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A transnational social contract: Social protection policies toward Non-Resident Keralites

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Abstract

The migration process raises a set of migration-related risks and vulnerabilities, yet recognizing these as collective problems is paramount to formulating public policy responses. As one of the first subnational states globally, the South Indian state Kerala has institutionalized various social protection policies toward emigrants and returned migrants under the department of Non-Resident Keralites' Affairs (NORKA) and its implementation agency NORKA ROOTS. Taking the case of Kerala, this article investigates why subnational states recognize their international emigrants and return migrants as deserving of social protection provisions. Subnational states matter as they are sites of diaspora identification, and it is where migration's consequences, such as emigrants' philanthropic development projects and the reintegration of returned migrants, unfold. At the same time, they have less legislative and infrastructural power than federal states in engaging with emigrants and destination countries. By drawing on original data, the article argues that (returned) emigrants' access to social protection schemes is built on understandings of deservingness based on a combination of protection rationales and economic rationales, rooted in Kerala's specific developmental and identity discourse. The study demonstrates that despite subnational states having limited institutional capabilities compared with federal states, they are essential stakeholders in articulating transnational social protection policies.

Keywords: emigration, India, Kerala, migration policy, social protection, welfare state expansion

1. Introduction

Because in Kerala, the government is giving high importance to these expatriates, they now have become a privileged class. (...) They are a relatively privileged group and class in Kerala. (Recruitment Manager, NORKA ROOTS, Government of Kerala).¹

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A significant body of literature has demonstrated that the subnational level is crucial in migration governance, at least from the perspective of the immigration state. Subnational authorities are vital in policy formation and practice, and their policy outputs often complement, substitute, or diverge from national outputs (e.g., [Dobbs et al. 2019](#); [Gravelle, Ellermann and Dauvergne 2012](#); [Landau and Amit 2014](#)). This article expands these perspectives by exploring the subnational levels of migrant-origin states and their role in providing social protection policies for their international emigrants. Specifically, it investigates the South Indian state of Kerala, which has been providing an extensive set of transnational social protection schemes.

As a subnational state known for its high emigration rates, the Keralan government is a pioneer in institutionalizing emigrant-directed social protection schemes at the subnational level ([Kumar and Rajan 2014](#)). In 1996, it created the department of Non-Resident Keralites' Affairs (NORKA) and in 2002 the related agency NORKA ROOTS—eight years before the Indian federal government established the Ministry for Overseas Indian Affairs,² which provides schemes similar to NORKA. Kerala's forerunner position is surprising: subnational entities, such as Kerala, differ in their legislative and infrastructural power ([Arrighi and Lafleur 2019](#)) from nation-states. They cannot operate independently from the federal state through embassies or consulates, sign agreements with destination countries, or enfranchise emigrants. Kerala does not hold a unique position, however: other Indian subnational states, such as Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, have followed its example.³ As a NORKA officer states, 'Many of the provinces [states] in India are carefully watching what we are doing. They would like to copy some of the things we have successfully implemented in addressing the grievances of the migrant population.'⁴ Beyond India, scholarship has described how subnational stakeholders in Mexico, a major origin country, have been at the forefront of establishing emigrant-directed development programs; the Mexican federal state later followed suit ([Délano 2011](#)). The Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCCs), Kerala's main destination region, generally do not offer pathways to citizenship acquisition and restrict political organizing, thereby creating very different conditions from the Mexico–US migration corridor; the study of Kerala thus adds to what is already known about subnational emigrant states.

Given Kerala's social protection schemes for its emigrants, detailed in a later section,⁵ this article asks why subnational states recognize their international emigrants and return migrants as deserving of social welfare provisions. To understand subnational states' emigrant social protection policies, this study draws on multi-level perspectives that have moved away from regarding the emigration state as a single homogenous entity, and instead differentiate between multiple institutional levels and their actors that shape emigrant policies ([Délano Alonso and Mylonas 2019](#)). The regional level matters, as it is where the consequences of migration, such as remittances and philanthropic development projects, and the economic reintegration of migrants take place; at the same time, due to their limited institutional capabilities, subnational authorities resort to different emigrant policies from those of national states. Keralan state officials acknowledge this tension: 'The provincial government has limitations. It cannot negotiate or get into a contract with foreign governments. So you will have to work through the union government. But at the same time, we have many other mechanisms, too.'⁶

Subnational states play a critical role as sites of diaspora identification (Arrighi and Lafleur 2019) and, in the Indian case, also for states' welfare expansion, in terms of both social policy implementation and invention (Deshpande, Kailash and Tillin 2017; Singh 2011, 2015; Tillin, Deshpande and Kailash 2015). Research has shed light on factors specific to the Indian subnational level—such as a subnational identity (Singh 2011, 2015), political coalitions, and policy legacies (Deshpande, Kailash and Tillin 2017)—that influence social policy development. In this regard, Kerala is an interesting case to study, as it has a strong regional sense of belonging centered on a linguistic and cultural Malayali identity and a history of redistributive social policies (Singh 2011).

Building on these insights, the present analysis seeks to contribute to the growing literature on the transnationalization of welfare (Lafleur and Yener-Roderburg 2022) by investigating how subnational states form social protection policies. It underlines the importance of looking at subnational governments to understand how transnational labor migration and social policy are governed and how emigrants' access to social protection is shaped. Including subnational levels in the analysis of transnational social welfare helps to draw a more comprehensive picture of drivers of policy developments and emphasizes the role of origin states, not only migrants themselves, as active providers of transnational social protection (see Lafleur 2020).

This article uses Schneider and Ingram's (1993, 1997, 2005) conceptualization of group deservingness in public policy to analyze why the Keralan state has defined Non-Resident Keralites (NRKs) as a target group for social protection schemes. It focuses on how the selection of welfare recipients and policies is legitimized through policy rationales. An analysis of policy rationales reveals the 'naming and claiming of needs' (Dean 2013: 37) which underpins the construction of social rights (ibid.) and thereby helps to illuminate how migration affects the way migration-origin states make social policy. The NORKA ROOTS social protection schemes demonstrate that the government defines deservingness of welfare benefits by combining instrumentalist economic-developmental rationales and ideational rationales, associated with protection and care; the combination of rationales differs depending on the social protection scheme. I argue that both rationales are rooted in a wider ideational project of the Keralan state, involving visions of society and statehood which the Keralan state contrasts with those of other Indian states and implicitly of the Indian federal state.

