

PAKISTAN: SURVEY ON DRIVERS OF MIGRATION MIGRANTS IN EUROPE DURING COVID-19

REGIONAL EVIDENCE FOR MIGRATION POLICY AND ANALYSIS (REMAP)
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM)
DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX (DTM)

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Disclaimer

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Definitions

Migrant: A Pakistani national who has moved to Europe. The movement of this person takes place outside of the laws, regulations, or international agreements governing the entry into or exit from the state of origin, transit or destination.¹

Migration facilitator: This term refers to anyone that is involved in the facilitation of migration services (irregular and regular) via air, land or sea routes in exchange for money. Those services can reach from consultative services for visa application and acquiring (fraudulent) documents, to transportation arrangement, to the facilitation of border crossings. The term used does not intend to neglect the differences in services and often used terms for those persons providing the migration services.

STATISTICAL NOTES

- When the label "Multiple answers possible" appears above a graph or when a dagger symbol (†) appears in the text, it means that a single respondent was allowed to provide more than one answer. For this reason, totals do not add up to 100%.
- An asterisk (*) denotes when a statistic is based off a sample size less than 10.



¹Note: this is the statistical definition used in this study to differentiate a migrant from other travellers, but it is not the official definition endorsed by IOM. For the official definition of migrant, please [click here](#).

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I. INTRODUCTION

In 2019, Pakistan constituted one of the top 10 emigration countries in the world, accounting for 6.3 million emigrants; over three per cent of the country's population (UNDESA, 2019). Emigration from Pakistan can most commonly be characterized as labour migration, with remittances from working abroad comprising a core part of the country's economy and its government's efforts to reduce unemployment and poverty in Pakistan (IOM, 2020). Migrating abroad is further encouraged by the government's development of an advanced legal and institutional framework for migration as well as a dedicated ministry, the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, which manages and maintains the welfare of Pakistani nationals abroad (IOM (c), 2019).

Though the Gulf States are major destinations for Pakistani emigrants, in particular labour migrants, nearly one million Pakistani emigrants of the total global Pakistani migrant stock in 2019 were residing in Europe (ILO, 2019; UNDESA, 2019). As the global number of Pakistani emigrants has risen steadily during the past two decades, the percentage of those going to Europe has increased proportionally, rendering the continent a consistent and significant destination for Pakistani nationals looking to migrate overseas (UNDESA, 2019). Land routes between Pakistan and Europe are well-established and highly organized, while sea routes see the arrival of hundreds to thousands of Pakistani nationals to Europe's shores each year (IOM (c), 2019; IOM (b), 2019). Pakistan was one of the most frequently registered countries of origin for those transiting through the Western Balkan countries in 2019 and the second most registered nationality among arrivals by sea to Italy in the same year according to available data from national authorities (IOM (b), 2019).

With the increasing importance of Europe as a destination country for Pakistani nationals, the objective of the Survey on Drivers of Migration: Migrants in Europe During COVID-19 (SDM 2) is to present a snapshot of Pakistani migrants (either in transit locations or final destinations) in Europe and their motivations to migrate. The SDM 2 is preceded by the Survey on Drivers of Migration: Potential Migrants in Pakistan (SDM 1), which focused on potential migrants in Pakistan and was conducted in January 2020. Since then, the COVID-19 pandemic has emerged worldwide, affecting migration conditions on a large

scale, including severely limiting employment access and incurring mobility restrictions, health concerns and debt repayment issues. In an effort to account for these new challenges, the SDM 2 also focuses on respondents' immediate needs and vulnerabilities related to the COVID-19 crisis. This report furthermore presents a snapshot of the demographics, migrant support networks and return intentions of Pakistani migrants in Europe.

The SDM 2 is implemented by IOM and funded by the European Union under a regional project called Regional Evidence for Migration Analysis and Policy (REMAP). The objective of REMAP, which is implemented by DTM at regional and country levels, is to strengthen the evidence-based formulation and implementation of humanitarian and development policy and programming on migration and forced displacement in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq and Pakistan through the dissemination of insights gained from DTM's research. Data for SDM 2 was collected between September and November 2020. Enumerators used a structured questionnaire and interviewed respondents via phone (land line, mobile or social media call). One hundred and sixty Pakistani nationals (currently residing in Europe) were interviewed in order to create a snapshot of migration motivations and current conditions in the wake of the global pandemic and altered global environment.

This report is divided into two main sections, preceded by a summary of key findings. The first section covers the methodology used for the SDM 2, including sampling and limitations. The second section covers the findings and is divided into five thematic sub-sections. The first subsection contains a socio-economic profile of the respondents prior to migration. The second subsection explores the drivers of Pakistani migration in terms of life events encouraging people to leave Pakistan and challenges that migrants faced prior to migration. In the third subsection, the report examines how respondents obtained information relevant to their migration decision-making and transnational support structures. The fourth subsection examines respondents' perceptions of conditions related to COVID-19 in their current locations as well as their primary needs and vulnerabilities. Finally, the last subsection comprises respondents' future intentions to potentially return to Pakistan.



II. SUMMARY

2.1 Demographics and socio-economic profile

The sample population was made up of male, Pakistani nationals mainly between the ages of 19 and 44 years of age (90%). Forty-five per cent of respondents were between 25 and 34 years old. All respondents held either irregular migration statuses or were under asylum proceedings in their current locations at the time of the interview.

Respondents were primarily self-employed (29%) or privately employed (21%) prior to migration, with other common occupations including working for daily wages (14%) and being a student (14%). Thirty-nine per cent of respondents reported that their income prior to migration was not enough to meet their monthly expenses. Fifty-seven per cent of respondents had debt prior to migration, and 78 per cent of those could attribute all of their debt to financing their migration to Europe.

Respondents reported previous migration and internal displacement experiences at 19 and 11 per cent, respectively.

2.2 Drivers of migration

Among respondents, dissatisfaction with income situations in Pakistan (54%) as well as a lack of hope for the future (21%) were the most frequently cited life events that triggered migration to Europe among respondents. Unemployment (12%) was also an important trigger for migration. This is reinforced by both the SDM 1 and the Comprehensive Migration Flows Survey (CMFS)². Both reports emphasize that, for both potential migrants and returnees in Pakistan, the lack of job opportunities in the country is a main driver of migration.

Ninety-four per cent of respondents experienced challenges in Pakistan on the personal level 6 months prior to migration. The most commonly reported primary challenge was a lack of sufficient income (59%) followed by unemployment (14%) and a lack of hope for the future in Pakistan (13%).

2.3 Migration facilitation and support network

When asked about sources of information regarding

²The CMFS was a study conducted by IOM DTM in 2016, which focused on Pakistani migrants before migration to Europe, in transit, in final destinations in Europe, upon return from Europe and amongst families left behind in Pakistan (IOM, 2020; IOM, 2019; IOM (a), 2019).

³When a dagger symbol (†) appears in the text it means that a single respondent was allowed to provide more than one answer. For this reason, totals do not add up to 100%.

Europe and how to migrate there, respondents most frequently reported primary sources as social contacts at work (23%), social media and messaging applications with family and friends abroad (21%) and family and friends that returned to Pakistan from abroad (16%). The significance of transnational linkages as well as information from returnees was also emphasized in the SDM 1 (IOM, 2020).

Eighty-four per cent of respondents received support from friends or family, either inside or outside of Pakistan, with migration arrangements before leaving Pakistan. The most common form of support from friends or family was financial (90%).³

2.4 COVID-19 needs and vulnerabilities

Respondents were asked to rate COVID-19 response measures in their current location. Healthcare access and access to COVID-19 testing were rated between “fair” and “good” among the highest number of respondents. Respondents residing in camps or informal settlements were also asked about access to showers/sanitation, hand sanitizer and facemasks; respondents rated access to all, on average, below “fair”, with access to facemasks rated lowest.

