



HOUSE OF LORDS

Revised transcript of evidence taken before

The EU Sub-Committee on Home Affairs

Inquiry on

THE EU ACTION PLAN AGAINST MIGRANT SMUGGLING

Evidence Session No. 4

Heard in Public

Questions 32 - 39

WEDNESDAY 22 JULY 2015

11.30 am

Witnesses: Elizabeth Collett and Franck Düvell

Members present

Baroness Prashar (Chairman)
 Lord Condon
 Lord Cormack
 Lord Faulkner of Worcester
 Baroness Janke
 Lord Jay of Ewelme
 Baroness Massey of Darwen
 Lord Morris of Handsworth
 Baroness Pinnock
 Lord Ribeiro
 Lord Soley
 Lord Wasserman

Elizabeth Collett, Director, Migration Policy Institute Europe, and **Franck Düvell**, Associate Professor and Senior Researcher, COMPAS, University of Oxford

Q32 The Chairman: I welcome you both to the Committee. Thank you for your time. By way of introduction, this is a public session. It is being recorded, the recording will be on the website and you will be sent a copy of the transcript. If there are any corrections that you want to make, please do so, and if you feel you want to add anything further to the evidence that you have given, please feel free to do so. Perhaps you can begin by introducing yourselves. If there is anything that you want to say by way of introduction, please do so.

Elizabeth Collett: Thank you for the invitation to be here today, and my deepest apologies for being late. It was largely down to the Changing of the Guard and being stuck in traffic. I am the director of the Migration Policy Institute Europe. An enormous amount of our time over the last 18 months has been spent thinking about the function or dysfunction of the global protection system and the future of the common European asylum system and its future functioning within that. That means that we have been looking at this issue but from several different angles with regard to the nature of smuggling and how it will develop. I am very interested to hear your questions today and answer them to the best of my ability.

Franck Düvell: Thank you very much for the invitation. I have been associate professor and senior researcher at the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society at the University of Oxford for the last nine years. I have also been working for several years for the International Centre for Migration Policy Development in Vienna, an international organisation advising EU member states on migration policy. I am currently also acting as consultant expert to the Turkish Government's director-general for migration management on improving the migration management system in Turkey. I have been researching irregular migration for, I guess, 25 years. I have been to most of the relevant countries—EU member states, frontier countries, transit countries, source countries, Ukraine, Turkey, Hungary, Moldova, the Greek islands—and conducted hundreds of interviews with irregular immigrants, smugglers, border guards, police officers, intelligence officers, NGO representatives: a whole range of actors in the field. So I suppose what I would bring in is a bit of a reality check to policies, ideas and suggestions floating in the current of debates.

Q33 The Chairman: Perhaps can I start with a question. What in your opinion are the root causes of irregular migration to the EU? Is it a balance between push and pull factors?

Franck Düvell: I am sure you are aware that we face a refugee crisis of historical proportions, with 59 million to 61 million refugees worldwide. We have a displaced population of about 22 million in the neighbourhood of the European Union alone, and I am talking only about Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Egypt and some north African countries. Of these 22 million displaced people, 7 million already live in another country so they are international refugees. We know that most of them are concentrated in a very small number of countries, with 2 million in Turkey and roughly 1.5 million each in Jordan and Lebanon. We have a displaced population of 1.5 million. This is one side of the problem. The other side is that not only do we have 232 million international migrants globally but an IOM/Gallup study found that another 630 million people have a desire to migrate. A desire is of course a very vague wish.

Lord Jay of Ewelme: Six hundred and thirty million?