This article looks at how the Keralan state explains the use of social protection policies in reducing migration-related risks, and scrutinizes how government officials, in official documents covering the period 1996–2019 and interviews from early 2020, justify the state's recognition of NRKs as deserving of social protection, resulting in the creation of transnational policies. In doing so, it focuses on policy construction and does not discuss the dynamics of policy implementation. NORKA ROOTS provides social protection to NRKs migrating internationally and within India; the analysis of policy rationales is limited to international Keralan migrants because the political and legal context differs between this group of migrants moving to an international destination and Keralans migrating within India, and NORKA ROOTS applies different social protection policies to them.

The first part of this article sketches out the relationship between the (subnational) state, migration, and social protection. Next, it discusses policy rationales as a theoretical

framework, incorporating scholarship on public policy analysis, social policies, and diaspora policies. Third, it then gives a short overview of the methodological approach. The following section begins with contextual details on Kerala migration and remittance patterns, and then maps out the multi-level, transnational policy field developed within the Kerala and the federal Indian social protection schemes; it then describes the overall structure of Kerala's government bodies and provides an overview of the schemes. The final section examines the policy rationales behind the policy design of NORKA's schemes and how these rationales justify social protection provisions for NRKs.

2. Locating the (subnational) state in a transnational social protection framework for migrants

This article considers Kerala's NORKA ROOTS schemes as a case of social welfare state expansion and formal, state-led transnational social protection. It defines social protection as a policy framework in the form of public and private actions that aim to decrease vulnerabilities to some type of risk and deprivation deemed socially unacceptable within a given polity or society (Conway, de Haan and Norton 2000; Kapur and Nangia 2015). States provide social protection through social insurance, social assistance, employment protection, and promotion (Barrientos and Hulme 2009; Kapur and Nangia 2015). Social protection is a specific set of social policies. Social policies derive from social citizenship rights, a form of social contract based on solidarity among members of a community. Their objective is to guarantee a minimum income in life contingencies such as unemployment or illness (van Hooren 2017) and provide public services, such as education, sanitation, and health care (Conway, de Haan and Norton 2000).

Compared with a non-migrant, migrants can face a set of migration-related risks (Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman 2011). These vulnerabilities include disproportionately higher numbers of migrants working in unsafe sectors, and limited access to welfare provisions in the destination country, depending on the migrant's legal status. Migrant-specific vulnerabilities can affect migrants and their families along the different phases of the migration circle (pre-departure, transit, destination, and post-migration) (Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman 2011). In response, origin countries may provide emigrant-specific social protection, including access to transnational social insurance and social assistance, creating suitable labor market conditions in destination countries and employment recruitment processes in the origin country, as well as the portability of social security rights between destination and origin countries (Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman 2011).

Levitt et al. (2017) define transnational social protection as 'the policies, programmes, people, organizations, and institutions which provide for and protect individuals in a transnational manner' (p. 6). Migrants as social protection providers have taken centre stage with the transnational turn in migration studies (see Schiller, Basch and Blanc 1995). Initially, scholars coined the concept of transnational social protection to describe how migration reduces the vulnerability and risk of individual (low-income) households through emigrants' remittances (for Kerala, see Kannan and Hari 2020; Sunny, Parida and Azurudeen 2020) and informal care practices (Lafleur 2020). The focus on migrants

as social protection providers, rather than recipients of social protection, can perhaps explain why scholars have done relatively little work linking migration to social protection frameworks or policies (Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman 2011; Lafleur 2020) of origin countries. Even so, scholarship on welfare states has pointed to how low- and middle-income countries throughout the Global South have expanded public social spending, resulting in a rapid rise in coverage of social protection programs (Barrientos and Hulme 2009; Dorlach 2020). Moreover, emergent welfare states' social protection policies are no longer understood as functioning only as safety nets (see Mkandawire 2005); they encompass a more comprehensive focus on basic needs and capabilities (Barrientos and Hulme 2009), as in the case of the NORKA ROOTS social protection policies.

Building on these insights, a growing body of literature (e.g., Dobbs et al. 2019; Lafleur 2020; Levitt et al. 2017; Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman 2011) has demonstrated that the expansion of social protection programs often also implies transnationalization of social welfare by expanding existing schemes or formulating new policies for emigrants. For example, as Lafleur and Vintila (2020) have demonstrated in the cases of India, Senegal, and Morocco, informal employment and exclusion from official work-related social benefits can be decisive factors in creating new migration social welfare schemes. These policy drivers can play out similarly for subnational entities, such as Kerala, as these entities may experience similar or higher levels of informal employment and related exclusion from social benefits. However, although Kerala, as a subnational state, shares several characteristics with national-level emigrant states and their policy dynamics, it diverges in its legislative and institutional capabilities, making it necessary to closely scrutinize how subnational emigrant states form transnational social protection policies. This article aims to complement existing research, which has focused predominantly on the nation-state, its bilateral relations, and the role of state and non-state actors in the perspectives of the destination countries, by bringing in the subnational level. It thereby takes up the call to differentiate, in its analysis, between the transnational, national, subnational, and local levels in migration governance and the actors that shape and provide responses to diaspora policies (Délano Alonso and Mylonas 2019).

Concerning multi-level approaches, the migration corridor between Latin America and the USA, particularly Mexico to US migration, has received much scholarly attention: research has highlighted, for example, the transnationally organized support of origin countries' consular offices in the USA in the provision of protection services and the rights-claiming process of labor migrants (Bada and Gleeson 2015; Délano Alonso 2018; see also Lafleur and Yener-Roderburg 2022). Subnational states, however, do not have direct political representation, such as consular offices, in destination countries. Therefore, to implement social protection policies, they either have to rely on the federal state's administrative bodies and private persons, or adjust their policies to focus on the pre- or post-migration period.

Destination country authorities play a crucial role in the types of welfare policies an origin country can implement and in how it does this (Lafleur and Yener-Roderburg 2022): the GCC political systems differ from the USA or European Union contexts—acquisition of legal citizenship in the GCC countries is nearly impossible (Ali 2011). This may explain why Kerala's social protection policies focus on reintegration schemes, similar to other origin countries with GCC-bound migration, such as Indonesia, Sri Lanka

(Wickramasekara 2019), and the Philippines (see Saguin 2020). In contrast, federally organized Mexico organizes no such support for its returnees on the state level (see Délano Alonso 2018). Also, unlike in democratic destination countries, non-national political parties or trade union organizations are forbidden in the GCC countries, which again has implications for how (subnational) state and non-state actors can shape social protection provisions.

