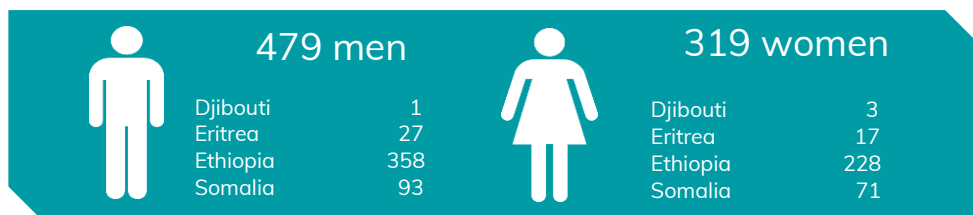


# Young people on the move from East Africa

Young people (in this snapshot, women and men aged 18-24) make up a large portion of those traveling along mixed migration routes out of the East Africa region. This snapshot explores 798 interviews conducted with refugees and migrants aged between 18 and 24 from Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia to understand more about the routes they take, their reasons for migration, access to information and intentions at destination. The data was collected between June 2017 and May 2019 with the average age of the respondents being 22 years (for both male and female respondents).

413 interviews were conducted within East Africa: Djibouti (219), Kenya (135), Somalia/Somaliland (59). 385 interviews were conducted outside of the region: Denmark (6), Germany (87), Norway (3), Egypt (154), South Africa (119) and Yemen (16).

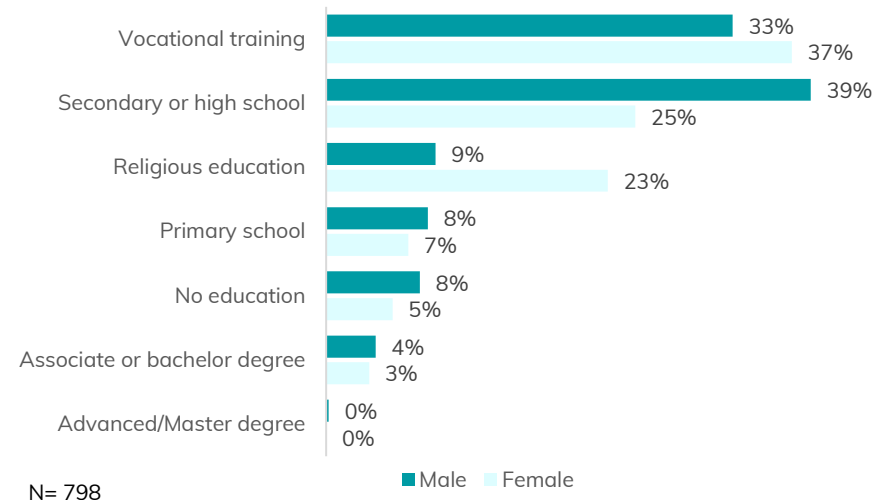
## Profiles



The majority of young people interviewed (76%) were single at the time of interview; 15% reported that they were married, and the remainder were separated/divorced (7%) or widowed (2%). Of all the youth interviewed, 14% reported that they have at least one child.

## Female migrants and refugees had lower access to education

Figure 1: Highest level of education attained



The majority of refugee and migrant youth (86%) had received some form of education before embarking on their journeys, ranging from primary school or religious education to university. However, women had lower access to education: 91% of male youth had accessed some form of education compared to 77% of female youth..

## Violence, lack of rights, and economic reasons driving migration journeys

The main driver for migration among young people interviewed was economic reasons, which was highlighted by 461 respondents. However, lack of rights, and violence and general insecurity were also key issues driving young people to migrate. 67% of the respondents gave more than one reason for leaving.

Figure 2. Reasons for leaving



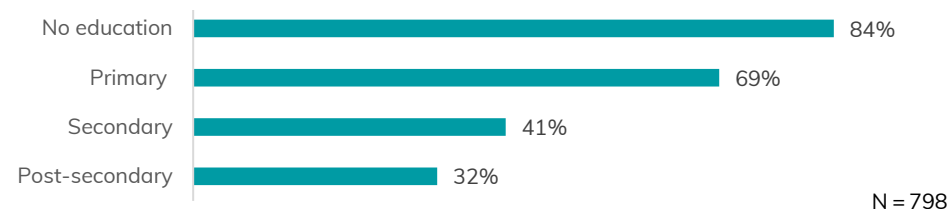
N = 788. This was a multi-select question; respondents were able to select more than one answer

A breakdown of drivers by nationality reveals more nuance in reasons for leaving. Out of the four nationalities interviewed, Eritreans had the highest proportion reporting 'a lack of rights in country of origin' as a reason for leaving, at 91% compared to 44% of Ethiopian (N = 546) and 11% of Somali respondents (N = 164). Among Somalis, economic reasons and general insecurity and violence were evenly split at 30% of respondents, while among Ethiopians economic reasons and a lack of rights were the most cited reasons.

