

Rwanda Resettlement Scheme: Shifting the Burden

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines Africa's evolving role as a preferred destination for external migrants, specifically highlighting Rwanda's emergence as a hub for resettling illegal refugees and failed asylum seekers from select Western European countries. Despite Africa's atypical status as a migrant hotspot, there has been a rise in refugees and asylum seekers arriving on the continent. Notably, Rwanda, which traditionally has not hosted such migrants until 2016, has become an unexpected choice. This study analyzes why Rwanda, a country with limited economic power, has taken on the responsibility of processing and transferring asylum seekers as outlined in recent bilateral agreements with the UK and Denmark. The research examines alternative motivations to Rwanda's presumed altruistic or financial intentions, including political leverage and the acquisition of low-cost labor skills. By shedding light on Rwanda's motivations, this paper contributes to a deeper understanding of migration and resettlement dynamics in a changing global landscape.

KEYWORDS

Rwanda, externalization, resettlement hub, refugees, asylum seekers, political blackmail, political leverage

Introduction

Migration is expected to continue increasing in the coming years due to various factors, including population fluctuations, environmental pressures, and political instability. However, it is essential to recognize that Africa and the Global North hold distinct social and political views on migration. Notably, the majority of African migration takes place within the continent, rather than beyond its borders. Surprisingly, African leaders seem to promote, rather than restrict, this internal migration. For instance, one of the African Union's (AU) flagship projects under Agenda 2063 envisions a visa-free Africa, aiming to eliminate barriers to Africans' mobility for travel, work, and residence within the continent.¹

In contrast, scholars conducting a review of international migration theories found that most existing theories predominantly focus on migration from the Global South to the Global North. They concluded that, "In popular thinking, international migration remains entangled in outdated nineteenth-century concepts, models, and assumptions."² This discrepancy may explain why many Global North countries have adopted various externalization management strategies targeting migrants, including those from Africa, despite Africa contributing only 14% of the global migrant population, compared to Asia's 41% and Europe's 24%.³

Externalization, a migration management strategy primarily adopted by several Global North countries, aims to prevent migrants, particularly from Global South countries, from reaching their territories.⁴ This is achieved by enlisting the assistance of third countries or transit nations. Strategies employed include offshore interdiction or interception of asylum seekers, especially those en route to their territories, through various water vessels. Additional methods involve visa regulations, overseas immigration officers, border pre-clearance, offshore detention, and externalized asylum processing and readmission agreements.⁵

This concept is defined as external governance, representing "the deliberate export of common policies through bilateral and / or multilateral agreements, and the extension of European policies to third countries through institutionalized forms of cooperation."⁶ The theory of external governance, initially conceptualized by S. Lavenex⁷ and further explored by A. Yildiz,⁸ seeks to capture the exportation of European migration regulations beyond European borders.

The underlying rationale for external governance is that these policies are pursued with the expressed objective of aiding third countries in the control and management of migration.⁹ Consequently, numerous bilateral agreements have been established between various European countries and organizations in the Global South. For instance, Article 74 of the partnership agreement between the European Union

1 "Visa Free Africa," African Union, accessed September 8, 2023, <https://au.int/en/visa-free-africa>.

2 Massey et al. 1993, 432.

3 "African Migration Trends to Watch in 2023," Africa Center for Strategic Studies, January 9, 2023, accessed September 8, 2023, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/african-migration-trends-to-watch-in-2023/>.

4 Amuhaya 2022, 34.

5 Zaiotti 2016, 14–21.

6 Lavenex, UçArer 2004, 418.

7 See for example Lavenex 2004; 2006; 2007; 2011; 2015; Lavenex, UçArer 2004; Lavenex, Wichmann 2009; Lavenex, Schimelfennig 2009.