In a recent contribution, Lafleur and Yener-Roderburg (2022) identify political regime change and enfranchisement of emigrants as explanations for the extension of social welfare to emigrants in order to cater to emigrant voters, using the case of health welfare policies in Turkey and Mexico. Kerala shares several attributes with these two countries, for example, a similar socio-economic profile, high levels of institutionalization of their diasporas, and migrant numbers (see Lafleur and Yener-Roderburg 2022). However, unlike Turkey and Mexico, Kerala, as a subnational entity, cannot enfranchise emigrants. Interestingly, NORKA and NORKA ROOTS were established *before* the Indian federal state included Non-Indian Residents in the electorate, including for state elections, in 2010. Thus, while parties actively court migrants in Kerala state elections (Naujoks 2020), capitalizing on emigrant votes was not the main driver in the establishment of NORKA. Furthermore, in contrast to Turkey and Mexico, consecutive governments in Kerala have continuously extended welfare policies (Deshpande, Kailash and Tillin 2017), and no public service has ever been revoked after a regime change (Heller 2005), including transnational social protection policies.

Consequently, existing findings cannot fully explain Kerala's emigrant policies. Hence, in the following section, scholarship on social policy design is combined with literature on diaspora policies toward emigrants: both strands of literature give insights into the mechanisms and justifications for selective policymaking. Therefore, they help to answer why the Kerala government has recognized NRKs as deserving and, as a result, has transnationalized its social protection policies.

3. Social policy design: constructing groups as deserving through policy rationales

Public policies, such as social protection policies, 'are primary mechanisms the society has for solving collective problems' (Schneider and Ingram 1997: 80). What policy actors consider to be a collective problem, whom they deem vulnerable, and which risks they find socially unacceptable and in need of a policy response depends on how policy actors interpret a situation as a problem, or as Bacchi (2009) puts it, 'policies (...) give shape to "problems"' (p. 1).

To understand why the Kerala state considers the migration-related risks experienced by NRKs as a collective problem and therefore in need of a policy response through social protection schemes, the article adopts Schneider and Ingram's (1993, 1997, 2005) social policy design framework, which conceptualizes social protection policies as institutional structures with three dimensions: the selection and categorization of a group as benefits-deserving (target groups); the kind of policy through which a perceived problem is

addressed (policy instruments); and the ways in which the choices of benefit recipients and policy instruments are justified, legitimized, and explained (policy rationales) (Schneider and Ingram 1993).

Definitions of social protection recipients are linked to the social construction of target groups as more or less deserving (Schneider and Ingram 2005). Recipients of social protection are not fixed entities. For example, the Keralan government shifted the category of NRKs, from solely international migrants to include Keralites migrating to other Indian states (see *Government of Kerala n.d.*).

Policy choices are expressed through policy rationales—understood as justifications for policy targets, target populations, and policy instruments (Schneider and Ingram 1993). Policy rationales as legitimations of problem definitions are based on assumptions (Schneider and Ingram 1997); previous knowledge and values also inform policy rationales. Ideas expressed through policy rationales inherent in policy choices are used to convince groups that the chosen design is the proper way to solve collective problems (*ibid.*).

Similar to choices of policy instruments, rationales depend on the social construction of the target group (Schneider and Ingram 1993). For target groups that are perceived positively, Schneider and Ingram (1993) state that governments justify policies using two sorts of rationales. First, they may use ‘instrumental rationales’ (p. 340), which often link the group to ‘the achievement of important public purposes’ (*ibid.*: 339) such as economic competitiveness (*ibid.*). Second, they invoke ideational rationales, which are justice-oriented and connected to attributes such as rights, needs, equity, and equality (*ibid.*). Work on emigration policymaking has identified policy rationales for targeting migrants similar to the two rationales described by Schneider and Ingram (1993): instrumentalist approaches, which highlight economic, foreign, and domestic political interests as drivers of policymaking toward emigrants; and normative approaches, which emphasize the role of ideas and norms, for example, democratization and collective identity, in the targeting of migrants in the form of policies (Waterbury 2010; Ragazzi 2014). To investigate which policy rationales the Government of Kerala brought forward to justify its social protection policies toward NRKs, the two policy rationales are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

3.1 Instrumentalist rationales

Within studies of origin state-emigrant relations, the structuralist–instrumentalist framework (Ragazzi 2014) views remittance transfers as the rationale underlying attempts to strengthen ties with citizens abroad through policies. Indeed, several migrant-origin states have strengthened remittance channels or established policies to make investments in the home country more lucrative (see Piper and Rother 2012). Scholarly accounts describe how with increasing global remittances, an understanding of emigrants as ‘agents of development’ sprang up in the 1990s, instead of the previously prevalent ‘brain drain’ debate in labor emigration countries in the 1970s and 1980s (Faist 2008), and positively linked migration to development in origin countries (Gamlen 2019). The migrants as ‘agents of development’ discourse attributes economic, political, and social development in countries of origin partly to migrants’ monetary and social remittances and knowledge and attitude transfer.

Rodriguez (2010) views instrumental rationales as the driver of origin states' policy interventions: schemes, such as pre-departure skills training, are described as a form of upskilling, which gives a competitive advantage and leads to more remittances per migrant due to higher wages, even as part of a labor export marketing strategy in the case of Filipino labor migrants. These measures also include more intrusive policies, such as migration bans to destination countries judged unsafe for Filipino workers. Rodriguez relates these to domestic politics in terms of the electoral power of migrant families, which, it is argued, outweigh the losses of remittances due to migration bans. Lafleur (2020) similarly states that political parties may be concerned about the well-being of emigrants due to their critical influence on the electoral process, either through the direct vote of the migrant or indirectly through migrants' families, and therefore put in place social policies for emigrants. While subnational states cannot enfranchise emigrants, the electoral effects of transnational social protection policies may be more consequential for them than for federal governments, as the Indian electorate identifies social welfare programs with the subnational rather than the federal level (Tillin, Deshpande and Kailash 2015).