## Young people with less education more often cited economic drivers

The data also reveals a relationship between migrants' level of education and reporting economic reasons for leaving their country of origin. The lower the level of education, the more likely that economic reasons were the major reason for leaving. Figure 3 shows that 84% of respondents with no education cited that they were leaving because of economic reasons, compared with 69% of those with primary education, 41% with secondary education and 32% with post-secondary education.

Figure 3. Level of education against economic reasons as a reason for leaving.



## Fewer than half intended to migrate permanently

228 youth reported that they had reached their final destination by the time of the interview. However, under half of young people planned to stay permanently in their destinations. This was highest among Eritreans (48%), whose biggest driver lack of rights is closely linked with the indefinite military conscription in the country. However, Ethiopian youth, whose most frequently reported reason for leaving was economic, were most likely to stay temporarily (37%), closely followed by intentions to remain permanently (36%). Around 30% of youth were undecided about how long they would stay in their destination country, with Eritreans and Somalis being the most unsure.

**Table 1. Do you intend to stay permanently or temporarily? By country of origin**

	Permanently	Temporarily	Don't know
Eritrea	48%	16%	36%
Ethiopia	36%	37%	26%
Somalia	45%	20%	35%

Of the 386 respondents who had not yet reached their destination country, the following top 5 countries were mentioned as preferred destinations; Saudi Arabia (129 respondents), following far behind were Australia (32 respondents), Canada (28 respondents), South Africa (26 respondents) and Germany (25 respondents).

**Table 2. Do you intend to stay permanently or temporarily? By intended destination**

	Permanently	Temporarily	Don't know
Saudi Arabia	24%	55%	20%
Australia	72%	0%	28%
Canada	71%	4%	25%
South Africa	65%	4%	31%
Germany	76%	4%	20%

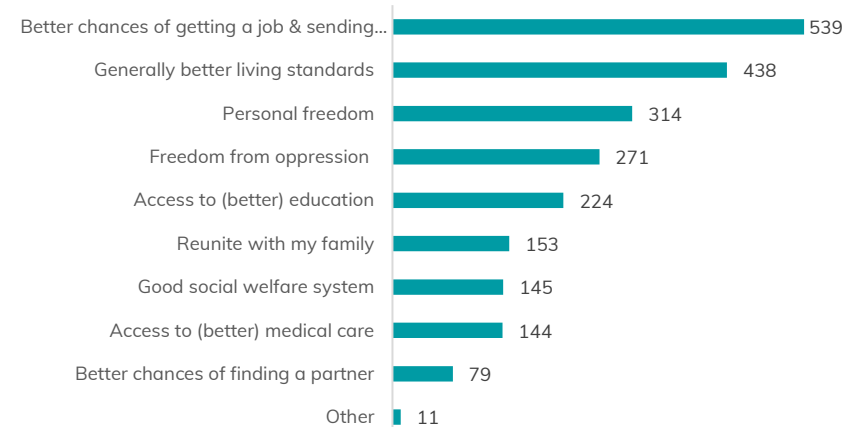
For the most popular destination Saudi Arabia, only 24% had plans for permanent migration, with a much higher 55% indicating that they would remain temporarily. This is most likely informed by economic factors, with the data showing that 94% of respondents travelling to Saudi Arabia reported economic reasons as a reason leaving their country of departure. In contrast, majority of the respondents who intended to go to the other countries wanted to stay there permanently with very few wanting to stay temporarily.

A further 181 respondents had not settled on their final destination at the time of interview.

Interviews show that respondents are largely driven to choose their destination country based on 'better chances of getting a job and sending remittances home'. This was particularly true among Ethiopian and Somali respondents, who gave this as their top reason at 25% and 24%,

respectively. This corresponds with the most cited reason for leaving - economic reasons. Eritreans, however, were most likely to consider personal freedoms (23%) as their top reason for choosing a destination country, followed by freedom from oppression at 21%.