The primary immediate needs reported most frequently by respondents in their current locations were income-generating activities (48%), physical health care in the form of treatment (16%) and support with return to Pakistan (11%). Support with asylum procedures, as well as support with obtaining a legal status, were prominent secondary and tertiary immediate needs reported among respondents.

Forty-one per cent of respondents reported having debt at the time of the interview. Of those who had debt, respondents most frequently had more than 2,000 Euro worth of debt (38%).

2.5 Potential return

Respondents were asked about their future migration plans during the next six months. Thirty-six per cent reported that they wanted to stay in their current location, 36 per cent wanted to return to Pakistan and 23 per cent wanted to migrate elsewhere in Europe.



1. METHODOLOGY

1.1 Research and sampling method

Building upon the SDM 1, a quantitative approach was adopted to conduct the SDM 2. This method was selected to analyze the following specific thematic areas previously identified by DTM REMAP: 1) socio-economic profiles of Pakistani migrants, 2) drivers and reasons for migration, 3) challenges and access to services in Pakistan, 4) migration networks and future aspirations and 5) needs and vulnerabilities related to the COVID-19 pandemic. A quantitative approach was preferred among other methods because it allowed for the systematic, standardized comparison of factors and for measuring the importance of the various variables that led to different migration choices and experiences.

The SDM 2 focused on Pakistani migrants who migrated from Pakistan in the past ten years. The target population included Pakistani nationals that were in transit locations or in final destination countries in Europe and were either under asylum procedure or holding an irregular status. Through various outreach activities by the DTM team in Pakistan with support from various IOM country offices in Europe a total of 160 respondents were identified in 8 countries⁴ for the SDM 2. The DTM Pakistan team consisted of four males and one female staff and conducted their interviews via phone calls, calls through social media apps and video calls, resulting in a non-probabilistic sample of 160 respondents across the different countries. Convenience sampling and snowball sampling techniques were used by DTM Pakistan to reach the

sample population. Both techniques are among the most used sampling methods in quantitative research and were used because the population of interest is not completely known as it includes persons on the move and persons with an irregular status, and no sampling frame exists from which to draw random samples.

1.2 Limitations

This study presents limitations frequently encountered while researching hidden populations, especially related to the sampling method and sample size. Due to the nature of this study, the collected sample is non-probabilistic, meaning that the sample population is not representative of all Pakistani migrants currently in transit locations or final destination countries in Europe. The results of this study should be interpreted carefully, as generalization of results and inferences are constrained by the SDM 2 design. Additionally, because no women were surveyed, the report does not necessarily represent the needs and vulnerabilities of female migrants. This is due to the type of migration being evaluated, which is primarily dominated by men, as well as limitations with remote outreach.

TOTAL RESPONDENTS

 160

⁴Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, North Macedonia, Spain and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.





2. FINDINGS

2.1 Demographics and socio-economic profile

The sample consisted entirely of men, with nearly half in the 25 to 34 year old age category (46%). Twenty-five per cent of men were between 19 and 24 years old, and 20 per cent were between 35 and 44 years old.⁵

The origin of 80 per cent of respondents was Punjab province, while 10 per cent were from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Other respondents originated from Balochistan, Islamabad, Pakistan Administered Kashmir and Sindh.

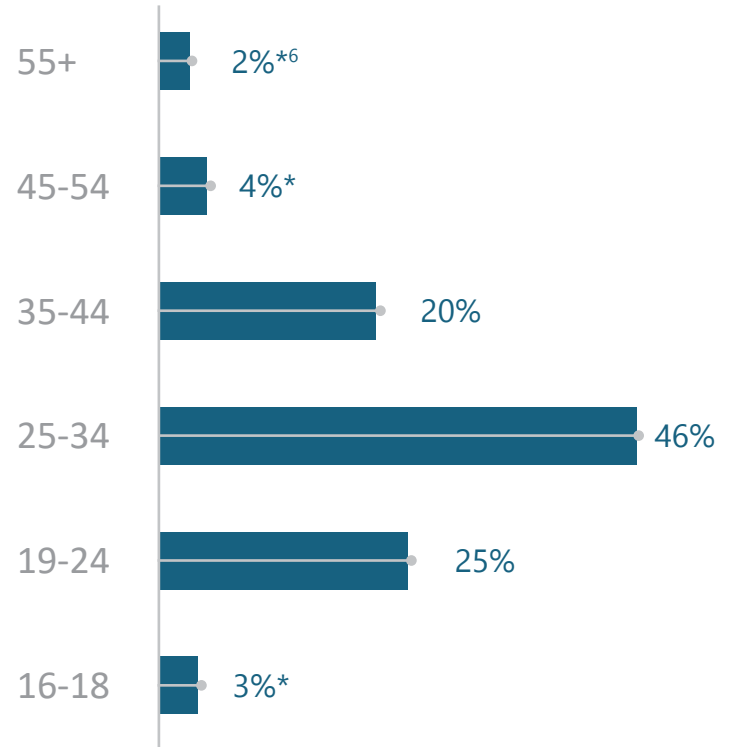
When asked about their employment status prior to migration, 29 per cent of respondents reported having been self-employed while in Pakistan. Twenty-one per cent of respondents had been employed in the private sector, while 14 per cent had worked for daily wages. Another 14 per cent had been students, and 13 per cent were unemployed prior to migration.

160
RESPONDENTS

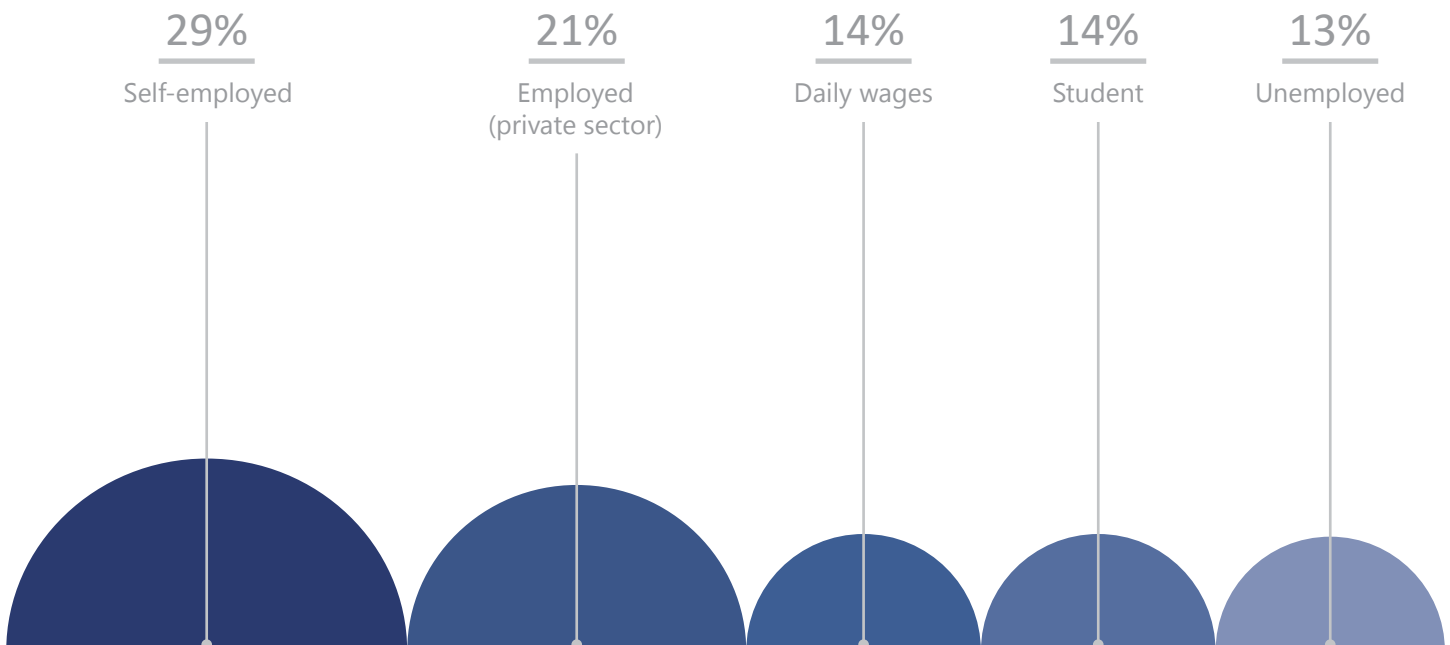


100%
MALE

AGE GROUPS



EMPLOYMENT STATUS PRIOR TO MIGRATION (top 5 answers only)



⁵ Individuals under the age of 16 were not included in the sample.