As migrants' development investments are often directed at specific projects in their localities of origin (see, e.g., Roohi 2018), subnational governments might be quicker to notice such contributions and be more inclined than federal governments to create conditions to attract investments. In Mexico, for example, state governments, state federations, and hometown associations initiated the 3×1 program, a community development scheme that was later extended to incorporate federal authorities (Duquette-Rury 2014). Moreover, similarly to India, in migrant-origin states such as Ethiopia (Adugna 2019) and Mexico (see Délano 2011), the contributions of remittances to household incomes vary regionally and, therefore, incentives for establishing outreach programs may vary accordingly among subnational states. Thus, analyses which only examine the national level overlook region-specific instrumental motivations to establish emigrant policies.

3.2 Ideational rationales

Scholarship on both social policy and emigrant policy formation discusses how ideational rationales connect policy design choices to norms and ideas, such as belonging, social justice, or what it means to be a successful nation-state. Citizenship in the Westphalian nation-state is based on civil, political, and social rights and contributory duties, such as work (taxation) and military service (Isin and Turner 2007). Social rights include the right to access welfare benefits (Bloom and Feldman 2011). Social policies function to provide social rights to members of a political community (Ketola and Nordensvard 2018). The redistribution of social rights is made possible by solidarity among people who have never met (*ibid.*)—a social contract based on a sense of shared identity. As a practice, social policies demarcate inclusion in or exclusion from membership in a political community. They are part of discursive and social practices creating a sense of collective identity, belonging, and national identity building (Fink, Lewis and Clarke 2001; Ketola and Nordensvard 2018).

Emigrant policies, such as extending voting rights to citizens abroad, mirror ideational rationales concerned with the (re-)definition of belonging and boundaries of collective identities (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Waterbury 2010). Consequently, these policies

can serve to provide extra-territorial and trans-sovereign membership to the nation-state by extending political, social, and legal rights to (symbolically) include migrants. Thereby, emigrant policies can become part of state-building projects and constructions of national narratives (Waterbury 2010).

Policies toward emigrants and their descendants are increasingly common among origin states and have emerged as an international norm (Levitt and de la Dehesa 2003; Gamlen 2014). As Levitt and de la Dehesa (2003) point out, ‘at least at the level of discourse, the incorporation of emigrant communities as citizens, with rights and duties in their home countries, is often portrayed as part-and-parcel of broader trends toward democratization and as a natural outgrowth of globalization’ (p. 600). Therefore, policy design choices can be portrayed in terms of striving for democratic values and modernity.

Arrighi and Lafleur (2019) state that emigrants may ‘primarily identify with and direct their claim to their region of origin’ (p. 534). Subnational entities are salient points of identification in India to the extent that the Indian federal state has been creating new states, for example, Telangana in 2014, to accommodate ethnic–linguistic claims. The Keralan Malayali identity is linked to nation-building processes, specifically the movement to unify all Malayali-speaking presidencies into one Keralan state when, in the 1950s, India formed linguistic states (Singh 2011). Consequently, emigrant policies at the subnational level can possess similar functions to national emigrant policies, namely expressing a transnational expansion of membership to a subnational polity and thereby the inclusion of emigrants in the subnational political community.

4. Data and method

To comprehensively examine how the Keralan state mobilizes instrumentalist and ideational rationales to justify social protection policies toward NRKs, this article analyses data from three sources. First, I conducted 10 semi-structured interviews with (former) representatives of several bodies: NORKA ROOTS; the Keralan Public Service Commission; the Keralan State Planning Board, which as an advisory board assists the Keralan government in compiling a yearly economic plan for the state; members of the Keralan Legislative Assembly, who formulate and decide laws and regulations concerning NRKs; and non-governmental organizations in the field of migrants’ rights; these interviews took place between February and March 2020 in Trivandrum and New Delhi. Since specific policy outcomes result from the decisions of powerful actors and how they interpret social reality, I selected interview subjects who are either directly involved in social protection policymaking concerning NRKs or potentially influence the process. This approach allows researchers to study how issues connected to labor migration are perceived and articulated (see Bogner, Littig and Menz 2014). Also, these interviews provide insights into stakeholders’ interpretative knowledge, policy recommendations, and how they evaluate official reports on the welfare of NRKs. In general, stakeholder interviews allow scholars to reconstruct policy processes that happened in the past, are too complex to observe personally, and in which scholars cannot directly participate (see Bogner, Littig and Menz 2014).

To supplement the interviews, I reviewed informational brochures from NORKA ROOTS, since these documents give an overview of all social protection policies and

include information about eligibility criteria and the policies' aims. Finally, I analyzed reports from the Kerala Legislative Assembly's Committee on the Welfare of NRKs (2016–9). The Committee on the Welfare of NRKs consists of several members of the Legislative Assembly. Their reports highlight issues related to NRKs and are meant to give policy recommendations to other members of the Legislative Assembly. A research assistant translated the reports from Malayalam into English.

I coded the content of the interviews, brochures, and reports using the program Atlas.ti and applied the qualitative content analysis method. This approach systematically describes the meaning of qualitative material (Schreier 2012). I developed the codes based on categories of policy rationales described by Schneider and Ingram (1997).

5. Situating social protection policies toward NRKs in a transnational, multi-level policy field

5.1 Kerala—international labor migration and social policy development

While this article focuses on how Kerala provides formal social protection to migrants, it considers welfare policy expansion in the subnational state as interdependent with the international and federal system (Tillin, Deshpande and Kailash 2015). Thus, the policy process and its stakeholders are seen as being embedded in a transnationally structured policy field that involves sociopolitical and economic dynamics in Kerala, the destination countries, and the Indian federal level. Before analyzing policy rationales, it is vital to examine these different levels, as they are constitutive to forming social protection policies toward NRKs.

Since the early 20th century, the Kerala labor market and the GCC region have had strong connections, as the latter was a British dominion, and the British colonial rulers used Indian migrants to uphold the colonial apparatus (Rajan and Oommen 2019). Kerala and the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu were India's primary origin states for low-skilled labor emigrants⁷ from the 1970s until 2009 (Kumar and Rajan 2014). Kerala's international emigrant numbers steadily increased until 2013: from around 1.5 million leaving in 1998 to nearly 2.5 million emigrants in 2013 (Rajan and Zachariah 2019). Since 2013, the trend has slowed down to 2.1 million NRKs in 2018 (Rajan and Zachariah 2019). With about 33 million inhabitants (Census of India 2011), around 6% of Kerala's total population has emigrated to another country. The remittances from Kerala's international migrants, who live and work predominantly in the GCC region, make Kerala among the top 20 remittances-receiving regions in the world (as of 2003) and account for up to 18.3% of the state's gross domestic product (George and Remya 2010). Rajan and Zachariah (2019) show that total remittances to the state increased six-fold between 1998 and 2018.