8 Yildiz 2016.

9 Frelick et al. 2016, 195.

and members of the Organization of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States (OACPS), initialed in 2021,¹ stipulates that “Each Member of the OACPS shall accept the return and readmission of its nationals who are illegally present in the territory of a Member State of the European Union, at the request of that Member State, without further formalities.”²

In contrast to externalized asylum processing and readmission agreements, where asylum seekers’ processing occurs in third or transit countries before potential admission to some Global North states, the emerging trend is to transfer asylum seekers from European countries to third countries – locations that are neither their country of origin nor birth, such as Rwanda. In these cases, their asylum claims are processed in the third country. If successful, they will be settled in that country; if their asylum claims are unsuccessful, the only option is to return to their birth country, with no possibility of returning to Global North countries.³ This approach is exemplified by bilateral agreements signed between Rwanda and the UK in April 2022⁴ and a subsequent agreement with Denmark signed in September 2022.⁵

However, it is worth noting that most migration analyses regarding why states admit refugees have primarily focused on Global North countries. For instance, an empirical analysis conducted between 1980 and 2019⁶ on why states admit refugees covered only 33 OECD states. Unfortunately, a similar analysis examining why African countries would accept refugees has not yet been conducted. This represents a notable gap in the existing research on migration policies and their implications, which warrants further investigation.

A new migration trend is on the rise in Africa, distinct from the internal interstate migration that predominantly occurs within the continent. Sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, has witnessed a growing interest from migrants originating outside the continent. For instance, in 2022, Sub-Saharan Africa welcomed 954 refugees and 269 asylum seekers, primarily from Turkey. This marked a significant increase compared to 2015⁷ when the region received only 43 refugees and 63 asylum seekers. Notably, the East and Horn of Africa (EHOA) region has become a preferred destination for some refugees and asylum seekers from beyond Africa’s borders.

However, a striking development is Rwanda’s emergence as an unexpected choice for resettling illegal refugees and failed asylum seekers, specifically from Western European countries like the UK and Denmark. Rwanda, traditionally not a preferred destination for asylum seekers or refugees from outside the continent, has surprisingly taken on this role.

The key question arises: Why would Rwanda willingly embrace such a responsibility, especially considering that it does not rank among the strongest economies in Africa?

1 “Partnership Agreement Between [The European Union/ The European Union And Its Member States], Of The One Part, And Members Of The Organisation Of African, Caribbean And Pacific States, Of The Other Part,” European Commission, April 15, 2021, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nemih>.

2 Ibid.

3 Melanie Gower, Patrick Butchard and C.J. McKinney, “UK-Rwanda Migration and Economic Development Partnership,” House of Commons Library, December 20, 2022, accessed September 8, 2023, <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9568/CBP-9568.pdf>.

4 Ibid.

5 “Joint Statement on Bilateral Cooperation,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, September 9, 2022, accessed September 8, 2023, <https://uim.dk/media/11242/faelles-erklaering.pdf>.

6 Lutz, Portman 2022.

7 “Refugee Statistics,” The UN Refugee Agency, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nempx>.

Furthermore, it has not been a historical destination for refugees or asylum seekers from beyond the continent. Only as recently as 2016 did Rwanda initiate the hosting of asylum seekers.

This article, following a comprehensive analysis of Rwanda's evolving migration patterns, aims to shed light on Rwanda's motives for shouldering this responsibility. It proposes three potential underlying reasons: Rwanda might be contending with political pressures or even blackmail; it could be strategically positioning itself to leverage migrants for political purposes in the future; or it may be strategically planning to tap into a source of inexpensive labor and skills. Understanding these motivations will provide critical insights into Rwanda's evolving role in the global migration landscape.

Theoretical Framework

Realism often presumes that states implement policies in pursuit of their national and geopolitical interests as rational actors. This might explain why Global North countries have implemented various externalization management policies to deter migrants. In the same vein, the realist theory and practice of blackmail, developed by D. Ellsberg, argues that states use coercion, defined as "the art of influencing the behaviors of others by threats."¹ Consequently, the authors argue that Rwanda's consent to host failed and / or illegal asylum seekers is not driven by altruism or financial considerations, as commonly speculated.² Instead, it may be due to a lack of data sovereignty. Rwanda might be facing political blackmail from the states that own the software it allegedly uses to monitor its politicians, human rights activists, and journalists.³

Expanding on the foundations of realism theory and the principle of coercion, our second argument posits that Rwanda may employ coercive tactics and leverage migrants for political purposes in the future, akin to instances seen in Turkey and Belarus. This is described as instrumentalized migration, characterized by three key elements: it entails the irregular movement of individuals into one state's territory, intentionally initiated or exploited by another state as a means to pressure the former to fulfill political, strategic, or other objectives.⁴ Both Turkey and Belarus have previously exploited migrants to advance their political and strategic agendas, emphasizing that their states are not the ultimate intended destinations for these migrants. Rwanda, situated adjacent to Tanzania, which hosts a significant number of migrants from Rwanda and serves as a major migration exit route for individuals from the East and Horn of Africa region to Europe. Our final argument suggests that Rwanda may be seeking to harness the labor skills of certain migrants who have been coerced into resettling in Rwanda.

