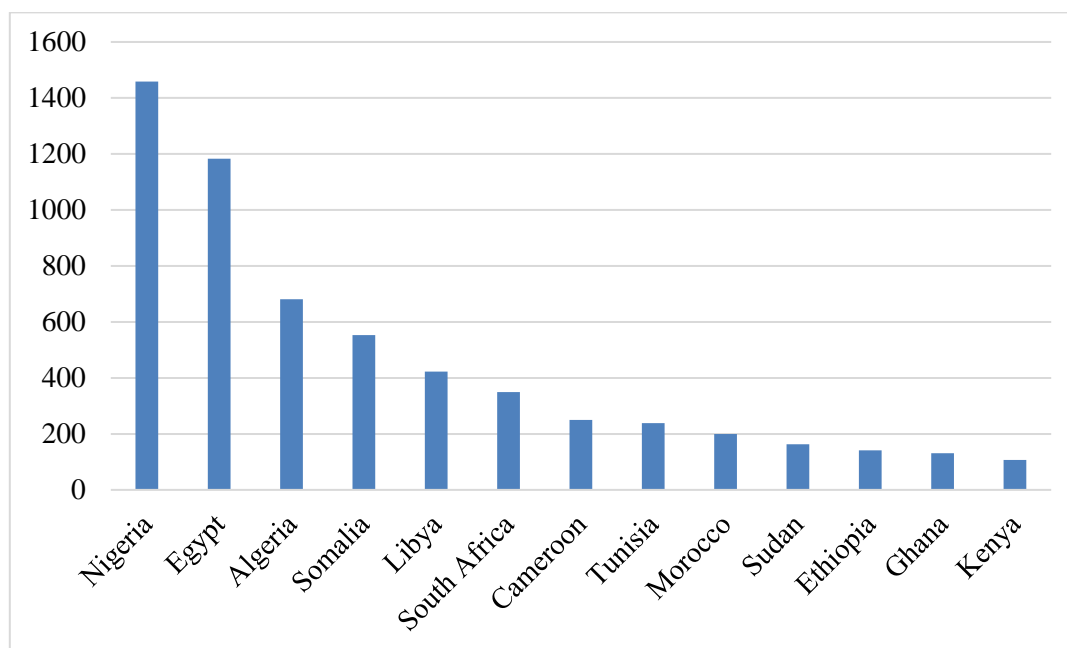


Figure 6. African immigrants by citizenship in Hungary in 2015
(Authors, based on UN, 2016).

The fact that most of them graduated in Hungarian universities makes them more educated than their Hungarian peers, with more than 50% holding a university degree compared to the national average of around 20%. This helps them to be integrated into the Hungarian labor market as well as to the society considering their living standard. As it is discussed later, most of them are from the Nigerian upper-class which ensures their financial background to launch their own company in the country, as some of them made businesses after finishing their studies. These all make their representation in the Hungarian society, namely the Association of Nigerians Living in Hungary visible.

Hungary is also the first among the new member states with hosting more than 100 refugees (exactly 245) from Nigeria, even ahead of Belgium or Denmark. Hungary is also the first in this respect considering the number of Somali refugees (UNHCR, 2016b). These refugees are generally a marginalized part of the Hungarian society, lacking almost all form of coherent integration. Their humanitarian assistance is only provided by NGOs or religious organizations following their stay for the legally allowed 30 days in a reception camp after gaining refugee status or other forms of humanitarian protection. The integrational gap between the Nigerian refugees and those coming to Hungary as students is very significant (IOM Hungary, 2018).

3.3 International student migration from Nigeria

Along with other forms of migration, as discussed above, another type of human mobility is also taking place, mostly involving the children of upper-class Nigerian parents. The number of Nigerian international students, who are studying abroad, especially outside Africa, is increasing parallel to the global trends. Nowadays, an estimated 5 million international students are taking part in higher education worldwide. By the year 2020, it is projected that their number will reach up to over 7 million (UNESCO, 2016).

Student mobility shows significant geographical differences as a spatial process. On a global scale, students generally go from east to west and from non-English to English-speaking countries (Brooks and Waters, 2013). Considering the global tendencies, it can be stated that the USA, the UK, Australia, Canada, Germany, and France are the most important host countries. More than half of the students come from Asia with China and India being the largest source countries (OECD, 2015). In the last decade, the African continent has also become increasingly involved in the international student mobility as a sending region.

