



Experiences and conditions of Irregular migrants in the Netherlands: Case Study of Rejected Afghan Asylum Seekers

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Rejected Asylum Seekers

- Comparatively lack social networks and ties
- Less likely to be working irregularly
- More vulnerable and reliant on NGOs, charities, etc

The Netherlands: Rejected Asylum Seekers

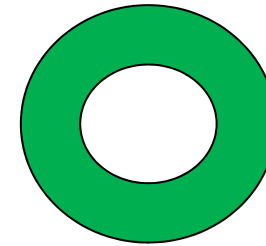
- Given a 28 day deportation order
- Options are:
 - 1) Assisted Voluntary Return
 - 2) Return on their own- voluntary departure
 - 3) Live Irregularly

Bed, Bath and Bread Debate

**National
Government**



**Local
Municipalities**



Migrants

Study Objectives

- 1) Experiences and modes of survival** of Rejected Afghan Asylum Seekers in the Netherlands
- 2) Future Aspirations** of Rejected Afghan Asylum Seekers in the Netherlands

Methodology and Participant Overview

- 47 interviews with Rejected Afghan Asylum Seekers
- 11 Key Stakeholder interviews
- Young and Male (average age 26)
- 55% arrived as Unaccompanied Minors
- 1/3 had come from living in Iran

Migration Journeys

- Ranged from 6-24 months in duration
- Transit: Turkey (71%), Greece (65%) and Italy (33%)
- Only 1/5 chose the Netherlands as their intended destination:
 - 40% The Netherlands was intended as a transit country
 - 30% had no intended destination

Modes of Survival:

1) Accommodation

- 19% living in reception centers
- 55% NGO assisted
- 15% church assisted

Modes of Survival: 2) Social Networks

- No relationship with regularized Afghan organizations
- Former UAMs were more likely to receive support from social networks

Modes of Survival:

3) Employment

- 1/5 had ever worked
- 2 participants had continuous employment
- Lack of employment key reason for high dependence on NGOs

Aspirations = Legalization

- Submit another asylum claim
- Go to another country
- Stay in the Netherlands
- Return was not viewed as an option

Discussion: Modes of Survival

- High level of vulnerability for this group = High reliance on NGOs
- Less than 10% were surviving without support from NGOs, churches or COA
- Limited access to cultural, economic or social capital
- Removal of supports would place this group on the street

Discussion: Aspirations

- Unrealistic aspiration of legalization
- Reluctance to Return must be placed within the context of the return journey- despair of rejection

Impending question: What to do?

1. Deportation

- Cost?
- Unreturnable migrants
- Re-migration

2. Remove Support

- No indication that this encourages return
- Issues of public order, safety, and human rights

3. Amnesty

- Public and political support?

4. Maintain quiet tolerance

- Cost?
- Extending limbo?

Conclusion

1. Categorizing Irregular Migrants- differences between rejected asylum seekers and other groups of irregular migrants
2. Bed, Bath and Bread debate- No evidence that removing supports increases voluntary return. There is a continued need for 'quiet tolerance'

Thank you