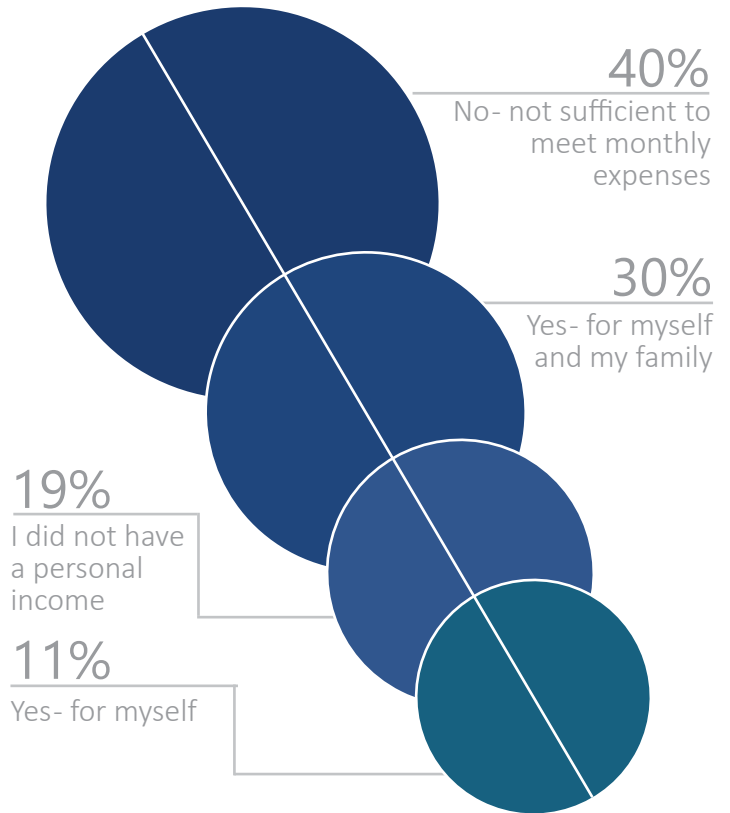
⁶ An asterisk (*) denotes when a statistic is based off a sample size less than 10.



In order to further gauge pre-migration demographic conditions, respondents were asked about their income and debt prior to migration. Regarding income, respondents most frequently reported that their pre-migration income was not sufficient to meet monthly expenses (40%). Nevertheless 30 per cent of respondents did report earning incomes that were sufficient for themselves and their family. Nineteen per cent of respondents did not have personal incomes prior to migration, while 11 per cent reported that their income was sufficient for themselves individually.

Over half of all respondents had incurred debt in the last 6 months prior to migration. Of those, the majority had gone into debt entirely to finance their migration to Europe (78%). Sixteen per cent had debt that was only partially linked to their migration, while 3 per cent had debt that was not linked to their migration at all.

WAS YOUR INCOME SUFFICIENT PRIOR TO MIGRATION?

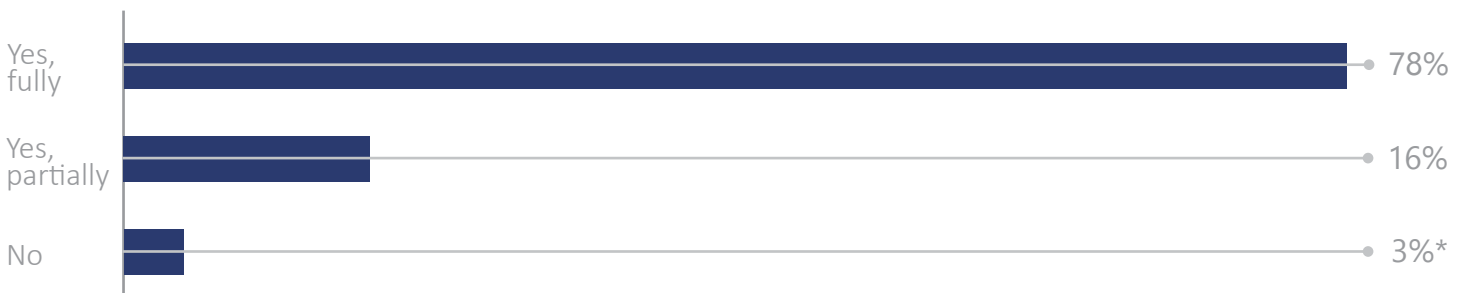


DEBT PRIOR TO MIGRATION

During the last 6 months before migration, did you have any debt?



If yes, did you go in debt to finance your migration?



The remaining 3% of respondents answered either "I do not know" or "Other" when asked if they went into debt to finance their migration.



Respondents were asked about their previous migration experiences to explore the extent to which previous migration plays a role in shaping new mobility patterns. Nineteen per cent of respondents had migrated abroad before, and 11 per cent had been internally displaced prior to their current migration primarily due to complex crises and natural disasters. These correspond with generally low rates of previous migration and internal displacement experiences reported among potential migrants in the SDM 1 and the CMFS (IOM, 2020; IOM, 2019).

Forty-three per cent of respondents had left Pakistan before 2016. Thirteen per cent left during 2016, 16 per cent during 2017, 13 per cent during 2018, 14 per cent during 2019 and 1 per cent during 2020.

More than half of respondents arrived in their current

location either before 2016 (34%) or in 2020 (22%). Eighty per cent of those who arrived in 2020 arrived during the third (July – September) or fourth (October – December) quarter of 2020. Eleven per cent of respondents arrived in 2016, 9 per cent in 2017, 9 per cent in 2018 and 15 per cent in 2019.

PREVIOUS MIGRATION AND DISPLACEMENT

19%



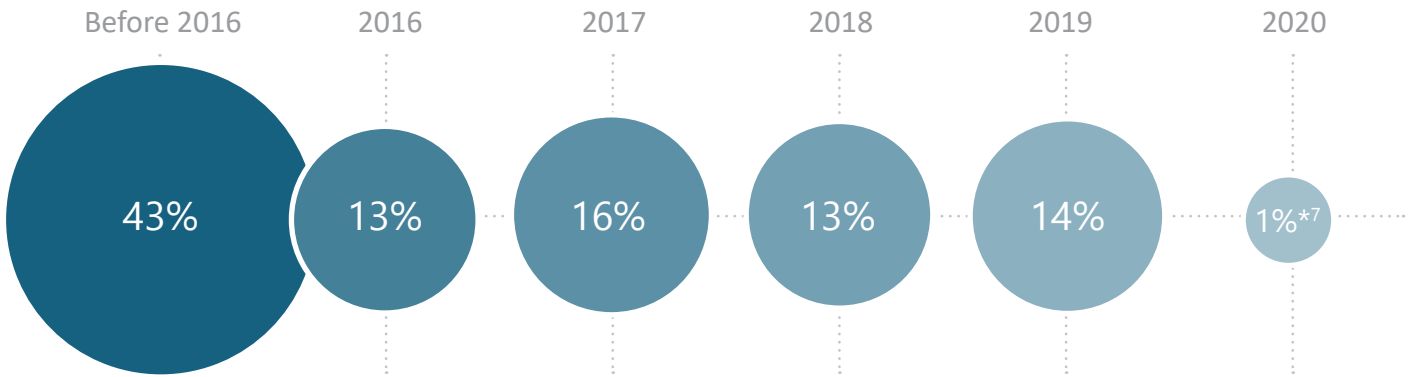
Of respondents have migrated abroad before