**Figure 4. Reasons for choosing destination country**



N = 794. This was a multi-select question; respondents were able to select more than one answer

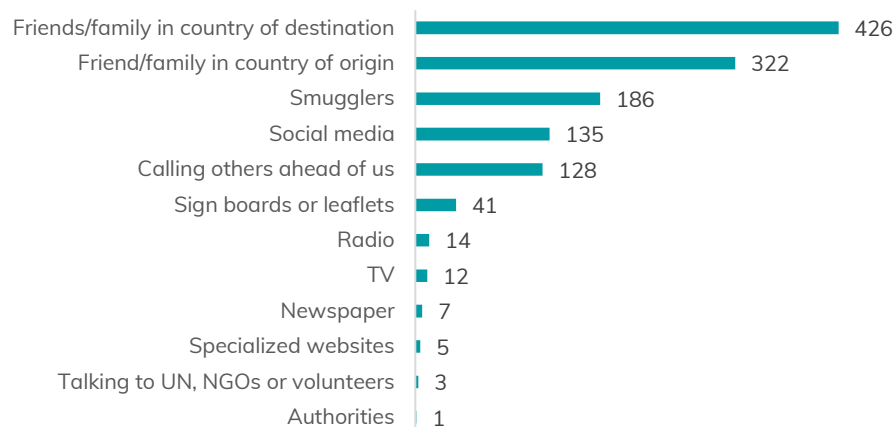
73% of respondents gave more than one reason for choosing their destination country.

## More educated young people more interested in access to better education

The chance for a better education... was selected by 52% of those with post-secondary education; this fell with lower levels of education. Only 37% with secondary education reported 'access to better education' as a pull factor, 30% with primary education and 8% with no education.

## Friends and family are the main source of information

**Figure 5. Sources of information prior to departure**



N = 774. This was a multi-select question; respondents were able to select more than one answer

It is clear that the young people on the move relied more on social connections to inform their choices on migration before departure. This is in comparison to authorities and NGOs, which were ranked as the least-used source of info. The most important source of information for young people on the move was 'friends and family in country of destination'. The second most important source for young people was 'friends and family in country of origin'.

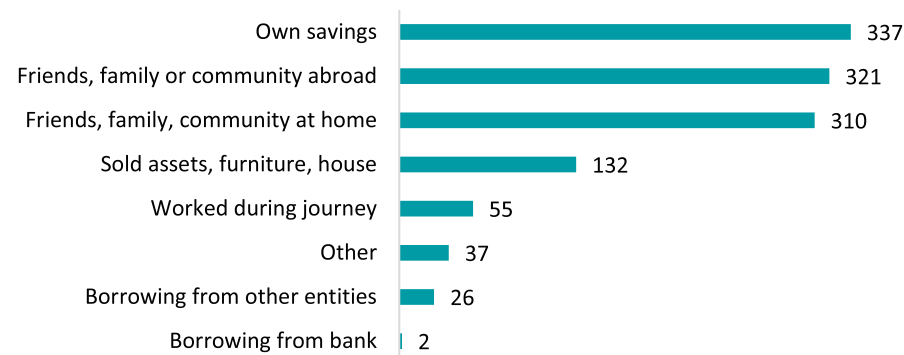
Youth were less reliant on smugglers, with only 23% citing smugglers as their first source of information as opposed to 44% for the respondents over 25 years.<sup>1</sup>

46% of youth reported to have used the following social media platforms during their journey (presented in order of popularity): Facebook, Whatsapp, imo, viber, YouTube, email, telegram, Twitter and Snapchat.

## Most youth relied on their own savings

Young people on the move finance their journeys through a mix of sources. The top three sources reported were: 1) their own savings; 2) friends, family or community abroad; and 3) friends, family or community in their countries of origin.

**Figure 6. How migrants financed their journeys**



N = 790. This was a multi-select question; respondents were able to select more than one answer

The Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative (4Mi) is the Mixed Migration Centre's flagship primary data collection system, an innovative approach that helps fill knowledge gaps, and inform policy and response regarding the nature of mixed migratory movements and the protection risks for refugees and migrants on the move. 4Mi field monitors are currently collecting data through direct interviews with refugees and migrants in West Africa, East Africa and Yemen, North Africa, Asia, and Europe.

Sample sizes are clearly indicated and represent a limited section of those on the move. The findings derived from the surveyed sample should not be used to make any inferences about the total population. See more 4Mi analysis and details on methodology at [www.mixedmigration.org/4mi](http://www.mixedmigration.org/4mi)

<sup>1</sup> Unpublished 4Mi data, based on interviews with 1,898 adults aged 25 years and above, in the same time period July 2017 – May 2019.