The state has ranked first among all Indian states since the 1950s in terms of basic human development indicators (Parayil and Sreekumar 2003), but its economic development has ranked below most all-India measures (Parayil and Sreekumar 2003). International organizations, scholars, and policy-makers commonly describe this combination of high social development with low per capita income as the Kerala model of

development. Since the 1950s, the state has introduced several massive redistributive social policies, particularly extensive public healthcare, primary education, and land reforms (Singh 2011). These programs explicitly target historically marginalized groups, such as scheduled castes, women, residents in rural areas, and the poor (Singh 2011). The pro-workers stance of consecutive governments is said to have driven away economic investment and led to Kerala's stagnant economy, a leading cause of migration to the GCC countries (Parayil and Sreekumar 2003).

Kerala's redistributive and social welfare policies originated from social movements of lower-class groups and competition between the regionally powerful Communist Party and the nationally present Congress Party (Parayil and Sreekumar 2003). These parties have made social welfare a focal point of their political competition, creating social consensus on what counts as policy issues and leading to policy continuity between different governments (Deshpande, Kailash and Tillin 2017). Singh (2011) argues that Kerala's social welfare developments are also closely tied to its political subnationalism. The Communist Party's demands for increased state autonomy were justified as a call to ensure 'Malayali welfare', which the party claimed the Indian central government did not provide. Thus, the politics of social policy are also politics of identity: the Kerala model, with its social policies and proclaimed success, has reinforced Malayali subnationalism by being portrayed as part of its political culture (Singh 2011).

Return migrants and migrants have a strong presence in Kerala's dominant parties and have set up party-affiliated organizations (Akhil and Ganga 2022). They function as lobbying groups for (returned) migrants and their families. Together with returnee associations, these organizations lobbied the Kerala government for adoption of the Non-Resident Welfare Act, to set up the NRKs' welfare board, which was the prerequisite to establishing NORKA's several social assistance schemes (Akhil and Ganga 2022). Civil society organizations also have been traditionally active in Kerala (Heller, Harilal and Chaudhuri 2007). Besides returnee and diaspora organizations, church-based groups, media, and NGOs provide practical support and advocate for migrants, including for legislative changes. They are often part of transnational advocacy networks, such as Migrant Forum in Asia, or are supported by the International Labour Organization or UN Women (Interview, Trivandrum, 22 February 2020; see also Akhil and Ganga 2022).

5.2 How the Indian federal state provides social protection to emigrants

In the GCC region, the key destination region for 8.5 million Indians (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India 2018), a majority of the migrants work in so-called unskilled job categories, such as construction, agriculture, or private households (Abraham 2012). Labor migrants to the GCC do not receive social protection from the destination country, a situation that often becomes more precarious due to poor working and employment conditions (United Nations 2018); they have only a temporary residence permit or a total lack thereof, and migrant labor regulations are weak. In response to the labor and human rights abuses of Indian low-skilled labor, India's federal government established the Indian Emigration Act (1983), a pre-departure migration-monitoring system for low-skilled labor migrants, with which all subnational states, including Kerala, must comply. It introduced the Emigration Check Required (ECR) category for persons

with no educational qualification beyond lower secondary school and who intend to migrate to GCC region countries or several other countries in the Middle East and Southeast Asia.⁸ In addition, the Indian federal state introduced social protection schemes for Indian international migrant workers in the ECR category⁹: these included establishment of a compulsory insurance system in 2003 (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India 2021) and a welfare fund in 2009 (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India 2021). The Indian state operates these schemes, such as the welfare fund and provision of legal advice, through the respective embassies in the GCC countries.

Unlike in Kerala, these schemes have not been stipulated in any legal act, and the Indian federal state does not offer any form of (economic) reintegration schemes or skill training to potential emigrants. In addition, India has negotiated and signed bilateral agreements and memoranda of understanding on labor recruitment with several destination countries. While not explicitly mentioned, the memoranda of understanding apply to all workers, especially low-skilled workers (Wickramasekara 2012). However, except for general statements about promoting or strengthening friendly ties and cooperation in the fields of workforce and labor, these agreements do not explicitly cover migrant workers' protection and welfare (Wickramasekara 2012).

5.3 Overview of NORKA and NORKA ROOTS' history, mandate, and social protection schemes

The Indian federal government and state governments share responsibilities regarding the welfare of labor, social security, and social insurance (Deshpande, Kailash and Tillin 2017). The shared approach is enshrined in the Indian federal organization of the Indian political system. As a result, state governments implement national social policies and can initiate new policies (ibid.). This enabled the Kerala state to set up the NORKA department in 1996 and its implementation agency NORKA ROOTS in 2002, and subsequently to formulate social protection schemes.

NORKA's mandate is to provide social protection to potential migrants, people residing outside of Kerala, either abroad or within India, and returned migrants. The provisions include insurance schemes, financial assistance, a 24-h helpline, and legal support for migrants in the destination countries and their families; loans for setting up businesses and distress relief for returned migrants; and repatriation of the mortal remains of NRKs. NORKA ROOTS also functions as a state-run recruitment agency and offers certificate attestations, pre-departure, and upskilling programs for potential migrants. In 2008, the Non-Residents Welfare Act institutionalized NRKs' welfare rights. According to Jha (2019), legally supported welfare implies a redefinition of the citizen-state linkage, since welfare recipients are not only end-users and beneficiaries but citizens with legal rights to welfare.