Franck Düvell: Yes. These are the people who have a desire to migrate. If we break this down to the number of people who are planning to migrate, that is only 7.6% of the total, so 48 million people. In the survey that was then broken down to those who were actually making preparations—applying for an international passport and/or a visa, booking tickets—and that was only 3% of the total, so 19 million globally. Of those people, a certain proportion—roughly one-quarter—have the ambition to move to the EU. We know that each year roughly 1.4 million people are admitted to the European Union on legal grounds on a longer-term permit. Another 13 or 14 million are admitted on a short-term visa, which is normally a tourist or visitor's visa. So if we look at the opportunities available to them—a Schengen short-term visa or the permit on the one hand, and the large number of people who have a desire to migrate on the other—we see a significant gap between those who have a desire and those who are finally admitted. A small proportion of the people in this gap decide to move on in an irregular fashion. I ask myself, though I do not have the answer: how many people would that be? We do not have this research or these data. However, if we ask how many people who desire a car but cannot afford one would actually go and steal one, we come up with a very small proportion. People either wait or buy another kind of car. In our case, it means that they would go somewhere else—the second-best option. Most migrants who desire to migrate to Europe or America realise that it is only a dream, so they take the second-best or third-best option. Such countries could be Russia, Turkey, Libya, the Gulf countries, Brazil or other booming BRICS countries. If we talk about the root causes, though, then there is the political dimension of forcefully displaced people—7 million international refugees in the neighbourhood of Europe—and then the economic motivation for people to migrate. In both cases, you have a gap or tension between aspiration and what is legally possible. To some extent this feeds irregular migration, if that answers your question.

Elizabeth Collett: I would just add one comment. I completely agree about the complexities of understanding the desire to move versus the ability to move, and the ability to effect plans to move. We often look at immigrant populations through the lens of our existing immigration system, so we tend to divide people up into refugees, economic migrants and family migrants on the basis of the system that we already have. Motivations are still very poorly understood but far more fluid and complex. Motivations may change over time. They also may have multiple drivers attached to them, and it is worth understanding that many of the people who are coming from places of conflict today are not necessarily coming directly from Syria or Afghanistan, but may have been displaced for some period in a region of protection—maybe Lebanon, Turkey or Jordan, to take the Syrian example. We should understand and question what is not being offered to those people in those regions of protection that is then impelling

them to seek a new life within the EU. We need to understand not just the complexities of the decision-making process itself but the context and the circumstances that large numbers of displaced people are finding themselves in, meaning they want to take that decision to move.

The Chairman: Taking that point, the Government suggest that the majority of the irregular migrants reaching Europe are economic migrants rather than refugees. What does your research show?

Franck Düvell: If we look at the figures from the national authorities in the “frontier countries” as I call them—Italy, Greece, Malta, Hungary and, to a much lesser extent, Poland and Spain—they show that the majority of people, perhaps 60% or 70% of them, certainly come from countries in trouble, where there is civil war, war, fighting and destruction. One would assume that on the basis of nationality these people at least have a claim, or believe they have a claim. That is of course untested. In the asylum procedures it is tested and challenged in court. The recognition rate varies from nationality to nationality, from 30% to 70% or 80%. However, the majority of people, 60% or 70% of them, come from troubled countries and believe they have a claim that they take forward. The rest is of course decided in the asylum procedures and courts.

Elizabeth Collett: I just emphasise that there is huge variance in recognition rates across the European Union, which also adds to tension with second removal within the European Union. But also the reverse is true. Some people who might be considered eligible to claim asylum choose not to do so because they see the asylum system as not particularly helpful to go into when there might be alternatives such as informal working. We see this in Spain for example: people choosing to find their way into the informal economy rather than necessarily claiming asylum. You do not necessarily see it just from the formal figures of who has done what on arrival.

Lord Cormack: I think it was very interesting what Dr Düvell said, but we must be careful not to be diverted by this 630 million figure. We all have hopes and aspirations in our youth—or old age—to settle on the Costa del Sol and how that might be a wonderful idea. However, we are seeking to address a particular crisis. The numbers are obviously extremely high but very significantly less than this 630 million. In your view, from your studies and investigations, what is the real figure we are looking at?

Franck Düvell: The real figure of what?

Lord Cormack: Of those who are displaced, because they either feel the conditions in which they are placed are intolerable or have been effectively driven out.