11%

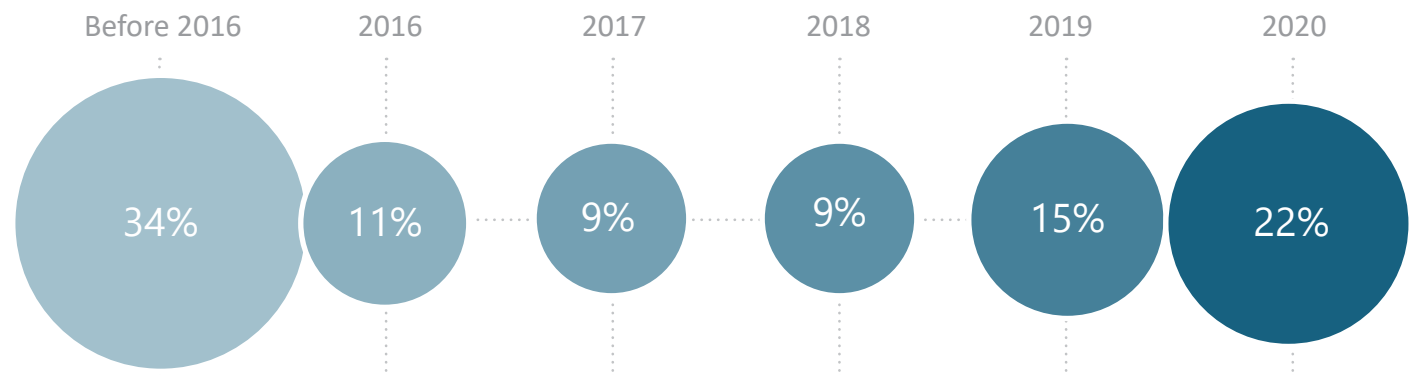


Of respondents have been internally displaced before

WHEN DID YOU LEAVE PAKISTAN?



WHEN DID YOU ARRIVE IN THIS COUNTRY?



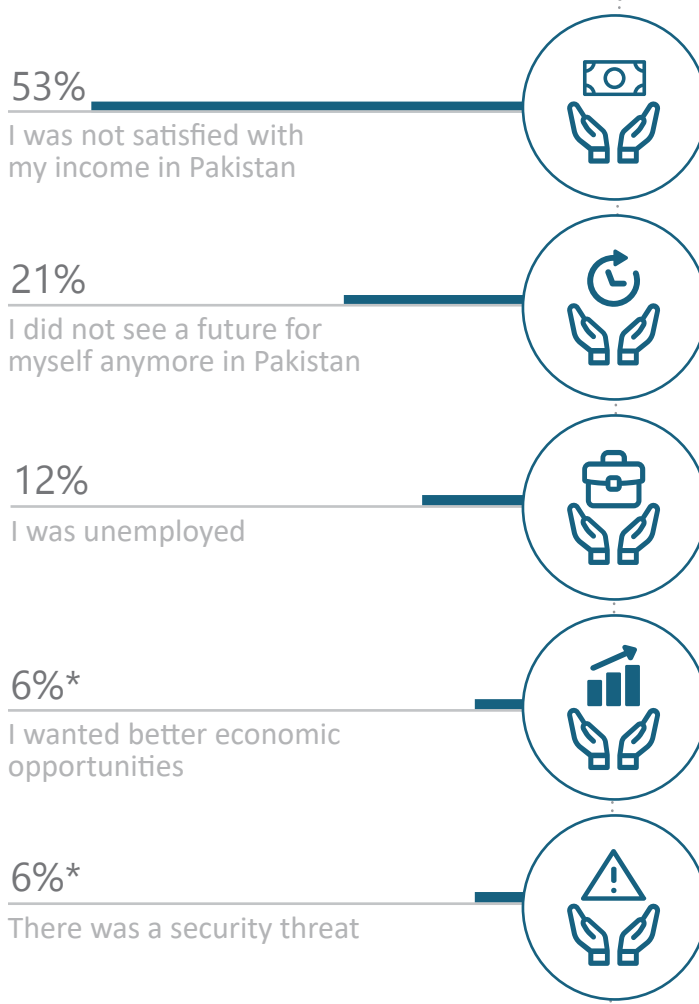
⁷This group includes two individuals.

2.2 Drivers of migration

Among respondents, dissatisfaction with income situations in Pakistan (53%) as well as a lack of hope for the future (21%) were the most frequently cited life events that triggered migration among respondents. Unemployment (12%) was also an important trigger for migration. This is reinforced by both the SDM 1 and the CMFS, which both emphasize a lack of job opportunities as a main reason for migration for both potential migrants and returnees in Pakistan (IOM, 2020; IOM, 2019; IOM (a), 2019).

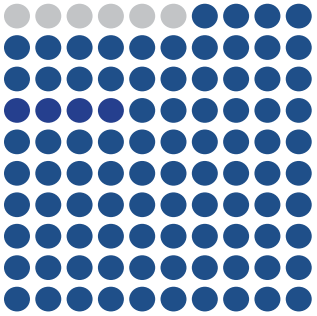
Ninety-four per cent of respondents experienced challenges in Pakistan at the personal level 6 months prior to migration. The most commonly reported primary challenge was a lack of sufficient income (59%) followed by unemployment (14%) and a lack of hope for the future in Pakistan (13%). These challenges are consistent with those reported in the SDM 1, which also cites financial problems/debts as a significant primary challenge at the personal level for potential migrants (IOM, 2020). Financial problems are also a frequently reported secondary personal challenge among respondents in SDM 2 (30%) as is a lack of hope for the future in Pakistan (40%).

LIFE EVENT THAT TRIGGERED MIGRATION (top 5 answers only)