Three main categories of social protection are provided: social assistance, labor market programs, and social insurance (see Table 1), covering the whole migration circle (see Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman 2011). Whereas the labor market programs and social insurance schemes have no specific eligibility criteria, NORKA's social assistance schemes are specifically targeted at migrants considered poor (see Government of Kerala n.d.), using the ECR category as an eligibility criterion (ibid.). The majority of NORKA's

Table 1. Social protection schemes by the department of NORKA, Government of Kerala

Migration phase/form of social protection	Social assistance	Labor market programs	Social insurance
Pre-departure		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill up gradation program • Certificate attestation • Recruitment/placement • One-day pre-departure orientation program 	
Destination country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash benefits for disability, marriage, death, medical treatment • Scholarship Scheme for children of NRKs of the ECR category 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/7 h helpline • Legal aid cell • Free plane tickets for persons released from foreign jails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRK insurance card • NRK (Pravasi) ID card
Return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency ambulance service • Financial assistance for repatriation of the mortal remains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NDPREM: small enterprises for return migrants • NORKA Business Facilitation Center 	

Source: [Government of Kerala \(n.d.\)](#).

programs are labor market and social assistance schemes; financed both through the state's general annual budget via a yearly planned fund allocation and from an individual fund generated from fees for certain NORKA services (Akhil and Ganga 2022). Neither the Indian state nor state governments tax remittances (ibid.).

The labor market programs focus on all three stages of the migration process (pre-migration, destination country, and return) and seek to prevent unemployment and inadequate employment. Starting with the pre-migration phase, the *Skill Up gradation Programme* aims to provide migrants with adequate skills to meet labor market requirements abroad. The recruitment wing of NORKA ROOTS certifies educational documents and runs lists of job openings in destination countries to help potential migrants in their labor market placement. Services qualify as efforts to protect worker safety and rights, such as the pre-departure training for potential migrants involving information dissemination about the migration process, a helpline for grievances, such as missing wages, issues with recruitment agents, or for getting in touch with relatives; and legal counseling in the destination countries (see Levitt et al. 2017). The NORKA Department Project for Return Emigrants (*NDPREM*), launched in 2013, helps returned NRKs by offering training and partially financing loans to set up small-scale businesses (Government of Kerala n.d.).

Social assistance programs aim to mitigate or help people cope with chronic poverty (Sabates-Wheeler and Waite 2003). The scheme *Santhwana*¹⁰ provides cash benefits for disability, marriage, death, and medical treatment of migrants or their family members (Government of Kerala n.d.). *Karunyam*¹¹ provides financial assistance for the repatriation of mortal remains in case of death abroad or in another Indian state, similar to the scholarship schemes for graduate/post-graduate studies or children of NRKs belonging to the ECR category.

The *NRK (Pravasi) ID card* (for international Keralan migrants) and *NRK insurance card* (for internal Keralan migrants) are voluntary social insurance programs partially funded by a contribution of 315 Indian Rupees¹² per migrant per year (Government of Kerala n.d.). Social insurance schemes function on the principle of combining a large number of similarly exposed individuals or households into a common fund, thus eliminating the risk of loss to individuals or households in isolation (Sabates-Wheeler and Waite 2003: 6). NORKA's insurance schemes provide an income in the case of the insured person's death or inability to work due to disability.

6. Policy rationales in the social protection programs for NRKs

Official Keralan government documents and interviews with government representatives reveal that justifications for forming social policies targeted at NRKs involve both instrumentalist and ideational rationales. Instrumentalist rationales are evident in both interviews and official documents, with the government stressing the importance of migrants' economic contributions:

During the Gulf boom, during the oil rise, [a] large junk of Kerala population (...) moved to [the] Gulf. And they made [the] Kerala economy also a bit rich.

(...) [I]n the state, whatever development you are seeing is a contribution of NRKs, which is much appreciated (...). You can see all the buildings, all the constructions, and the standard of living. Everything happened because of the remittances from the Middle East. You can see at least one-third of the population is directly or indirectly connected to remittances from abroad. (Government Official, NORKA ROOTS, Government of Kerala).¹³

When the Gulf countries became a paradise for Malayalis [Keralites] in the seventies, who were mostly illiterate and poor, who could not even dream of the sky, it changed the culture of the country. It had its reflections on eating habits, clothing, attending school, and lifestyle. There is no account for the amount of money the Malayalee migrants have poured into their homeland to raise their living standards, build land value, and build massive structures. Undoubtedly, the hard work they put on for their family made Kerala eradicate poverty and have the lowest poverty rate among the other states in India. (Committee on Non-Resident Keralites 2017).

Also, interviews and documents portray remittances from NRKs as helping Kerala's comparatively successful poverty eradication, enabling access to education, housing, and infrastructural development, as well as individual spending capacity. Linking NRKs' contributions to Kerala's development, and implicitly to the Kerala model, corresponds to Schneider and Ingram's (1993) description of instrumentalist rationales as perceived significant public achievements to justify a group's deservingness. In the case of the Keralan government, deservingness is constructed based on a developmental, economic notion of citizenship, where NRKs' financial contributions are in a way fulfilling a citizenry duty; from there, the government derives a perceived obligation to support migrants.

The Keralan government has questioned the sustainability of the Kerala model due to uncertainty about consistent remittance flows as labor market conditions change (Center for Development Studies 2006). The government uses this perceived crisis to explain NORKA ROOTS' labor market programs, thus legitimatizing policies in terms of economic stability. With Kerala dependent on the GCC countries' labor markets to minimize its unemployment, the government has viewed both the 2008 financial crisis and the nationalization of workforces in countries such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait as concerns. Specifically, the government is worried about fewer job opportunities abroad and higher numbers of migrants returning to Kerala:

(...) [F]rankly speaking, opportunities are shrinking. Except [in] medical health-care, [in] all other sectors, opportunities are shrinking. I think (...) this phenomenon is due to three reasons. (...) [T]hat is the automatization, indigenization or nationalization, and stagnation of oil prices, and all these three factors are affecting the opportunities, scope (...) of Indian migrants in these countries. (Recruitment Manager, NORKA ROOTS, Government of Kerala).¹⁴

The Keralan government/NORKA ROOTS has responded to these changes in several ways: running a state-owned recruitment agency; facilitating return migrants' labor market reintegration in Kerala with the NDPREM scheme; offering skills training to potential migrants; and locating new labor markets:

Now our government is interested in us finding new markets and new migration paths and migration opportunities as well. So we have a separate scheme to find

out emerging corridors. Now, in the beginning, in Kerala, all the migration was voluntary migration. There was not much involvement from the government or state. But now, the government is thinking that it is the duty of the government to find out new emerging corridors. (Recruitment Manager, NORKA ROOTS, Government of Kerala).¹⁵

This statement from NORKA ROOTS' recruitment manager shows that labor market development has become a higher priority for the Keralan government. This concern explains why, in 2015, NORKA ROOTS established a recruitment agency that facilitates the migration of nurses, doctors, technicians, and domestic workers to GCC countries (Government of Kerala n.d.). The agency provides an alternative to private recruitment by promising a 'safe, legal, and ethical recruitment process' (Government of Kerala n.d.: 19) and 'a new overseas work culture for job seekers' (ibid.) by 'empower[ing] overseas health sectors job aspirants and domestic service workers' (ibid.).