Franck Düvell: As I said, the number of refugees we know pretty well: 59 million worldwide, with roughly 22 million displaced populations in the nearer neighbourhood of the European Union. Of these 22 million, 7 million are internationally displaced and the others are displaced within their countries: Iraq, Syria and Ukraine are the main countries. The 7 million are those who are forcibly displaced from their country to another place, seeking protection there.

Lord Cormack: And it is their plight that we should specifically focus on.

Franck Düvell: I would like to add one argument to my point because you made this clear. We have a blurred situation of economic migration and asylum. I am referring to economic migrants who are becoming sandwiched in a war or civil war situation specifically in Libya. They arrive as labour migrants, they become refugees and they need to escape the country. For economic reasons, they often decide that they are not able to move back, so there is some economic element in the political situation. They arrive in the European Union as refugees but

then they seek to continue their previous life as workers. Like many of the people in the boats, who would be of Gambian, Senegalese, Nigerian or Malian nationality, they could be taken as economic migrants even though they are escaping a war situation. So this fluidity of category—labour migrant becoming refugee becoming labour migrant again—complicates enormously the case that we deal with. We have 1.5 million to 2 million labour migrants in Libya because it is an immigration country suffering now from war.

Q34 Lord Soley: Both the European Commission and the United Kingdom take the view that the actions against smugglers is particularly important, using law enforcement. Do you think that method is sufficient in dealing with this migrant crisis?

Elizabeth Collett: If we start in mid-April, when the terrible tragedy occurred in the Mediterranean, this was suddenly on the agenda of heads of state. In late April there was an extraordinary summit. From that moment, we have really seen an emphasis on countersmuggling. The 10-point plan had that front and centre. It is certainly there as a partly political narrative as well. If you are going to do search and rescue, you want to show that you are trying to break down smuggling networks. I think there is still a poor understanding of what those smuggling networks are. I am not convinced that the military operation that has been proposed in the Mediterranean will be sufficient to achieve some of the goals articulated. There is a mismatch between ambition and the tools being placed on the ground. I can go into that in more detail.

Lord Soley: What would you want to do that might make it more effective? I share your view that there is not enough there. Do you have other suggestions to add to this policy of dealing with migrant smuggling through law enforcement?

Elizabeth Collett: Unfortunately, the answers are not simple or fast. When this becomes an extraordinarily highly sensitive political issue, people want to see immediate change, but that will be very difficult to do. So much of smuggling is horizontal networks. We are talking about sometimes very local networks. Sometimes migrants themselves participate in the facilitation of smuggling to fund the next stage of their journey. We have a very weak evidence base for understanding smuggling networks. We recently published a paper by an expert called Jacob Townsend who noted that existing evidence is based on a destination bias. We tend to interview the ones who made it and do not look at the ones who did not. We have small samples and I think Frank can add a lot more to this in terms of the smuggling networks, but it is an extraordinarily complex industry with many different types of actors. One thing that strikes me about the EU response which might be slightly naive, in particular in the action plan on countersmuggling, is that it does not really mention corruption and rule of law in the countries where smuggling is taking place. It is extremely difficult to talk about robust countersmuggling activities without taking into account the governance structures within which you are working. It would mean really thinking about how smuggling links to corruption, law enforcement locally, the facilitation of those networks and how local economies often depend on smuggling networks. We have maybe depicted this as a series of bad and pernicious actors but that does not necessarily describe the totality of smuggling networks.

Lord Soley: And that might go right back to the country of origin, not just in Libya or something like that. It might go back to Nigeria or wherever.

Elizabeth Collett: Yes, a complex chain.

Baroness Massey of Darwen: Can I ask a quick question as a supplementary to Lord Soley's? Do we know how many people do not make it, approximately? What are the data like?

Elizabeth Collett: There are efforts to approximate the numbers of people who lose their lives specifically in the Mediterranean. The IOM produced statistics on that, though obviously they are imprecise because unfortunately we do not know the full numbers, but it is an almost impossible data set to collect.