The choice of country and higher education institution of foreign students generally depends on the following: cost of education; official language(s) of the state; higher quality of education in the country of destination; tolerance towards foreign languages and cultures; job opportunities; higher income compared to the country of origin; and simplified visa application procedure (Varghese, 2008). It can be demonstrated that due to the increase in student mobility its economic significance becomes increasingly significant as well. Accordingly, besides attaining the talented students, income generation is also a central issue of universities in recruiting foreign students. However, the presence of foreign students means benefit not only for the university itself, but also for the municipality, and for the country in which the institution is situated. This benefit is realized directly in the tuition fees, and in the sums for the cost of living, but it also benefits indirectly if there is an economic relationship between two institutions or between two states (Astor, 2005; Brooks and Waters, 2013).

The role and importance of Nigeria, Africa's most populous country and biggest economy in the global flow of tertiary-level students, has different aspects. Measuring its volume, we can state that Nigeria is the sending country for the most international students among African countries with the combined number of nearly 100 000 young people. The country is already ahead of Morocco which sends around 45 000 students abroad (UNESCO, 2016). *Figure 7* shows the number of university students from Nigeria studying in different foreign countries.

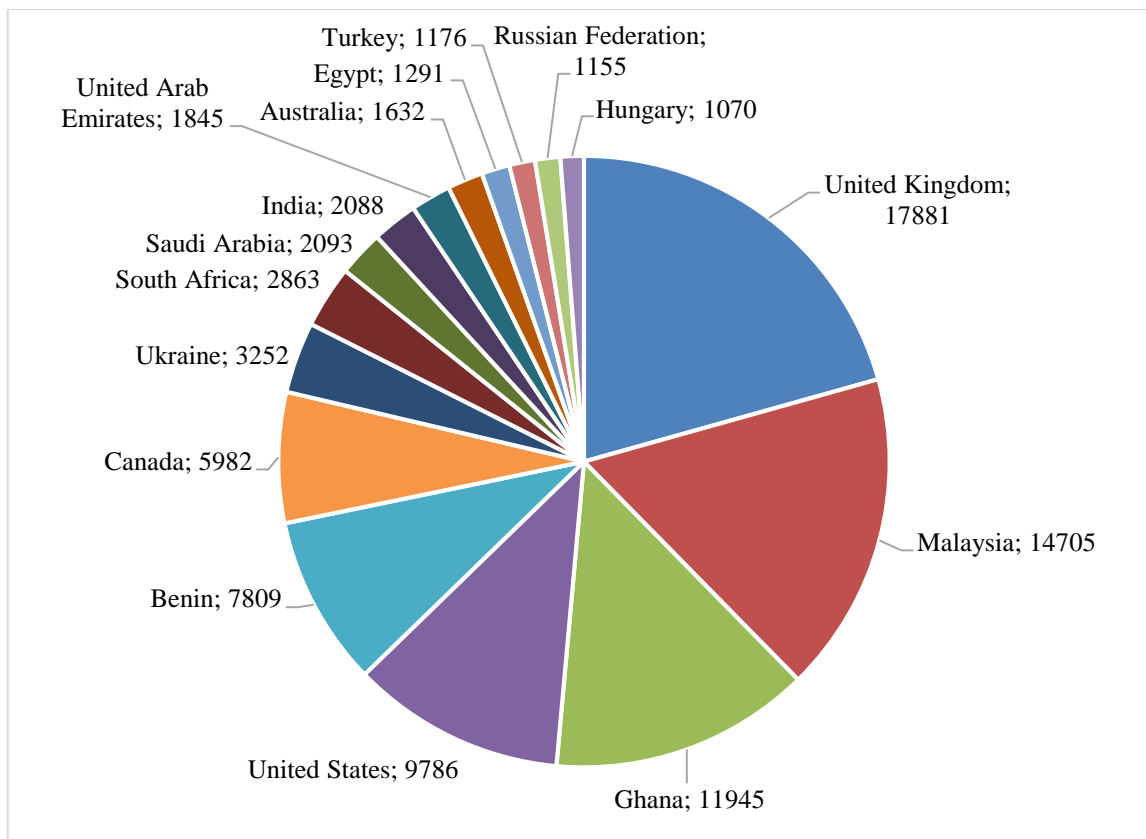


Figure 7. Nigerian tertiary-level students by country of destination in 2016 (Authors, based on UNESCO, 2016).