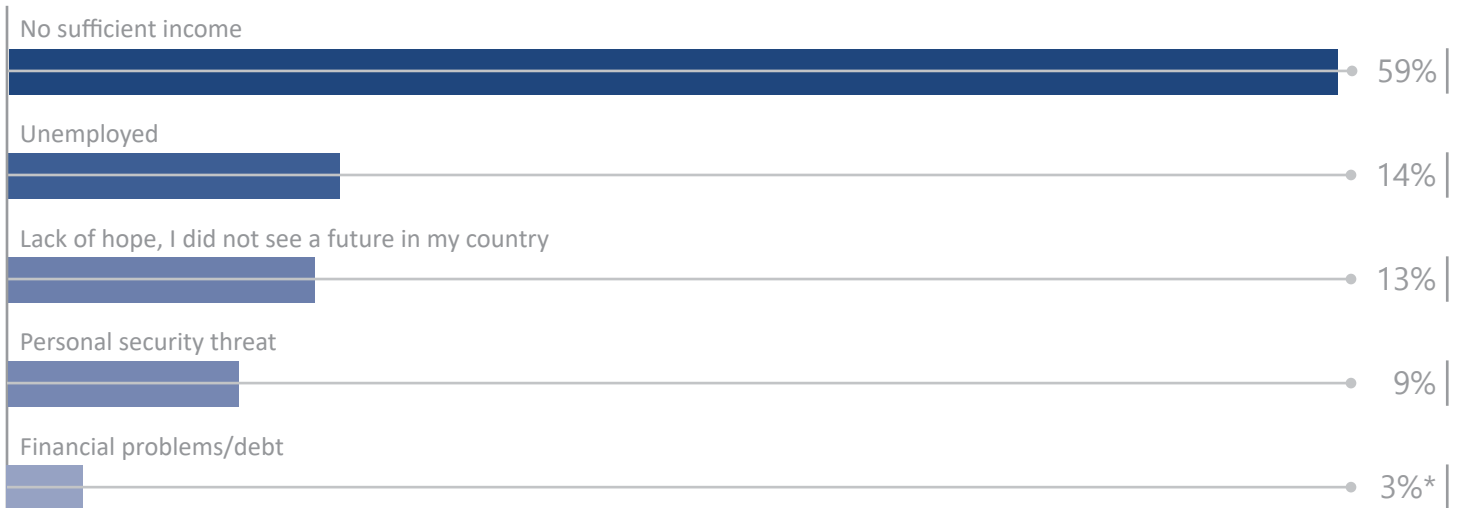
CHALLENGES



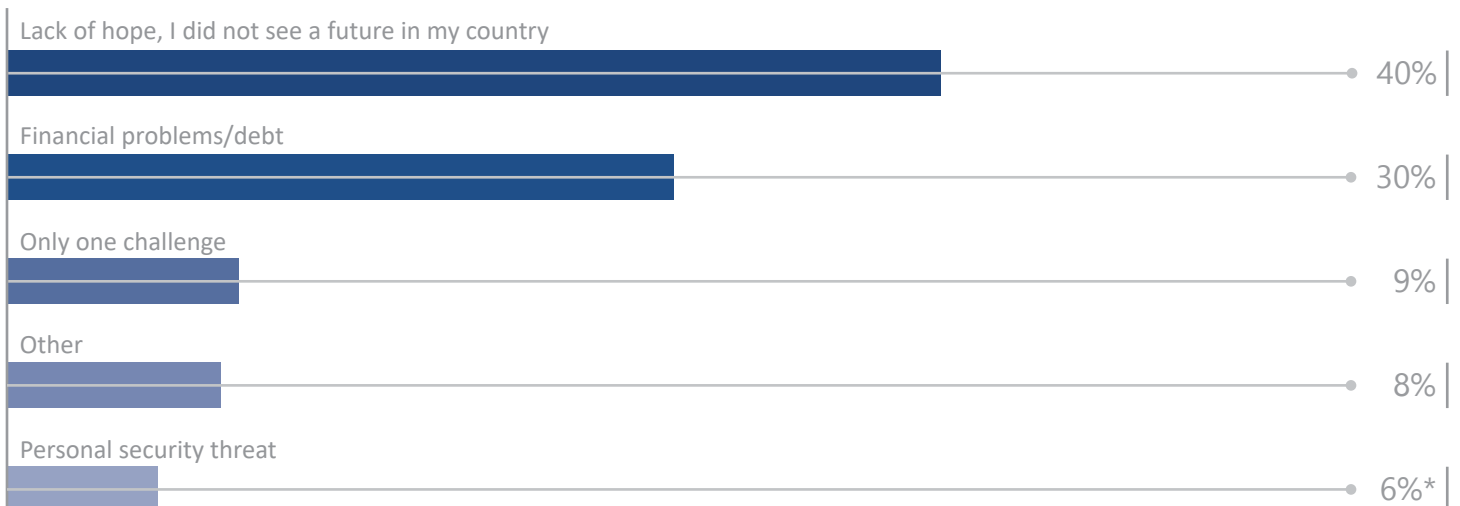
94%

Of respondents reported facing challenges at the **personal level** 6 months before leaving Pakistan

PRIMARY CHALLENGES (top 5 answers only)



SECONDARY CHALLENGES (top 5 answers only)

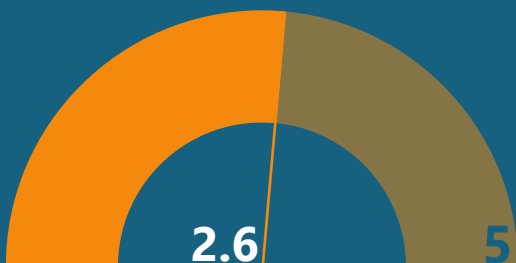




2.2.4 SERVICE QUALITY INDEX

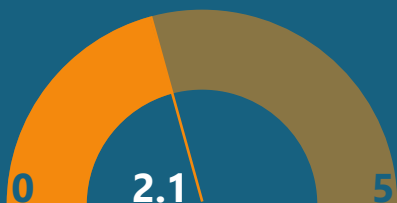
PAKISTAN

1=very poor 2=poor 3=average 4=good 5=very good

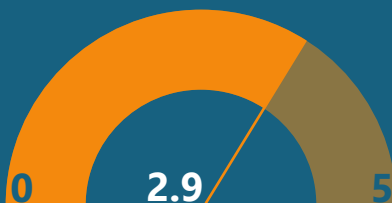


Pakistani potential migrants were asked to rate the services present in their communities. Ratings were averaged among respondents in order to gauge perceptions of services in Pakistan 6 months before migration.

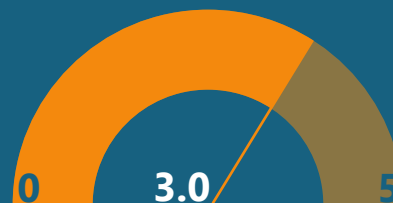
JOB OPPORTUNITY



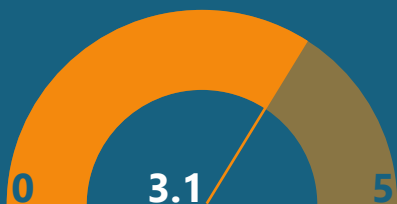
SAFETY AND SECURITY



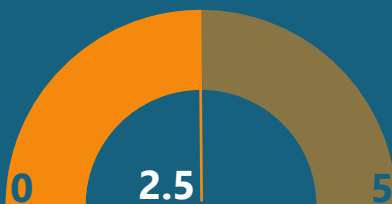
PUBLIC HEALTHCARE



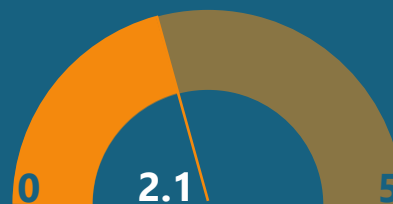
PUBLIC EDUCATION



QUALITY OF SERVICES



ANTI-CORRUPTION



Survey participants were asked to rate the quality of services in Pakistan 6 months prior to migration in order to provide insights about their perceptions on a range of factors. Their perception of the quality of services in Pakistan 6 months prior to migration earned an average rating of 2.6, equating to slightly below "average" but above "poor".

Educational services were rated the highest at 3.1, while job availability and anti-corruption were rated the lowest at 2.1. In the SDM 1, education services were also rated highest among potential migrants, while job availability scored lowest (IOM, 2020).

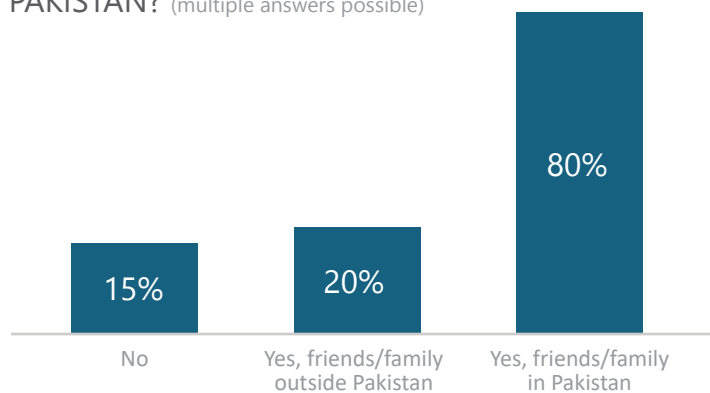


2.3 Migration Facilitation and Support Networks

When asked about sources of information regarding Europe and how to migrate there, respondents most frequently reported primary sources as social contacts at work (23%), social media and messaging applications with family and friends abroad (21%), family and friends that returned to Pakistan from abroad (16%) and social events/activities (12%). Meanwhile, the most prominent secondary source of information about Europe and how to migrate there were migration facilitators (36%) followed by family and friends that returned to Pakistan from abroad (12%). The significance of transnational familial/friend linkages as well as information from returnees was also emphasized in the SDM 1 (IOM, 2020).