1 Ellsberg 1975, 344.

2 Abdi Latif Dahir, "The West Doesn't Want More Migrants. But Rwanda Will Take Them," *The New York Times*, October 9, 2022, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nemql>.

3 "Hotel Rwanda' activist's daughter targeted by spyware: report," *France 24*, July 20, 2021, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nelzw>.

4 Aurel Sari, "Instrumentalized migration and the Belarus crisis: Strategies of legal coercion," *Hybrid CoE*, April 2023, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nepfo>.

Rwanda Migration Trends

The UK's deal to resettle asylum seekers in Rwanda faced significant criticism,¹ marking a recurring pattern in Rwanda's involvement in such arrangements. In 2015, Israel reportedly sent asylum seekers and migrants to undisclosed third countries, with Rwanda and Uganda suspected to be part of this arrangement, allegedly for a fee of \$5000 per migrant.² While both governments denied involvement, evidence from offshore detention centers suggests that Rwanda and Uganda had established such facilities by 2015 and 2016, respectively. Rwanda had an undocumented prison last recorded in use in 2015,³ and Uganda had the Entebbe Airport detention center (known as a detention suite)⁴ last in use in 2016, hinting at a possible deal with Israel.

The paradox lies in Rwanda's acceptance of the scheme with Israel in 2015 while its own citizens sought refuge and asylum globally. At that time, there were 268,357 Rwandese refugees and 15,842 Rwandese asylum seekers worldwide (see *Table 1*). However, the majority of those sent to Rwanda from Israel were primarily from the Horn of Africa, specifically Eritreans and Sudanese. In contrast, the East and Horn of Africa region received 10,489 Rwandese refugees and 3,817 Rwandese asylum seekers. Remarkably, according to the UNHCR, among all Rwandese refugees and asylum seekers globally, including those in the East and Horn of Africa region, none were reported in Eritrea or Sudan. Rwandese migrants in the region predominantly sought refuge in Burundi (304 refugees and 574 asylum seekers), Ethiopia (11 refugees and 6 asylum seekers), and Kenya (813 refugees and 796 asylum seekers), with Uganda hosting the largest number of Rwandese refugees (14,714) and asylum seekers (2,441)⁵ in the East and Horn of Africa.

Table 1.

TOTAL NUMBER OF RWANDESE ASYLUM SEEKERS GLOBALLY AND IN THE EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA REGION (EHOA), AS WELL AS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ERITREAN AND SUDANESE ASYLUM SEEKERS IN RWANDA IN 2015, 2019, AND 2021
ОБЩЕЕ ЧИСЛО ГРАЖДАН РУАНДЫ – ПРОСИТЕЛЕЙ УБЕЖИЩА В МИРЕ И В РЕГИОНЕ ВОСТОЧНОЙ АФРИКИ И АФРИКАНСКОГО РОГА, А ТАКЖЕ ОБЩЕЕ ЧИСЛО ПРОСИТЕЛЕЙ УБЕЖИЩА – ГРАЖДАН ЭРИТРЕИ И СУДАНА В РУАНДЕ В 2015, 2019 И 2021 ГГ.

Year	2015	2019	2021
Total number of Rwandese refugees globally	268,357	246,407	247,947
Total number of Rwandese refugees in EHOA	15,842	16,745	17,895
Total number of Rwandese asylum seekers globally	10,948	15,773	16,559
Total number of Rwandese asylum seekers in EHOA	3,817	3,635	2,784
Total number of Eritrean asylum seekers in Rwanda	0	143	108
Total number of Sudanese asylum seekers in Rwanda	0	5	54

Source: Compiled by the authors based on "Rwanda Refugee Statistics," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, accessed September 8, <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=3HMho5>.

- 1 Rachel Hall, "UK plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda sparks fierce criticism," *The Guardian*, April 14, 2022, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nemat>.
- 2 Peter Beaumont, "Rwanda's history of receiving deportees raises concerns for potential UK scheme," *The Guardian*, January 17, 2022, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nemaw>.
- 3 "Rwanda Immigration Detention Data Profile," Global Detention Project, 2020, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nemqx>.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 "Rwanda Refugee Statistics," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2015, accessed September 8, 2023, <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=Rr50oJ>.