Most of the students choose to study in countries where English is the official language just as in the case of Nigeria, with the main overseas destinations including the UK (approximately 18 000 Nigerians studying there), the USA (with nearly 10 000 students from Nigeria) and Canada (with 6 000 students). Along with its geographical proximity (as in case of Benin too), this is the reason why Ghana also hosts around 12 000 students. Malaysia can be considered as an exception showing that affordable destinations with long existing bilateral agreements and interstate educational cooperation can also lead to increased number of foreigners who are attending courses in English. The case is similar to the second most significant European destination for Nigerians, the Ukraine. There are now more than 3 000 Nigerians studying at various universities in Ukraine which is one of the most affordable states in Europe for foreigners and especially for students. Considering only EU countries, Hungary is the second most important country of destination for Nigerians behind the UK with over 1 000 students; and after Brexit, it would possibly become the first host country (Vanguard, 2016; UNESCO, 2016).

The main motivations behind this kind of migration – above the previously mentioned general factors – also show the challenges with the Nigerian educational policy needs to deal with on a national level. These include the lack of available places at state universities as well as the generally poor quality of education. Meanwhile, the recent economic boom resulted that more families can support their children during their studies abroad. This allows these students to study in the above mentioned countries without any kind of scholarship. On the other hand, the economy also lacks the educated workers in for instance the oil industry or in the IT sector. Enrollment rates – especially of girls – are also

generally showing that there are major issues left to be solved in connection with the accessibility to education (WENR, 2017). It has all resulted that Nigeria is now the fastest growing source for international students with an increase of 164% between 2005 and 2015 as one study of the University of Oxford (2017) reports.

Medical studies are among the most attractive courses for Nigerian international students. According to Eyekpimi (2016a): „Studying medicine abroad as a Nigerian international student is a prestigious challenge (...). Medical school tuition and practice fees are relatively high; this is one of the main reasons for low admission statistics for international students attending overseas medical schools; you’ll need to provide evidence of a substantial funding source for the entire duration of your studies and sometimes financial statements indicating enough money (about \$200,000) in your account at the time of admission, this is because Nigerian students hardly receive financial aid or loans from foreign government. This is not easy; however, there are a variety of medical school scholarships the world over to aid your studies”.

3.4 Case study: empirical research of Nigerian international students in Hungary

International student mobility is becoming an increasingly important aspect of Hungarian higher education. The number of foreign students is rising steadily. In the academic year of 2010/2011, about 18,850 foreign students studied in the country, while six years later in the year of 2016/17 the combined number of foreign students attending universities in Hungary reached 28,628 (OH, 2018). The increasing number of people in these universities also contributes to the operation of the universities and to the economy of the cities and even the country.

In order to measure the economic impact of these students on the regional economy, an empirical study was carried out on foreign students studying in Hungary. The research was based on a questionnaire survey conducted among foreign students in Debrecen, Szeged, Pécs, Hungary's three major cities in the countryside.

As it is stated above in the paper, Hungary is the second most important country of destination for Nigerian students in the EU. Those studying in Hungary from Nigeria are a minor part (with around 1% share) of the overall number of Nigerian students abroad, however, they are among the biggest groups of higher education students by citizenship residing in the country. According to the Hungarian Office for Education there were 1 031 students from Nigeria in Hungary in the academic year of 2016/17. The country is a favorable destination for students, as Eyekpimi (2016b) states: „Hungary is a growing higher education destination for international Nigerian students, with its scenic and vibrant environment, low living costs (about \$600-850 per month) and low tuition fees of estimates \$5000/year. It offers a variety of English taught courses in three degree levels of bachelor’s, master’s and doctorate”. The majority of the Nigerian students are attending medical universities and paying for their tuition fees on their own with the help of their families. International students are also offered governmental scholarships by the Hungarian state. These scholarships cover not only the tuition fees but also the accommodation, a monthly stipend and even the medical insurance for those citizens who are addressed in this program. Nigerian participants of the Stipendium Hungaricum (SH) scholarship program are mostly attending courses of engineering, natural sciences, healthcare, and agriculture.

The number of Nigerian students is the highest at the University of Debrecen (UD), with most of them studying medical education. In addition, the medical schools of the Semmelweis University, the University of Pécs, and the University of Szeged are also popular among them. They are present in a smaller number at the Szent István University of Gödöllő’s agricultural courses, at the University of Miskolc's Petroleum Engineering

Department, at the Budapest University of Technology and Engineering and at two economical universities along with two non-state funded higher education institutions of the International Business School (IBS) and the Central European University (CEU).