Eighty per cent of respondents received support with migration arrangements before leaving Pakistan from friends or family in Pakistan, and 20 per cent received support from friends or family outside of Pakistan.† The most common form of support from friends or family was financial (90%).† Support with documents (29%) and finding a migration facilitator (15%) were also important forms of support among respondents.†

DID ANY OF YOUR FRIENDS OR FAMILY SUPPORT YOU WITH MIGRATION ARRANGEMENTS BEFORE LEAVING PAKISTAN? (multiple answers possible)



WHAT WERE YOUR MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT EUROPE AND HOW TO MIGRATE THERE?

Primary sources (top 4 answers only)

	Social contacts from work	23%
	Social media/messaging apps with family/friends abroad	21%
	Family/friends that returned from abroad to Pakistan	16%
	Social events/activities	12%

Secondary sources (top 4 answers only)

	Migration facilitator	36%
	Family/friends that returned from abroad to Pakistan	12%
	I only have one source	10%
	Internet	7%

IF YOU RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM FRIENDS/FAMILY, HOW DID THEY SUPPORT YOU?

(multiple answers possible, top 4 answers only)

	Financial support	90%
	Support with documents	29%
	Finding a migration facilitator	15%
	Finding transport	6%*



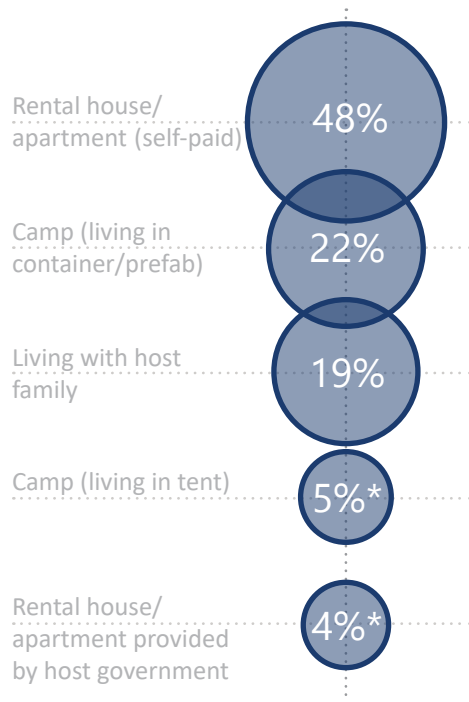
2.4 COVID-19 Needs and Vulnerabilities

Nearly half of all respondents were residing in self-paid rental houses or apartments at the time of the interview (48%), with a further 27 per cent living in camps (living in container/prefab or living in tent) and 19 per cent living with a host family.

In order to better understand the immediate needs and challenges of respondents in the wake of COVID-19, respondents were asked to rate COVID-19 response measures in their current location. Healthcare access and access to COVID-19 testing were rated highest among respondents at 3.4 each, between “fair” and “good”. Despite the overall rating of healthcare access, however, respondents who had rated healthcare access “poor” or below cited obstacles to obtaining healthcare due to their legal status (49%), a lack of the necessary treatment (30%) and discrimination against migrants (27%) as the main reasons for low ratings.

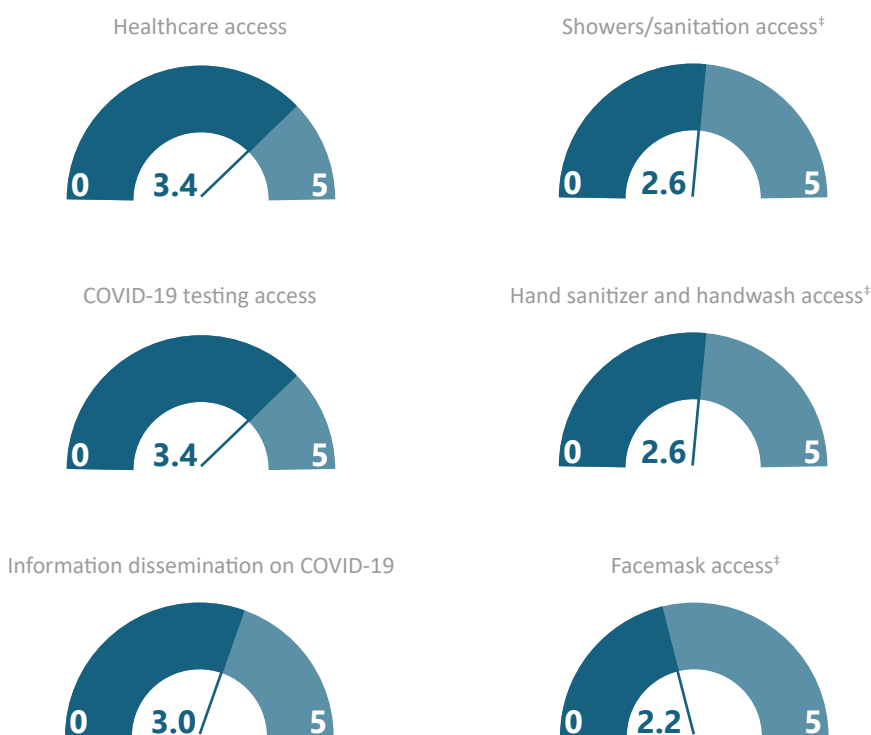
Respondents residing in camps or informal settlements (28%) were also asked about access to showers and sanitation services, hand sanitizer and facemasks, all of which were rated below “fair” on average. Facemask access in camps was rated lowest, with an average of 2.1: “poor”.

TYPE OF RESIDENCE (top 5 answers only)

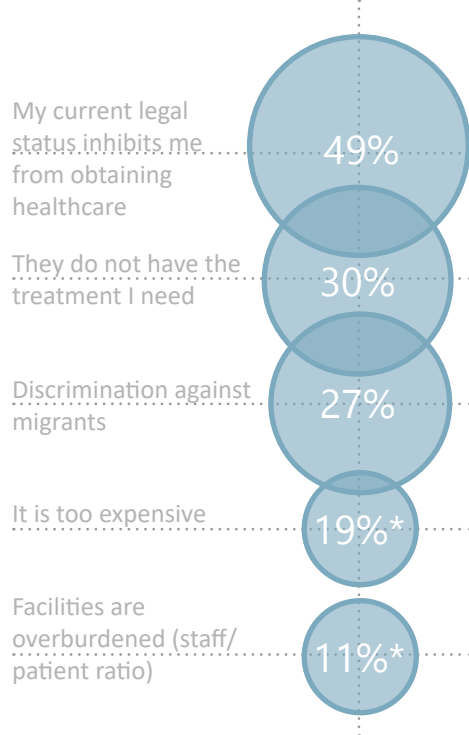


RATING OF COVID-19 RESPONSE MEASURES

0=non-existent 1=very poor 2=poor 3=fair 4=good 5=very good



If you rated access to healthcare below 3, why?
(multiple answers possible, top 5 answers only)

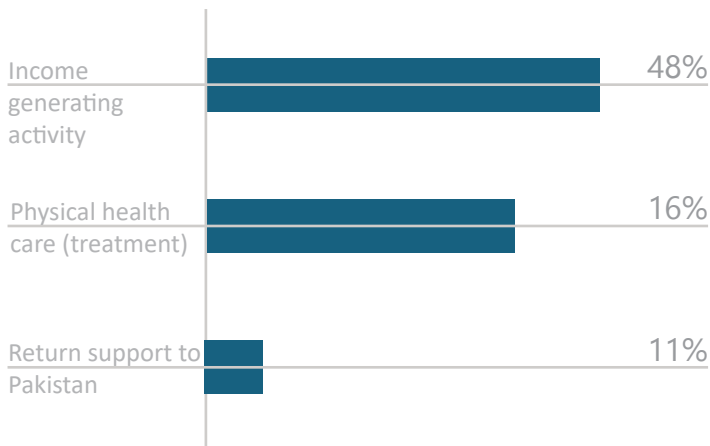


[‡]Ratings concerning sanitation/personal protective equipment were only asked among respondents living in camps or informal settlements.