Franck Düvell: We do not have that information. When I consider the question, I would look at the issue and the necessary policies in a much broader context. The main crisis of course occurs in the countries which are at war: Syria, Iraq, Libya and Ukraine. They are countries in crisis, and that is where the crisis lies. Then we have a crisis in the first country of arrival—the so-called transit countries of Turkey, Lebanon and Libya. We have a crisis of much smaller proportions, to be honest, in the European Union. Last year, we had 600,000 asylum seekers and 250,000 arrivals as compared with the 7 million refugees in other countries.

When I look at the policy proposals, I wonder to what extent they are an adequate response to the complexity and scope of the crisis, in particular the action plan on smuggling. Obviously, that addresses only a very small element of the crisis—the small proportion that arrives or aims to arrive on the doorstep of the European Union. How many people do not make it, indeed, we do not know. I have never seen or myself conducted a large-scale survey that goes beyond the usual case studies which would tell us what the deterrent effect of these policies is. This is all based on intuition and assumption because we have absolutely no evidence of any deterrent effect. Over all these years, I have never met anyone who did not make it. At the end of the day, the people are interviewed sooner or later. I have found them on Facebook and they have sent me an email saying that they are now in Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Germany or wherever they wanted to go. This is not representative, but it tells me that having the resources, skills and commitment, along with a strong need or urge to move away from an unviable situation is a powerful motivation.

What is neglected in the agenda on migration and the action plan on smuggling is, I would argue, the demand side. It focuses on the smugglers because they provide the service. The supply side is addressed, but the demand side, which is made up of the people who feel a very strong urge to leave a country and therefore need others to help them get out, is neglected. If we do not address the demand side, which is the humanitarian crisis of the people who need to leave the place where they are, I cannot see how this can be comprehensive.

Q35 Baroness Massey of Darwen: Can I go back to another issue? You said earlier on that the motivation of the migrants themselves may change over time, a comment which I found very interesting. The Commission intends to transform migrant smuggling networks into high-risk, low-return operations. Are the measures in the action plan likely to deter smugglers? Further, what about the motivation of the smugglers themselves? Does that change over time? What is going on there?

Elizabeth Collett: The majority of the initiatives set out in the countersmuggling plan demonstrate to me at what an early stage EU thinking is. There is a lot of talk about setting up networks and contact points in the different states, as well as inter-agency collaboration and intelligence gathering. These are the sorts of things that we would have hoped that by this stage we were building on. The action plan to counter smuggling is to some extent a preparatory document in terms of setting up the institutions within the EU that will think about these things. There is not a huge amount that talks about increasing understanding of the smuggling networks themselves. There are some interesting things in terms of addressing the financing, but not necessarily building into a solid understanding of what that financing is.

When it comes to understanding smuggling networks, there is an enormous amount of research to do, but Governments are not necessarily the right actors for conducting the

interviews and establishing the research. We have seen the development of the hotspots and that the stated core goal of the military operation in the Mediterranean is intelligence gathering. That is done through the use of immigration liaison officers and EU delegations. Governments are not necessarily the most trusted actors to do intelligence gathering with people who may have grown up with a deep mistrust of the Governments of the countries they come from. They are also concerned that anything they tell the authorities may lead to retribution from the smuggling networks themselves. We also face a challenge in the sense that there is a need for an evidence base, but the actors most interested in gathering that evidence are not necessarily the ones who will get robust evidence. There is a big of a gap.

Finally, when it comes to motivations over time, that speaks a lot to the smuggling network itself. If someone is taking a slow route from, say, sub-Saharan Africa up towards Europe and is trying to fund themselves on the way, it can take anything up to five years to make the journey. People take jobs along the way and they encounter different communities. People may decide that it is actually too difficult to try to get that far. For example, a lot of the people in Libya may initially have wanted to go to Europe, but then found that until recently there had been a reasonably thriving economy in Libya, so they found jobs in that country. The work was sufficient to send money home. People may change their motivation, as Frank has said. There are people of other nationalities coming from Libya. There are Bangaldeshis and Pakistanis, for example, who had been migrant workers but who now see no other way out of Libya than to take the boats because the border with Tunisia is closed and there are no other ways to exit the country. That is a motivation which has certainly changed.