From the point of view of this study, the group of Nigerian students studying in Debrecen deserves special attention, who form the largest group of foreign students at the university. In the 2016/17 academic year, a total of 654 people came from Nigeria, with 67% of them involved in some form of medical education, and the other 33% in non-medical faculties, mostly attending courses of international relations, economics or agricultural studies, and others also studying in the Faculty of Sciences. Physicians at medical and pharmacy courses pay most of their tuition fees and costs which amounts to USD 16,900 on a yearly basis, while students at other faculties pay around USD 6,500 a year.

As already mentioned, over the past two years an empirical study was conducted among the students of three major Hungarian universities in the countryside (Debrecen, Szeged, Pécs), including a questionnaire survey. Nigerian students with 105 people in the sample participated in the survey, which is about 16.4% of all Nigerian international students studying at UD. 67 of them attend the medical school, while others study at Bachelor, Master, and PhD levels in other faculties of the university. In the present paper, only some of the answers to the questions related to this study are analyzed.

In the first question group about the choice of a university, "*Why did you decide on foreign studies?*", 40% of Nigerian students studying at UD answered with the non-sufficient, non-qualified higher education in their home country. Obviously, they are deliberately prepared for foreign studies, which is explained by their answer to the next question "*Did you plan to choose another country for higher education studies?*" To this question, the planned country, city and university could also be named as an answer. Regarding alternatives to higher education studies in Hungary, nearly half of Nigerians (50 people) named a different place. 12% would have stayed home, while nearly 60% of them would be heading for the major countries of destinations (UK: 24%, USA: 22%, Canada: 12%), without the possibility to attend the UD. Only 6 people (in Ukraine: 3, in the Czech Republic: 2, in Romania: 1 person) planned to come to the eastern part of Europe, while the attractiveness of the region is similar to that of Hungary, with favorable tuition fees and living conditions.

The fact that other Hungarian alternative than Debrecen was not mentioned by either of the asked students could also be linked to the existence of the UD's own university recruitment office in Lagos, Nigeria. An important aspect of university selection, as revealed by previous research (Bourke, 2000), is the priority of personal relationships which is one of the most important factors when choosing a place to study, especially if relatives, friends, and acquaintances recommend the university who used to attend the same place earlier. Beine, M. et al. (2014) underlines the network effect, for example the presence of groups of people with the same nationality already living in the destination country positively influencing the decision to select the destination country and, in proportion to the average level of education of the people living there, this effect continues to increase. In the case of the current study, the term "*network effect*" refers to those who are already studying there, as well as students of the same nationality who have been there, who recommend the city to their acquaintances, friends or relatives. In the case of the University of Debrecen, the participation of Nigerians in the medical education program dates back to the 1970s. Thus, there may also be several students among those present whose relatives or family members have been studying at the university earlier.

As for the answers to the question on the postgraduate studies of foreign students, "*What is your primary plan after the end of your studies?*", about one-third of the respondents would continue their higher education training. This high rate is somewhat surprising, as like other non-European students, the majority study in medical school, which is an undivided type of training. The key perhaps lies in the fact that most Asian and African students will most likely continue their education at another university in a developed country (this is where the question is answered incorrectly as it refers to their plans after graduating). Similarly, to other nationals, it is also possible that more people may attend PhD courses or some form of specialization abroad before they are employed. Very few have plans to work in Hungary in the future, however also relatively few would go to a third country. This could also be considered as a surprising fact since it could be assumed that Nigerian and Asian students use Hungary as a temporary destination before moving to Western European countries. In any case, 21.9% of the respondent Nigerians would return home for work, which is significantly high compared to the response of students of other nationalities. It is a fact that in their case there is a commitment to return home and that they will be able to use their knowledge at home.

In the next question group, the survey focused on integration related issues. As for the question "*What are the initial difficulties encountered in answering questions?*", the dominance of language difficulties is not surprising similarly to other respondents of different nationalities. Although they are likely to understand English in connection with university administration and contact with teachers and students, everyday situations in the city are likely to conflict with linguistic problems, as the English language knowledge of the Hungarian population is lower than the EU average and the majority would not be able to hold a fluent conversation in English even in positions in which this would be expected. Concerning integration into the city and its surroundings, 35.2% of Nigerian students reported a few difficulties. This is also attributable to the fact that these students come from a culture other than European, although everyday phenomenon is a multitude of foreign students present in the city, most Hungarians are less likely to accept a group from a different culture in their environment, in this case from Africa (Faubl N. et al., 2017) Some situations (shopping, access to services) are easy to solve for the interviewees. The biggest challenge, however, was the university environment and studies, adaptation to infrastructure and administration, opportunities to spend leisure time, and the knowledge and mentality of the receiving society. In these responses, due to notable cultural and religious differences, they may find these more problematic than those from European origin.