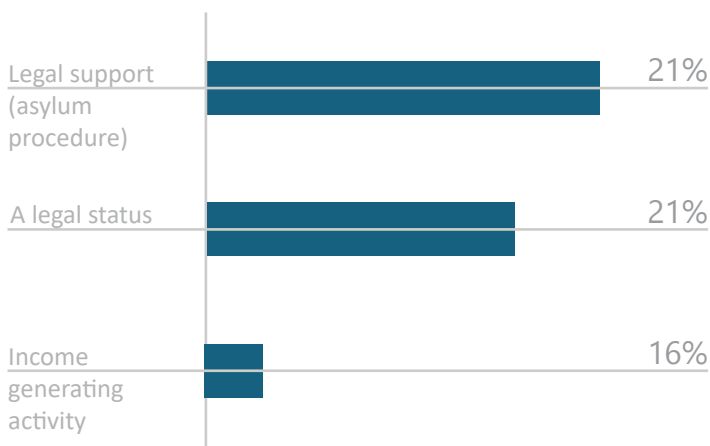


IMMEDIATE NEEDS IN CURRENT LOCATION

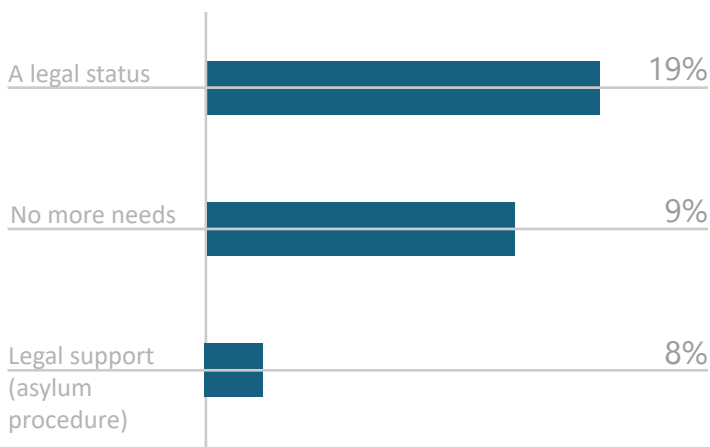
Primary needs (top 3 answers only)



Secondary needs (top 3 answers only)



Tertiary needs (top 3 answers only)



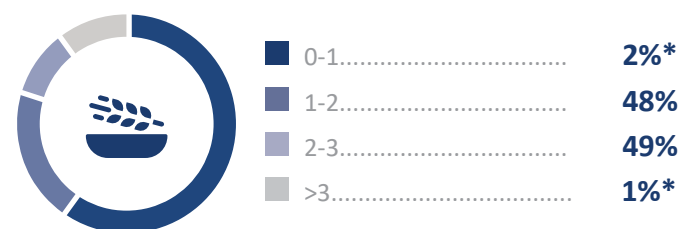
The highest primary immediate needs reported among respondents in their current locations were income-generating activities (48%), physical health care in the form of treatment (16%) and return support to Pakistan (11%). Legal support with processing a legal status claim, as well as obtaining a legal status itself, were frequently reported secondary and tertiary immediate needs among respondents.

The majority of respondents reported consuming 1-2 meals per day (48%) or 2-3 meals per day (49%) in the seven days prior to the interview.

At the time of the interview, over two thirds of respondents reported that their expenditure was higher than their income (69%), while 19 per cent of respondents had no income at all. Eight per cent of respondents had an equal ratio of expenditure and income, and five per cent had an income that was higher than their expenditure.

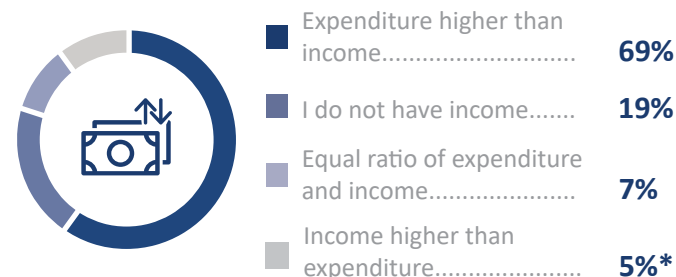
FOOD CONSUMPTION FREQUENCY

During the last 7 days, how many meals did you eat per day on average?



EXPENDITURE/INCOME RATIO

What is your current ratio of expenditure to income?





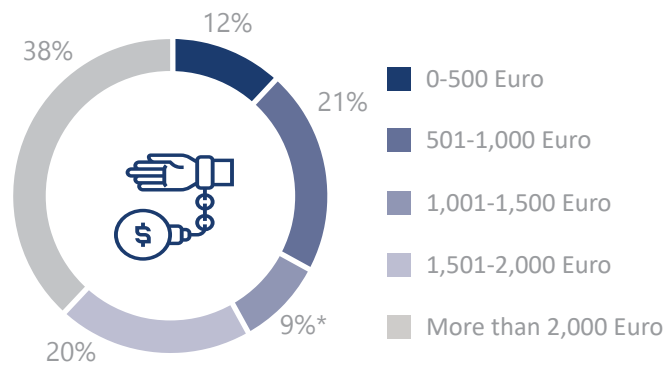
DO YOU HAVE DEBT?



In order to further gauge the socio-economic statuses of respondents in their current locations, they were also asked about their current debt and to whom they owed money.

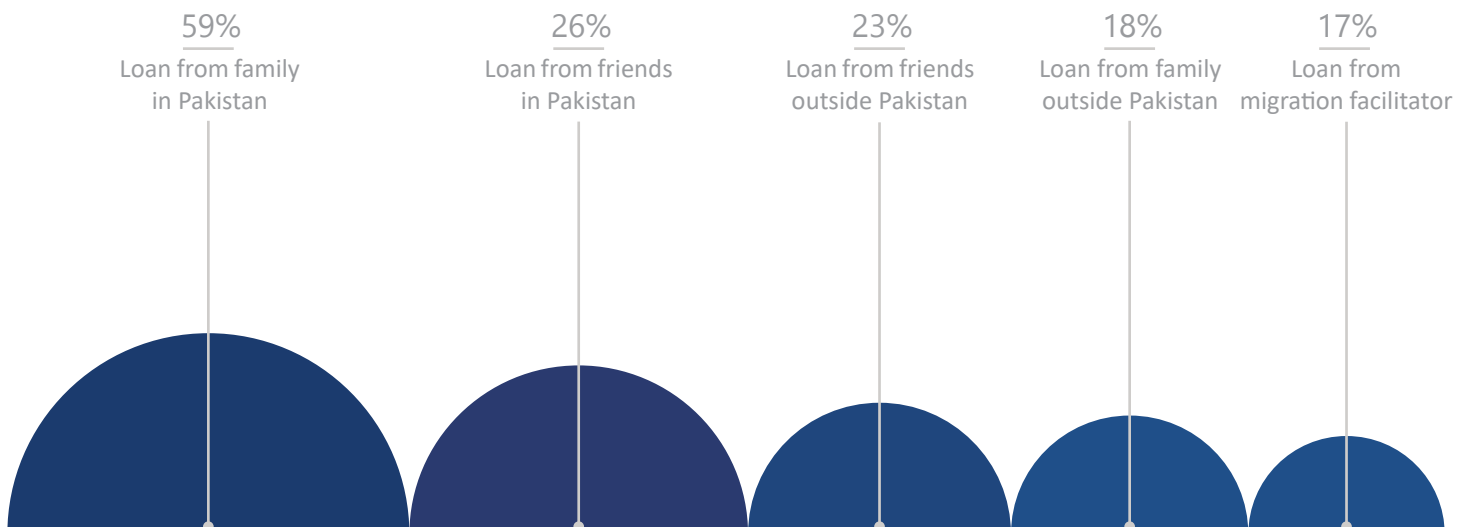
Forty-one per cent of respondents reported having debt at the time of the interview. Of those who had debt, respondents most frequently owed more than 2,000 Euro (38%), and 20 per cent owed between 1,501 and 2,000 Euro. Another 21 per cent of respondents had between 501 and 1,000 Euro worth of debt in their current location.