Baroness Massey of Darwen: Can we have a copy of your report?

Elizabeth Collett: I will be happy to send you one.

Baroness Massey of Darwen: Thank you.

Q36 Lord Condon: You have both spoken about the fluidity of the situation where economic refugees are willing to change. You have spoken about the absence of adequate address being given to the demand side of the problem and that corruption is not being looked at properly. In your opinion, are the priorities of the EU action plan and the actions it suggests sufficiently evidence based, or is there a huge gap in the statistics? If there is a gap, and what you have said so far suggests that there is, how do we address that? What more can be done to close the gap so that the policies are more evidence based?

Franck Düvell: Everything we know is based either on small-scale case studies made at a certain point in time and thus reflecting a very specific situation or is based on evidence gathered by state agencies. The people we talk about know very well what the discourses are and what the game is: what they are expected to say. They do not talk about their real background motivation and experience; they give what we call a morally adequate account of what they are expected to say. Even for researchers it is very difficult, if not impossible, to go beyond that. One needs to put the puzzle together. So the evidence base we have is pretty weak in terms of the motivations and the background situation in the transit countries, and in particular in the transit countries which are further away from the European Union and thus not in the immediate neighbourhood. Now we even see FRONTEX reports no longer referring to nationality but to region—sub-Saharans. Even there, there is no certainty about where these people are coming from, even though nationality can say a lot about whether or not they come from a country that is in trouble.

I also wonder when I read these policy documents what evidence is taken into account and what is not. A lot of convenient arguments are used to support one position, but not to support

the other. The talk of “high risk, low return”, for example, seems to imply that these days there is a low risk and a high return. That is not the case. The risk is already high.

Lord Condon: Is the biggest problem in terms of EU policy-making ignorance of the complexity, or is it political selectivity and misinterpretation?

Franck Düvell: It is both. There is so much rhetoric and there are so many narratives. The use of certain words tells me that the writer would rather narrate a particular story than look at the complexity of the issues. When I look at this document, it is not what is out there. The situation seems to be rather different, but the motivations of the writers of the report seem to be driven by emotions and political thinking that is inspired by these narratives. It is hugely difficult to untangle the elements that reflect the reality from those which reflect a narrative or a certain discourse.

Elizabeth Collett: The characterisation of smuggling as a bad actors’ game that is somehow superimposed on an otherwise functioning country, and is separate from and laid over a particular country—something that happens to a transit country rather than being integrally involved in its economy—is misleading, I think. Many smugglers are also acting legitimately at the same time as facilitating smuggling networks. Some excellent reportage came out last week in the *Wall Street Journal* which looked at Agadez in Niger and at how the economy was, essentially, utterly dependent on facilitating the movement of people. It is slightly naive to think that countering smuggling through intelligence-gathering and then a targeted response will address something that is so integrally involved in the development and stability—or instability—of those countries. You have to really take that broader context into account. Just to add to that, we have to look at the countersmuggling action plan in the context of the broader shift that is occurring in the European Union, which is about understanding migration policy as part of foreign policy. Right now, the two are slightly detached from one another but there has been an acknowledgement, particularly in the last three months, that EU policies will get nowhere without deepening and strengthening an honest dialogue with third countries. There is then an enormous step from understanding that to being able to affect it in practice. That will be one of the major challenges.

Baroness Massey of Darwen: On the question of the evidence base, you mentioned case studies. Are there case studies of smugglers themselves or are they just of the migrants?