By contrast, according to the UNHCR, no Eritrean or Sudanese individuals sought asylum in Rwanda until 2016 when 8 Eritreans sought asylum, and 5 Sudanese asylum seekers only arrived in Rwanda in 2019.¹ Therefore, we can argue that the Eritrean and Sudanese asylum seekers in Rwanda as of 2016 are likely those who arrived after the alleged Israel deal.

In 2019, Rwanda signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the African Union to establish a transit mechanism for evacuating refugees from Libya, primarily those originating from the Horn of Africa, as was the case in 2015, and resettling them in Rwanda.²

As observed in Table 1 above, Rwanda had a significant number of its citizens seeking asylum in other parts of the world, including the East and Horn of Africa region. However, these citizens were mainly located in East African countries rather than in Horn of Africa countries. Specifically, Burundi hosted 780 asylum seekers, Kenya hosted 1,069 asylum seekers, Tanzania hosted 30 asylum seekers, and Uganda hosted the highest number of Rwandese asylum seekers at 1,750. Ethiopia was the only Horn of Africa country with the lowest number of refugees and asylum seekers: 11 and 6, respectively.³

In contrast, only three Horn of Africa countries had asylum seekers in Rwanda – Eritrea had the most with 143 asylum seekers, followed by Ethiopia with 6 asylum seekers, and Sudan with 5 asylum seekers.⁴ It's also noteworthy that the majority of African migration occurs within the continent, and Africa is not the preferred destination for migrants from outside the continent, especially from Europe, the Americas, or Asia and the Pacific region. However, a new trend is emerging as the continent witnesses a growing number of refugees and asylum seekers from outside the continent, such as Turkey and Pakistan. For instance, in 2022, Sub-Saharan Africa welcomed 954 refugees, primarily from Turkey, compared to only 43 in 2015.⁵ The East and Horn of Africa (EHOA) region has also become a preferred destination for some refugees and asylum seekers from outside the continent. Refugees often use the region as a transit route, for example, traveling from Pakistan through Uganda and Kenya to Saudi Arabia.⁶ Besides serving as a transit route, some countries, excluding Rwanda, are also the final destination for certain refugees and asylum seekers (see *Table 2*). However, thus far, Rwanda appears to be the top choice for resettling illegal refugees and failed asylum seekers from Western European countries, specifically the UK and Denmark.

1 "Rwanda Refugee Statistics," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2019, accessed September 8, 2023, <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=27wnBO>.

2 Amuhaya, Degterev 2022, 214.

3 "Rwanda Refugee Statistics," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2019, accessed September 8, 2023, <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=27wnBO>.

4 Ibid.

5 "Refugee Statistics," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, accessed September 8, 2023, <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=AVklp0>.

6 Andrew Wasike, "Kenya launches crackdown on illegal Pakistanis," Anadolu Agency, September 30, 2021, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nemag>.

Table 2.

**MIGRATION TRENDS FROM MIGRANTS OUTSIDE THE CONTINENT
INTO THE EHOA REGION, 2017 TO 2022**

**ДИНАМИКА МИГРАЦИОННЫХ ПОТОКОВ С ДРУГИХ КОНТИНЕНТОВ
В РЕГИОН ВОСТОЧНОЙ АФРИКИ И АФРИКАНСКОГО РОГА, 2017-2022 ГГ.**

Country of Destination in EHOA region	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	Country of Origin Europe											
	Turkey		Turkey		Turkey		Turkey		Turkey		Turkey	
	Refugees	Asylum Seekers	Refugees	Asylum Seekers	Refugees	Asylum Seekers	Refugees	Asylum Seekers	Refugees	Asylum Seekers	Refugees	Asylum Seekers
Burundi	21	5	21	5	21	5	21	0	?		?	
Kenya	0	12	0	59	41	40	108	51	121	80	146	61
Rwanda	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sudan	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	5	0	5	0
Tanzania	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	10	0	19	0	10
Uganda	0	0	8	0	33	0	49	0	53	13	85	0
Total in EHOA Region	21	17	29	64	95	55	183	61	189	103	241	71

*5 Andorra refugees in Sudan in the year 2022, were excluded from the table

Source: "Refugee statistics," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, accessed September 8, <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=GCMm65>.