In the third question group of our survey, the relation of foreign students to the city, their use of space and their consumption and spending habits were explored. Regarding their accommodation, it can be stated that 18% live in a dormitory, while others live in a rented apartment, most whom are attending medical training. Asking about their average spending on accommodation and consumption in one month, it amounts to around 845 EUR or about 985 USD (based on the exchange rate applicable at time of the research). This is the average cost of foreign students of other nationalities studying at UD (795 EUR or 926 USD) as well. Including tuition and training fees it amounts to between 6456.7 USD and USD 16,700 USD per academic year for those paying for their education. The additional costs of preparatory training for the Basic Medicine Course is around USD 7,000, while English courses range from USD 2,000 to 5,500 depending on their duration.

Compared to the whole group (6542 persons), students from Nigeria who are studying in Debrecen spend an average of about EUR 5 526 300 or USD 6 295 404 for their accommodation, other needs, entertainment per year without training costs, and the tuition fee. While Nigerians are around one fifth (19,8%) of all international students at UD in numbers, their total spending accounts for 27,4% of the overall costs of foreign students.

(Table 1). We can conclude that Nigerian students studying in Hungary are supposedly from the upper and upper middle social classes in their home country.

Table 1. Students' yearly expenses in 2016, an estimate based on separate costs University of Debrecen, UD (total number of international students: 3290 (euros))

Expenses (EUR)	Confidence interval (with a level of 95% accuracy)			5% trimmed average
	lowest margin	average	highest margin	
Monthly	2,108,289	2,211,537	2,314,785	2,100,267
Yearly	20,239,578	21,230,757	22,221,936	20,162,562

The paper can conclude that Nigerian students studying in Hungary, especially in the university town of Debrecen, with their spending on living, leisure time, travel and tuition fees, have a notable impact on the regional economy. This is a further benefit for the university, student attractiveness and hence in the growth of the consumer market and leads to the creation of new workplaces so that the municipality and the state tax income would likely increase. The benefits to these can be multiplied by the knowledge-intensive economic sectors that have been set up with the help of universities and by expanding international relations. Based on the results mentioned above, the study could state that student migration from Nigeria contributes significantly to the economy of a Hungarian city in a predominantly rural and peripheral region.

The geopolitical role of Nigerian students in Hungary is also becoming increasingly important. In 2016, the Hungarian government agreed on the opening to the south with an annual scholarship quota of 50 students from Africa, which means that, due to the Hungarian state scholarship, more Nigerian students would be able to study in Hungary in the future (Neszmélyi, 2016).

4. CONCLUSIONS

Concluding the main results of the study, it is shown that Nigeria, the „giant” of Africa in terms of both the size of the economy and the population is also the main source, if not the only source, of asylum seekers but also of international students from the perspective of Europe. The several social and political conflicts have left approximately 1,8 million without permanent residency and other millions in need of humanitarian assistance to maintain or reorganize their everyday life during harsh conditions. The case of the most affected northeastern federal state of Borno is only a warning sign of possible further instability caused by both the governmental corruption and oppression and – on the other hand – the violent response in the most vulnerable regions of the country. People are seeking for better opportunities in a growing number in large urban areas of for instance Lagos or Abuja, where the economic boom resulted in a growing size of middle- and upper-class population. These people can afford to support their children during their studies abroad in response to the generally poor quality of education in Nigeria. In addition to the nearly 100,000 Nigerians studying abroad (which is the first country in Africa in this respect), thousands of forced migrants from the same country are trying to migrate to Italy or Spain. In 2017, Nigeria was the main country of origin for those registered at the external borders of the EU by the European joint border agency of Frontex.

This all could lead to the fact that a single host country can be home to forced migrants and international students from the same country of origin at the same time, presenting the complexity of international migration even only between two states, as it was revealed in the paper, in the case of Hungary and Nigeria. While the entry for newly arrived asylum seekers is limited by the restricted asylum policy of the country, more and more students are being hosted by Hungary with the support of the Hungarian governmental scholarship program of the Stipedium Hungaricum. This and the generally simplified entry for new students are making Hungary the first destination of Nigerians for their higher education studies after the planned exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union. International student mobility is already making a notable contribution to the regional economy as the research presented in this paper estimates their yearly overall spending around 5 526 300 EUR in the countryside city of Debrecen.

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