Franck Düvell: It is normally of the migrants. The smugglers are often studied through the narratives of the migrants, who are instructed to say this rather than that—they are aware of the narratives and give a coloured account. There has been some limited research on the smugglers, which one could comment on. The smugglers are depicted in a specific, negative narrative, even though the migrants in need of a service—I put it in those neutral terms—that takes them from one country to another rely on these networks and smugglers. There is an enormous discrepancy in terms of the quality and safety of the services and, accordingly, in the prices. There is almost a Ryanair, easyJet-type of service where you travel without luggage, because luggage means fewer people on the boat, or you can pay more. There are a number of self-made smugglers—opportunists—for whom this is an opportunity to make a bit, or quite a lot, of money. There are people who have been in the business for several years, who cannot afford to lose their reputation and their customers and who would provide a relatively higher-quality service. I miss, for example, a distinction between the rogue smugglers and the smugglers who provide a more genuine service. We should not forget—this is also downplayed in the rhetoric—that 99% of the people who embark arrive in the EU alive, even though we have a significant number of fatalities. The risk of losing one’s life is around 1% and the migrants know that. We talk about risk and ask why they engage in this—but they know that 99% of them make it and, once they arrive in Europe, they find many more

opportunities than they have in their own countries. They also know that it takes them six months, 12 months or one to three years before they secure a living. So if we look at this as a trade-off, the risk is 1% and you end up somewhere in the EU after a couple of years with asylum, tolerated status or irregular status, but with a network and some employment. That seems much better for people than life at home, where there are zero opportunities

Q37 Lord Faulkner of Worcester: Following on from that, do you think the member states and the EU institutions could do better at gathering, analysing and exchanging information on migrant smuggling? Are they doing enough to co-operate with each other?

Franck Düvell: What we have is a mess. I have an A4 list of agencies, institutions, programmes and intelligence-gathering mechanisms, at EU level and UN level. There are international organisations and national agencies, along with project-based short-term intelligence being put together. We have all these processes, such as the Khartoum process, the Budapest process and the Prague process, including processes that we have not even heard about—the list is not complete. We have conflicting operations: FRONTEX, with Triton and Poseidon, EU navy force operations and four or five private rescue operations in the central Mediterranean with another one in the Aegean. We have a lot of round-table meetings. This cannot provide a comprehensive picture. We also have conflicting mandates and divergent definitions of the type of problem. We have competition over funding for these activities and projects. The bodies talk ad hoc to one another in the field and on the ground, but not necessarily at a higher level.

Lord Faulkner of Worcester: That is a very helpful answer. Thank you very much.

Elizabeth Collett: To add to that, I completely agree about the multiplicity of institutions. You also have senior officials resorting to informal channels of communication with each other and using the working groups and the council to exchange information, because the formal processes are not working for them in many cases, but also because they do not necessarily want all the information they have to be published. So we speak as researchers aware that there might be information that is not available to us.

One thing to add to that is about the fluidity of smuggling networks and routes over time, which means that even if you had a robust snapshot of the routes from, say, October last year, when the primary maritime route was through the central Mediterranean, it would not really help you understand what is happening now through Greece and Turkey and up throughout the western Balkans. There has been a complete shift in routes, operators, networks and populations. It is not just that there are lots of different institutions working in lots of different geographies and constellations, with different levels of mandate and resources, but the picture is constantly changing. It is not possible to say, “We have done it now; we have mapped all the smuggling networks”, and sit back. Because, as we said, Governments are not necessarily best placed to gather that material, one of the enduring challenges will be how you find that localised, reliable information on a consistent basis that can be fed back to policymakers. That is an extraordinary challenge.

Q38 Lord Jay of Ewelme: My question follows on directly from that. You talked a lot about the different approaches to smuggling, the different people involved, the different source and destination countries, and the different routes and methods of transportation used. It is clearly an extremely complex and rather confusing picture, but a question that arises from that is whether it is really feasible to reach a single, common approach at the EU level for dealing with quite such a complicated and diverse set of issues.