In 2022, among all the refugees and asylum seekers in the region originating from Europe (note that Turkey is classified as Europe according to IOM), all but 5 refugees were from Turkey, and none of them were seeking refuge or asylum in Rwanda. This raises the question: why would Rwanda choose to be a resettlement hub when it is not the preferred destination for any refugees or asylum seekers from outside the continent so far?

Some scholars have argued that Rwanda's and Uganda's acceptance of hosting refugees is aimed at improving their international images and deterring foreign partners from imposing sanctions or other punitive measures.¹ However, this explanation does not adequately justify why a least-developed state like Rwanda, with a GDP of \$12.060 billion in 2021,² would willingly shoulder such an economic burden, especially when even top global economies like the UK are reluctant to take on similar responsibilities. This is why we propose that there may be other underlying reasons, particularly for Rwanda.

Rwanda's Rationale

Similarly to Uganda, Rwanda has faced recent internal political tensions, speculated to have led to state-sponsored surveillance of Ugandan and Rwandese politicians,

1 Erol Yayboke and Judd Devermont, "Why African Governments Are Accepting Afghan Refugees," Center for Strategic and International Studies, September 23, 2021, accessed September 8, 2023, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/why-african-governments-are-accepting-afghan-refugees>.

2 "World Economic Outlook Database," International Monetary Fund, April 2022, accessed September 8, 2023, <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2022/April>.

human rights activists, and journalists,¹ even those residing outside the country.² This surveillance is conducted through the use of Pegasus, a spyware developed and marketed by the Israeli technology firm NSO Group, which is partially owned by a UK-based private equity group. This spyware has reportedly been employed by at least six African governments, including Rwanda, Uganda, DRC, Egypt, Morocco, and Togo.

The cost of utilizing this software is substantial, especially for a country with a modest annual national budget of \$4 billion.³ Estimates indicate that it costs \$500,000 per installation and \$650,000 to infiltrate 10 devices, with an additional annual maintenance fee amounting to 17 percent of the total price.⁴ Furthermore, relying on software produced in another country poses a severe threat to the cyber sovereignty of the user country. This leads us to posit that Rwanda may be vulnerable to political blackmail from the UK company that holds partial ownership of the spyware manufacturer.

Another possible explanation could be that Rwanda plans to use asylum seekers and refugees for political leverage in the future. According to the deal, Rwanda will consider them for permission to stay or return to their country of origin, but they will not be eligible to return to the UK. Based on the history of several states that have entered into such agreements with some Global North countries, we know that the former have backpedaled on such agreements. For example, in 2016, the EU and Turkey signed an agreement that saw Turkey receive €6 billion in installments in exchange for preventing a wave of refugees and asylum seekers from entering Europe. To pressure Europe to become involved in the Syrian conflict in 2020, Turkey decided to open its border, resulting in 900,000 refugees crossing into Europe in just two months.

A similar strategy could potentially be implemented by Rwanda for political leverage in the future. This is because migrants from the Horn of Africa primarily use four routes in the region: the Horn of Africa route, the Eastern route, the Northern route, and the Southern route.⁵ Tanzania serves as the exit point in the Southern route, accounting for 5.70 percent of the total movements in the Horn of Africa. Additionally, it serves as the exit route for migrants from the Great Lakes region, primarily including migrants from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Rwanda.⁶

Tanzania, functioning as the exit route, has been implementing stricter migration policies. For instance, in 2018, it withdrew its status as a signatory to the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, which is a precursor to the Global Compact on Refugees. This move was aimed at discouraging the arrival of new asylum seekers.⁷

However, since Rwanda is one of the countries of origin for refugees and asylum seekers who, among many other migrants from the region, use it as an exit route to Europe, we posit that Rwanda might employ a similar argument in the future as

1 "Hotel Rwanda' Activist's Daughter Targeted by Spyware: Report."

2 Amy Greenbank, "Spies in our Suburbs Unearthing an Alleged Shadowy Network of Spies and Their Efforts to Silence Dissent," ABC News, August 24, 2019, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nelzq>.

3 "Rwanda Presents the National Budget for Financial year 2023/24," Ernst & Young, June 30, 2023, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nelzh>.