HOW MUCH DEBT DO YOU HAVE?



Debt among respondents was primarily composed of loans from family in Pakistan (59%).† Twenty-six per cent of respondents reported receiving loans from friends in Pakistan, while a further 23 per cent reported receiving loans from friends outside of Pakistan.† Eighteen per cent of respondents received loans from family outside of Pakistan, and 17 per cent had loans from migration facilitators.†

COMPOSITION OF DEBT (multiple answers possible, top 5 answers only)





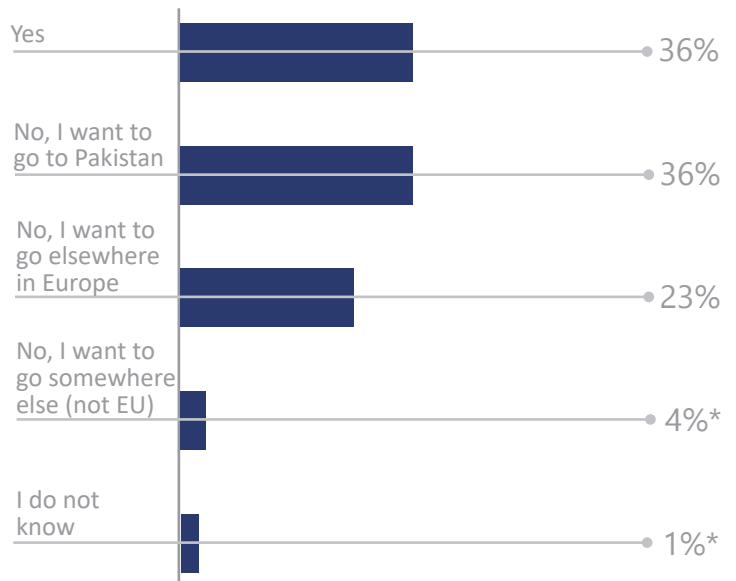
2.5 Potential Return

Respondents were asked about their future migration plans during the next six months. While 36 per cent reported that they wanted to stay in their current country, 63 per cent responded that they wanted to go elsewhere. Thirty-six per cent wanted to return to Pakistan, and 23 per cent wanted to migrate elsewhere in Europe. Four per cent wanted to migrate elsewhere but not in Europe.

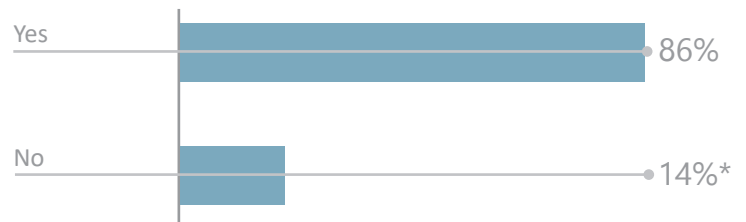
Among those who wanted to migrate elsewhere, the most common reason for wanting to continue on was the prospect of job availability in the intended destination. Ease of access to asylum procedures is also a prominent reason cited by those that wanted to continue their migration journey.

Respondents who reported wanting to return to Pakistan in the next six months were also asked whether they had considered returning during the previous three months. Eighty-six per cent reported that they had considered returning during this period, primarily because they had either not been able to make an income in their current location (24%) or because they were tired of waiting during lengthy asylum procedures (22%).

DO YOU WANT TO STAY IN THIS COUNTRY DURING THE NEXT 6 MONTHS ?



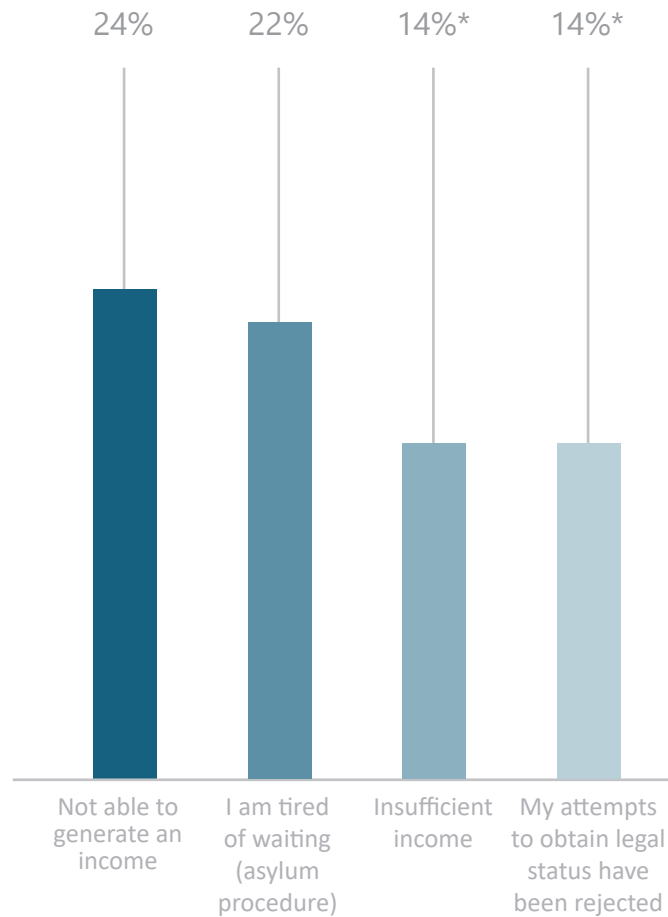
HAVE YOU CONSIDERED RETURNING TO PAKISTAN DURING THE LAST 3 MONTHS ?



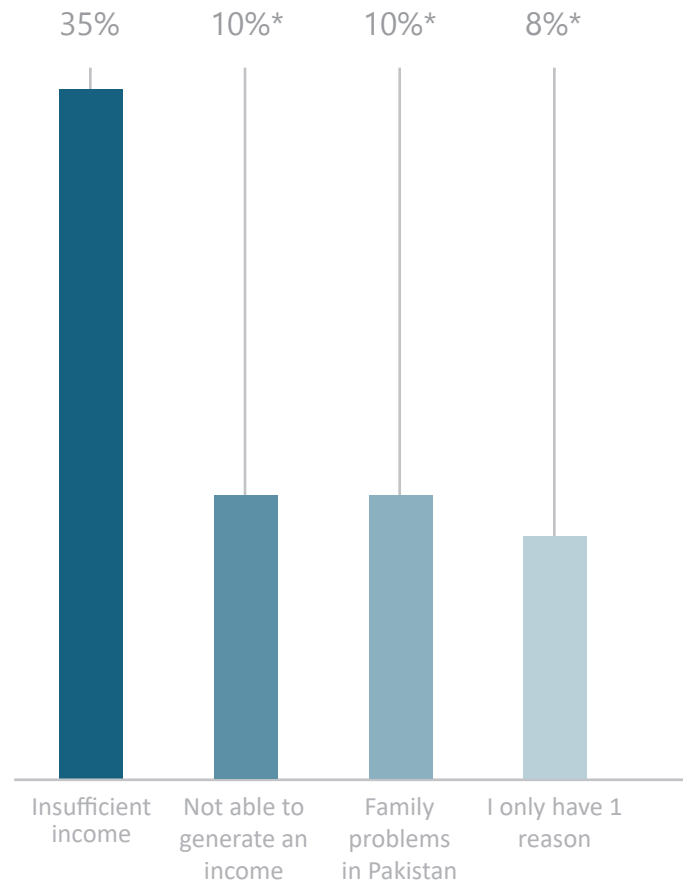


WHY DID YOU CONSIDER RETURNING TO PAKISTAN?

Primary reason (top 4 answers only)



Secondary reason (top 4 answers only)



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