Elizabeth Collett: It is a major challenge, not just from the point of view of co-ordination and institutional coherence but because EU member states may not have an interest, given their national political narratives, to find that level of co-ordination. They may not have equal levels of resources but their geography and their politics may mean that they would—the best example right now is Hungary building a wall on the Serbian border. That serves Hungary's interests very well, but it does not serve the EU's interests; it does not reduce the number of people crossing the border, but it does displace them to other external borders of the European Union.

Lord Cormack: It builds the pressure points.

Elizabeth Collett: We have seen this happening at various moments. Maritime migration across the European Union is not a new phenomenon. It is at least two decades old and we have seen the flows and the numbers shift quite sensitively according to policy responses. In the middle of the last decade the Spanish Government saw a large number of arrivals and so took steps to work with key transit states, notably Morocco and Senegal but other countries as well, to start managing that flow. So the route shifted towards the central Mediterranean and later to the eastern Mediterranean and back again. So we see those changes in response to what tend to be unilateral policies by particular Governments. That will be one of the major challenges and it is consistent with the biggest tension that is facing the European Union in constructing its own policies, which is that the benefits provided by the Schengen system of internal mobility are increasingly coming under tension from the enduring dysfunction that occurs within asylum and immigration policies writ large and external border management. Until we resolve those things, we will not find that level of consistent co-operation across the European Union, even aside from geography and resources and the more pragmatic aspects.

Lord Jay of Ewelme: That could be quite a long “until”.

Elizabeth Collett: I have been in Brussels 10 years. I will let you know when it is finished.

Lord Cormack: To pick up your last point, one could really say that Schengen is being exploited by people externally, and the point I want to take up with you is one that came up in evidence last week, when the director of Europol said that smuggling is predominately carried out by organised crime syndicates. Does that accord with your understanding?

Franck Düvell: No. We have heard this narrative for many years from certain organisations, Europol and IOM in particular. What we find on the ground are loosely connected networks, loosely connected individuals, telephone numbers and email addresses circulating, websites with certain information, all of which rather point to loosely connected contact persons in the various countries.

Lord Cormack: They can be loosely connected and still be part of an organised crime network, surely?

Franck Düvell: Well, if we look at smuggling from, say, Somalia, there is a tribesman who knows someone who knows how to get someone out of the country into Cairo or Dubai. The traveller is provided with a telephone number to call someone. That could be the taxi driver waiting outside the airport, calling someone else, arranging local accommodation, waiting on migration—it could be Moscow. There is another telephone number, another taxi driver taking the person to a safe house. They wait there for some time. Someone else provides some food. At some point some other people turn up with a car, take them to the border and drop them in the middle of the night at a certain point. Someone else is waiting there to take them across the border, where someone else is waiting—it continues like that.

Lord Cormack: That sounds highly organised to me.

Franck Düvell: So the person in Somalia would not know what has been going on in Moscow or Ukraine. It is a step-by-step organisation where you have a loosely connected network of communication which is not a network where each point knows every other point. It only connects one point to the next to the next. More often than not there is no flow of money from point A to point Z but people pay along the road to the local individuals or networks.

Lord Cormack: Can I just ask one final question? The most arresting statistic I have heard today is when you said only 1% do not make it. How far do you think these organisations have as their sale pitch, “99% of you will win the lottery”?