4 DH Web Desk, "How Much does Pegasus Spyware Cost to Operate?," Deccan Herald, July 21, 2021, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nelzc>.

5 Amuhaya 2022, 35.

6 Ibid.

7 Fellessen 2019.

Belarusian President A. Lukashenko has done. He has been quoted several times stating that Belarus will not hold back any migrants because, "We are not their final destination after all. They are headed to enlightened, warm, cozy Europe."¹ In fact, Rwanda wasn't even the first choice for refugees or asylum seekers.

Some scholars have argued that Rwanda's acceptance to resettle migrants might be influenced by the fact that the UK government will provide up to £120 million to support asylum operations, including accommodation and integration. This mirrors a common strategy among small economies in Africa; for instance, Djibouti is frequently criticized for hosting the highest number of foreign military bases, but in reality, it has become one of its main sources of revenue, reportedly generating over \$125 million annually.²

According to the IMF, Rwanda's GDP in 2021 was estimated to be \$12.06 billion, ranking it 34th out of 54 African countries.³ Therefore, this could be one of the strategies for the Rwandan government to diversify its sources of revenue. However, when considering the one-time payment of £120 million or the speculated \$5,000 per migrant, in comparison to Djibouti's annual revenue of over \$125 million from hosting foreign military bases, it might not be a convincing enough incentive for the government to accept such a burden, especially given the long-term need to integrate asylum seekers into its economy.

This is why we argue that Rwanda's acceptance to resettle migrants might not be purely altruistic, but rather driven by pecuniary interests. Rwanda may be aiming to acquire labor skills and eventual economic benefits from some of the migrants, as indicated by the title of the agreement,⁴ "UK – Rwanda Migration and Economic Development Partnership Agreement." It's crucial to note, however, that this agreement is part of a broader restructuring of British refugee and asylum laws, which became possible after the UK's exit from the European Union.

In 2003, the UK proposed a "New Vision for Refugees" policy paper, which faced criticism from the EU, the UNHCR, and Amnesty International.⁵ Consequently, the EU approved the establishment of Regional Protection Areas (RPAs) to house refugees in countries of first arrival and disregarded the UK's proposal of processing asylum seekers in transit states after their arrival in the EU.⁶

In the agreement signed between Rwanda and the UK, Rwanda explicitly labels it as a "migration and economic development partnership."⁷ According to the World Bank, Rwanda aims to attain middle-income country status by 2035 and high-income country status by 2050.⁸ However, President of Rwanda has frequently emphasized

1 Sergei Kuznetsov, "Lukashenko Warns EU that Belarus Won't Stop Migrant Border Surge," Politico, July 6, 2021, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nelys>.

2 Lauren Ploch Blanchard and Sarah R. Collins, "Djibouti," Congressional Research Service, June 3, 2021, accessed September 8, 2023, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11303/4>.

3 "World Economic Outlook Database."

4 Melanie Gower, Patrick Butchard and C.J. McKinney, "UK-Rwanda Migration and Economic Development Partnership."

5 "UK/EU/UNHCR: Unlawful and Unworkable – Extra-territorial Processing of Asylum Claims," Amnesty International, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nelyj>.

6 Nikolas Feith Tan, "Externalisation of asylum in Europe: Unpacking the UK-Rwanda Asylum Partnership Agreement," EU Immigration and Asylum Law and Policy Blog, May 17, 2022, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nelyc>.

7 "Remarks by Hon. Min Dr. Vincent Biruta at The UK & Rwanda Migration and Economic Development Partnership Press Conference," Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, April 14, 2022, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nelix>.

8 "Rwanda Overview," The World Bank, 2022, accessed September 8, 2023, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/rwanda/overview>.

that the citizens lack the skills and talent needed to achieve these goals. That's why in the new development strategy, one of the primary objectives is to focus on developing and transforming Rwanda into a competitive global environment through the training and employment of capable and skilled human resources. The central strategy to achieve this goal is the development and implementation of a thriving skills ecosystem designed to attract and nurture both local and international talent, positioning Rwanda to compete effectively in the global arena.¹