In its recommendation to provide IT skills training to NRKs, the Committee on NRKs gave economic rationales regarding unemployment of low-skilled migrants:

The recent crisis in the Gulf has created a situation where expatriate workers, especially Malayalis [Keralites], have been expelled from there. It affects unskilled workers more. One of the major challenges to the state's economic and social structure is the lack of a skilled workforce in the overseas job market. *The Committee recommends a training program to enable them to overcome adversity abroad by providing knowledge about advanced technology (...).* (Committee on Non-Resident Keralites 2016).

The government partly attributes the high impact of changing labor market conditions in the GCC countries to the low skill level of Keralan migrants. Officials perceive that their labor pool is at a disadvantage because of the global surplus of low-skilled laborers: 'Another (...) important point is the stiff competition from other (..) labor-sending countries. Our workers are competing with the Philippines, Bangladeshis, and also from Egypt' (Recruitment manager, NORKA ROOTS, Government of Kerala).¹⁶ Similar to Rodriguez's (2010) description of the situation in the Philippines, the Keralan state administration justifies NORKA ROOTS' skills training with political-economic rationales about competition in the low-skilled labor sector. Although 'unskilled workers' (Government of Kerala n.d.) are regarded as most affected, the government focuses more resources on the *Skill Up gradation Programme*, which addresses semi- and skilled rather than low-skilled workers, so as to not encourage migration of the latter group, given the risks associated with low-skill labor migration:

[For] domestic workers also, we are developing a curriculum. And started a batch, but sending domestic workers is not our policy. It is not a policy because we are not interested in encouraging to pursue domestic work jobs in [the] Middle East. Because it is not - even though we are trying to propagate it is a decent work - in reality, it is not a decent work. The housemaid job in [the] Middle East is not decent work. That is the stark reality. (...) They are supposed to work, work and live on the premises of the employer. And these home environments are not what we expect (..) [as] the global standard or Indian standard, in the Middle East environment. We heard, we had reported a lot of cases of a lot of ill-treatment from the sponsors and house owners. And there are a lot of chances of these

exploitation issues or overworking hours, ill-treatment. That is why we are not promoting sending our recruitees as housemaids to [the] Middle East. (Recruitment Manager, NORKA ROOTS, Government of Kerala).¹⁷

The government's concern regarding labor standards for domestic workers demonstrates its ideational rationales in the form of justice-oriented norms, such as ethical recruitment and fair employment conditions. Besides the pre-departure training, these rationales justify in particular NORKA's legal advice desks and helplines for workers in the destination countries, as well as social assistance schemes, such as the scholarship schemes for low-wage migrant workers' children, which aim to create social justice through educational opportunity. The state's explicit role is portrayed as providing employment opportunities and ensures the well-being of NRKs during the recruitment process and in the destination country. Deservingness is derived from framing segments of NRKs as vulnerable to exploitation and in need of empowerment and protection. The particular focus on domestic workers, who are predominantly female, echoes gendered narratives of victimhood and vulnerability. Patriarchal norms strongly affect emigrant policies in India and other major Asian migrant-origin countries, such as the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Nepal, for example, temporary migration bans for domestic workers (Shivakoti, Henderson and Withers 2021).

Keralan government representatives point out that policies target emigrants not only because of remittances but because of their economic contributions, combined with the Keralan sociopolitical context. Statements relating the sociopolitical context to social protection policymaking reveal how ideational rationales, in the form of ideas about good citizenship practices and the Keralan polity, inform these explanations:

Kerala is also just (...) [a] politically sensitive state. Here, the political consciousness is really high. Here, the labor rights, the rights of the workers, and also the consciousness regarding (...) the people [is] very, very high (...). This is (...) much [of] (...) an enlightened society. [In] this society, (...) the people, if they decide on [a] particular issue (...), then they know how to navigate that. Politicians cannot take the people for granted. There is some kind of a dissident voice. There is some kind of discourse here regarding everything. So, therefore, when compared to North India or UP [Uttar Pradesh] or Bihar [states in North India], the situation in Kerala is completely different. (Civil Servant, Government of Kerala).¹⁸

The government representative explains that a social protection framework evolved from Keralites' awareness of their labor rights and ability to influence political agendas. The interviewed stakeholder attributes the salience of labor rights in Kerala to the political socialization of the state's inhabitants and portrays the Keralan state as a thoroughly democratic polity that includes accountability of politicians, critical political debate, and a politically mature population. Kerala is contrasted with other key labor-origin states, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, which rank low in terms of economic and social development in the Indian context (see Rasul and Sharma 2014; Ahmad et al. 2003). This contrast underscores Kerala's unique sociopolitical development and its identity as a (subnational) community.

As mentioned before, Kerala is regarded as a model state in terms of human development, both in the Indian context and globally. According to the interviewed respondents, Keralites' political empowerment correlates to the state's high levels of human

development, a perspective that scholarship shares (see Singh 2015). A high-level Keralan government bureaucrat repeats that Kerala includes NRKs in its social welfare schemes because of its unique political trajectory, a reference to the Kerala model of development:

Kerala being a state which [is] highly welfare-oriented because of its different kind of political history, we love to take care of our citizens here as well as when they go abroad. And it is part of a different kind of political culture, awareness, development of a region. (Civil Servant, State Planning Board, Government of Kerala).¹⁹

The excerpt expresses an ideational rationale, where social welfare becomes part of the exceptionalist subnational narrative of the Kerala model of development. Thus, NORKA's social protection programs are portrayed as following existing ideas about the importance of welfare among the subnational community, as well as Kerala's history of redistributive social programs. Indeed, the continuing success story of the Keralan model, underpinning the subnational Malayali identity, is based on social benefit provisions 'as social development outcomes are determined primarily by the nature of and popular access to social services' (Singh 2015: 508). Social protection policies benefiting NRKs function as extended forms of solidarity, whereas the social contract underlying social policies extends transnationally. The government sees migration as challenging the concept of a Malayali polity, and, to preserve this notion, they have to reinvent it as a transnational polity:

Now, if you want to sustain this Keralite entity, and if Kerala should remain as a society (...) with a unique culture (...), then you will have to think beyond the borders, beyond the original geographical and original territory. It is a (...) society becoming de-territorialized. It is not fixed in a territory; it grows beyond a territory. So this is happening everywhere because of globalization, because of the movement of people, [and] because of the diversification of labor. (Civil Servant, State Planning Board, Government of Kerala).²⁰

7. Conclusion

Neither categories of social protection recipients nor areas of social protection are universal; rather, they are outcomes of political decisions. Subnational emigrant-origin states are primary sites of diaspora identification, emigrants' philanthropic projects and returned migrants' economic reintegration, but they possess fewer institutional capacities enabling them to engage with emigrants and destination countries than federal states, which mean that their policy responses may not correspond to those of the federal states. Drawing on a social policy design framework, this article asks why the Keralan state provides social protection to NRKs. By focusing on policy rationales—justifications of policy choices—in the subnational state of Kerala, I demonstrated that instrumentalist and ideational rationales substantially inform constructions of deservingness regarding social benefits and, thus, social protection policymaking for NRKs. This research shows that NORKA ROOTS' social protection programs are located in ambivalent convictions involving market development-oriented labor policies and social assistance programs;

these become forms of social protection and citizenship practice that are intertwined and not easily separable.

The government's instrumentalist rationale focuses on Kerala's dependence on the labor markets of the GCC countries and global labor market competition; its ideational rationales center on the nature of the Keralan polity and how it differs from other Indian states with substantial emigrant populations. The normative idea of Kerala as a social-democratic political society has been decisive in outlining NRKs as a target population. However, by folding justifications for the inclusion of NRKs in social welfare provision in the narrative of egalitarian development, stakeholders of the Keralan state obscure the excluding tendencies of the Kerala model, for groups such as Dalits, coastal and tribal communities (Devika 2010), and Muslims (Kabir 2010); in fact the latter constitute the most significant number of total emigrants, although they make up less than a quarter of the total population in Kerala (Rajan and Zachariah 2019).

Consecutive Keralan governments have understood that the state relies on emigration to reduce its high unemployment rates and due to the influence of remittances on Kerala's macroeconomy (see Kannan and Hari 2020). Remittances, as distributions of wealth, are also regarded as a kind of fulfillment of citizenship duty, which prompts the Keralan to enact its part of the social contract through social welfare provisions. However, according to Akhil and Ganga (2022) the transnationalization of social protection remains partially symbolic and a statement of intent, as NORKA has failed to adequately implement its programs due to a lack of funding and cooperation with civil society stakeholders. NORKA and NORKA ROOTS, despite the limited funding and a lack of direct diplomatic capacity in destination countries, have nevertheless outlived major discontinued attempts by emigrant countries to implement transnationalized welfare, such as the initiatives from Turkey and Mexico regarding health care provision (see Lafleur and Yener-Roderburg 2022), or the Indian federal state's pension schemes for returned emigrants.

Contributing to the unpacking of the emigration state (Délano Alonso and Mylonas 2019), this article highlights that subnational emigration states are significant stakeholders in migration governance despite their comparatively limited access to infrastructural and legislative mechanisms. More specifically, it shows the two ways in which the structure of political institutions, in this case, subnational polities, matters in articulating social protection and diaspora policies. First, the Keralan government relies on subnational identification as a source of solidarity; this identity encourages a perception of NRKs' risks and vulnerabilities as collective problems. Second, the Keralan state demonstrates that subnational governments are critical sites for policy invention and learning. While scholarly accounts have showcased the role of global policy networks, often in the form of international organizations, in policy transfer of social protection, Kerala presents an example of bottom-up policy diffusion. The state has become a model for the Indian government and other Indian states' formulation of social protection policies for international low-skill labor migrants. The Keralan case calls for closer scholarly attention to how policy learning unfolds at the subnational level. Further studies could build on insights from the literature on multi-leveled comparative welfare regimes (see, e.g., Tillin 2022) and diaspora policy diffusion (see Délano 2014): they could explore how subnational welfare regime types correlate with the adaptation of transnational social protection policies, or

how subnational variations in the presence of networks and stakeholders, such as migrant organization, unions, and international organization, explain outcomes of policy diffusion among federal states.

Supplementary data

[Supplementary data](#) are available at *Migration Studies* online.

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Conflict of interest statement

None declared.

Notes

1. Interview, Trivandrum, 17 February 2020.
2. The Ministry was merged with the Ministry of External Affairs in 2016 ([Government to Merge Overseas Indian Affairs Ministry with MEA 2016](#)).
3. See [Supplementary Appendix](#), also [Akhil and Ganga \(2022\)](#).
4. Interview, Trivandrum, 20 February 2020.
5. The research for this article was conducted in February and March 2020, just before India introduced strict Covid-19 safety measures. My findings reflect a pre-pandemic Kerala and social protection policies. In the meantime, NORKA ROOTS has been in charge of coordinating repatriations of Keralan migrants and international donations of medical equipment for Covid management; providing financial assistance to relatives of migrants who have died for Covid-related reasons and has organized medical consultations for NRKs via phone/video-call with medical specialists (see [NORKA ROOTS 2021](#)).
6. Interview, Trivandrum, 7 March 2020.

7. Low-skilled migration is defined here according to the kind of work migrants do, not to their qualifications.
8. The 18 ECR countries are the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Libya, Jordan, Yemen, Sudan, South Sudan, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Syria, Lebanon, Thailand, Iraq, and Malaysia (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India n.d.).
9. See [Supplementary Appendix](#).
10. Meaning support or relief.
11. Meaning benevolence or mercy.
12. Approximately 4 euros (in 2021).
13. Interview, Trivandrum, 22 February 2020.
14. Interview, Trivandrum, 17 February 2020.
15. Interview, Trivandrum, 17 February 2020.
16. Interview, Trivandrum, 17 February 2020.
17. Interview, Trivandrum, 17 February 2020.
18. Interview, Trivandrum, 24 February 2020.
19. Interview, Trivandrum, 7 March 2020.
20. Interview, Trivandrum, 7 March 2020.

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