Elizabeth Collett: It is important to recognise that the risks inherent in any particular journey vary considerably and will be taken into account when someone makes that decision. They are not thinking about the journey. They are thinking about the destination and what happens at the destination. This comes to your point on Schengen. People may be exploiting secondary movement within the European Union. The information is often incomplete about where to go within the European Union. Sometimes it is very complete. There is a lot of knowledge about what particular processes will allow. Some people know enough but are just told by the networks, “Don’t stay in Italy because conditions aren’t good in Italy. Move on. Where you go after that is your choice”. Some people pay for a package that takes them to specific countries, so the smuggling network goes on through the European Union. There is sometimes knowledge of the processing within asylum systems. We noted a few years ago, when visa facilitation was offered to the western Balkan countries, that there was a sudden rise in the numbers arriving and applying for asylum in certain EU member states. When those EU member states adjusted their asylum systems to be able to do very fast processing, particularly in Belgium, for example, the numbers then dropped as people recognised, “Okay, this is not a place where I can go and make my way through the asylum system. This won’t work for me, so I will try another country”. So there is that kind of knowledge throughout the European Union, but it is incomplete. Some people have good knowledge and some people do not. One of the things that we often forget is the credibility of the EU system. People are taking extraordinary risks to reach the European Union because they know that once they arrive in the EU, the chances of them ever being deported or returned home are very low. So smugglers can talk about the risks and dangers along the routes, but they know that the prize is extraordinarily attractive. There is a question about how we manage all of these aspects. How do we offer protection to people both in the region of origin and in countries? How do we deal with the demand side of this, but also how do we create a credible system that also reduces the certainty of the prize. Maybe that would make people reflect on the risks they were willing to take for what might be an uncertain prize at the end. The fact that the prize is certain right now is an incredibly attractive marketing tool.

Q39 Lord Soley: I think you partly answered this, but do you want to add anything? Clearly, some European Union member states will have more difficulties putting the action plan into effect than others. Do you want to say any more about what sort of difficulties they will have? You talked about Hungary, and clearly Hungary has a political policy at the moment, but I wondered if others would just not have the resources or ability to carry out the action plan. If so, which countries would struggle?

Franck Düvell: I think I would extend the question and ask not only about the resources but the national interests these countries may or may not have, and what policy priorities they have: what else is going on in the country? What comes to mind immediately is the economic crisis in Greece, for example, where the Government would most obviously focus on resolving that issue, looking after their own people, when they need to decide where to put resources. All these variables are also subject to change. We have the resources; we have the

priorities. We also have public opinion, which changes. We now have a much more sympathetic response to the migration crisis on the Greek islands, where whole communities—village populations—welcome and support the arrivals. We see similar responses in Italy. We see a media in Germany that are hugely critical towards a more repressive pushback approach and engaging the military in the Mediterranean. All that changes, influences policy and determines where the resources are put and how they are used.

Elizabeth Collett: I want to add just a short point, which is that some EU member states have a very strong, established foreign policy infrastructure and strong relationships with countries of transit and origin. They may be regional or historical but there are often those strong relationships that facilitate them in thinking about countersmuggling and maintaining a dialogue with different countries, to a greater or lesser degree. So those countries that do not have those strong networks will struggle because this is something that has to be thought of in a foreign policy context and not one of simply deploying resources to address a particular target.

Lord Ribeiro: My point is a very simple one. You talked about the prize. Do you think the prize is one of the reasons why the British Government have taken some of the positions they have on migration into the UK? It is quite clear that many of the people speak English and understand the English way of life, through colonisation and all those processes in the past, and therefore life would be a lot easier in England than in other European countries.

Elizabeth Collett: We do not have a very strong evidence base for motivations either but we commissioned some unpublished work earlier this year which started to look into that. Really, people choose particular countries based on existing family links they might have—diaspora groups—and this is where you see a reinforcement of particular asylum flows to particular countries because you have built up a diaspora. People talk about language: French and English are notable examples. Also, there are employment and education opportunities. What we misunderstand sometimes is that we assume that that decision-making process is the same for anyone regardless of where they come from. But if you are 18 years old, your goals and aspirations will be very different from if you are 54 years old. So it changes by gender, origin, age group—there are lots of different things that go into that, which is why so many different countries are involved. There is a strong impetus on behalf of the UK Government but also the European Union to try to communicate a very robust narrative that you should not be trying to come to the European Union irregularly, and I think that has a great deal to do with the pre-eminence of countersmuggling conversations. However, that has to be backed up with credible policies that follow that through. I think we have a strong narrative. I do not necessarily think we have the robust policies that break that link.

The Chairman: Thank you very much indeed. It has been very helpful to have your views. As I said at the outset, if there is anything you wish to add once you have seen the transcript, please feel free to do so. Thank you very much for your time.