At the signing of the agreement, Rwanda's foreign minister made it clear, stating, "By relocating migrants to Rwanda, investing in their personal development, and providing education, employment, and other opportunities, we are giving them the chance to build new lives in our country as full members of our communities. This will not only benefit them but also bring advantages to Rwanda and its citizens, helping to advance our own development."² This assertion is supported by the OECD / ILO 2018 analysis, which concludes that immigration's contribution to Rwanda's economy is relatively small but steadily growing. Moreover, the analysis highlights that immigration has a positive impact on labor markets, economic growth, and makes a positive contribution to public finances in Rwanda.³

It can, therefore, be argued that Rwanda's strategy is to obtain an inexpensive workforce from around the world because it's not the suggestion of asylum seekers to be relocated to Rwanda but rather a form of coercion. Following the UK – Rwanda migration agreement, other countries also followed suit, such as Denmark, which signed a similar deal with Rwanda in September 2022;⁴ however, its implementation is still pending. Nevertheless, the UK was unable to send asylum seekers to Rwanda due to facing several legal challenges. In June 2023, the UK's Court of Appeal ruled Britain's plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda as unlawful.⁵

However, these legal challenges have not deterred UK lawmakers from implementing further migration laws. On July 20, 2023, the Illegal Migration Act 2023 became law, banning those who enter the UK via unofficial means from applying for asylum in the UK. Officials can legally detain and deport people back to their country of birth or to a "safe third country," including Rwanda, where their asylum claims can be processed.⁶ This demonstrates the determination of both states to implement the agreement.

Conclusion

Migration has been a recurring phenomenon throughout human history, and it will continue to be so. As our paper has demonstrated, new trends are constantly emerging in migration, and scholars in this field must adapt to these changes. Traditionally,

1 "7 Years Government Programme: National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) 2017–2024," Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nemdl>.

2 "Remarks by Hon. Min Dr. Vincent Biruta at The Uk & Rwanda Migration and Economic Development Partnership Press Conference."

3 "How Immigrants Contribute to Rwanda's Economy," OECD/ILO, 2018, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264291829-en>.

4 "Joint Statement on Bilateral Cooperation," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, September 9, 2022, accessed September 8, 2023, <https://uim.dk/media/11242/faelles-erklaering.pdf>.

5 Stephen Castle, "Court Rejects U.K. Plan to Fly Asylum Seekers to Rwanda as Unlawful," *The New York Times*, June 29, 2023, accessed September 8, 2023, <http://surl.li/nemfs..>

6 "Illegal Migration Act 2023," July 20, 2023, accessed September 8, 2023, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/37/enacted>.

migration studies, theories, and policies have tended to focus on movement from the Global South to the Global North. However, as our paper has illustrated, a new trend is emerging – the movement of migrants from outside the African continent into the continent. Current migration studies and theories developed so far are not fully equipped to explain this new trend. Therefore, it is imperative to conduct migration studies that specifically focus on movement into certain African countries from outside the continent. Additionally, we conclude that regardless of the criticisms states may face or the legal hurdles involved, states will always pursue and implement policies that align with their national and geopolitical interests. As our paper has demonstrated, both the UK and Rwanda have different reasons for signing bilateral agreements, but they both appear committed to their implementation.

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Модель переселения мигрантов в Руанду

АННОТАЦИЯ

В статье рассматривается изменение роли Африки как пункта назначения для иностранных мигрантов. Особое внимание уделяется становлению Руанды в качестве центра переселения нелегальных беженцев и несостоявшихся просителей убежища из некоторых стран Западной Европы. Несмотря на то, что Африка не является традиционным миграционным направлением, в последнее время число беженцев и просителей убежища на континенте возрастает. Руанда, исторически не принимавшая таких мигрантов до 2016 г., стала в этом отношении необычным пунктом назначения. В настоящем исследовании анализируются причины, по которым руководство Руанды, не обладающей сильной экономикой, с готовностью взяло на себя такую ответственность. Авторами рассматриваются недавние двусторонние соглашения, в том числе с Великобританией и Данией, которые определяют порядок переселения просителей убежища в Руанду. В работе подвергается сомнению предположение о том, что правящие круги Руанды руководствуются исключительно альтруистическими или финансовыми соображениями; вместо этого на первый план выходят иные мотивы, такие как стремление приобрести политические рычаги или дешевую рабочую силу. Проливая свет на мотивацию правительства Руанды, данное исследование вносит вклад в более глубокое понимание динамики миграции и переселения в условиях меняющегося глобального ландшафта.

КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА

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