**Give more empirical illustration of the problem**

* **Who moved?** We illustrate this in our descriptive statistics section (see section XXX in the final dissertation).
* **To where?**
  + *Additional data:* From the currently digitized files, we cannot follow the opters beyond the Italian border. This means, we do not know where they moved. The corresponding files on the other side of the border are stored in the “Tiroler Landesarchiv” (the Archives of Tyrol) in Innsbruck. There, opters can be traced through their unique identifier number. However, this data is currently not digitized.
  + *Historical evidence:* Historical evidence provides us with a macro-level overview of the destination of the opters. Table 9 on page 99 of the book “Heimatlos. Die Umsiedlung der Südtiroler“, Wien, 1993, by Helmut Alexander, Stefan Lechner and Adolf Leidlmair, shows the following evidence:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Region (in German)* | *Country* | *Total opters* | *Percentage* |
| Nordtirol | Austria | 38,500 | 51.5 |
| Vorarlberg | Austria | 5,700 | 7.6 |
| Salzburg | Austria | 3,900 | 5.2 |
| Oberösterreich | Austria | 4,500 | 6.3 |
| Steiermark, Kärnten mit Osttirol | Austria | 5,600 | 7.5 |
| Wien, Niederösterreich, Burgenland | Austria | 1,800 | 2.4 |
| Deutschland in Grenzen von 1937 | Germany | 10,800 | 14.5 |
| Andere Gebiete | Other | 3,700 | 5.0 |
| *Total* |  | *74,500* | *100.0* |

* The following map stems from the same book page 101:

Diagram

Description automatically generated

* **Did agents (or their children) come back after some period?**
  + *History and additional data*: The opters and their children were allowed to migrate back to Italy officially only starting from 1948. They had to renounce to German citizenship and re-request Italian citizenship. According to historical evidence (see Alexander et al., 1993), about half of all initial opters returned to South Tyrol.

The return opters can be traced through the same initially created unique identifiers. However, since the digitization that we carried out is the first attempt to digitize any South Tyrol Option files, the “return option” files are not yet digitized either. Historians Eva Pfanzelter from the University of Innsbruck, and Andrea di Michele from the Free University of Bolzano are starting a project related to the return option, involving an extensive digitization project of the corresponding files. We hope that this data can help us understand the migratory trajectory of the opters who, in the end, returned.

Not on Francis’ list: **Did peers tend to move to the same destination?**

* *Additional data:* We could answer this question by tracing the emigrants with the help of the files in the “Tiroler Landesarchiv” in Innsbruck, which are, so far, not digitized.
* *Academic literature:* The role of migration networks in the choice of the destination country is pertinent, and has been extensively examined, among others, by Simone Bertoli and Ilse Ruyssen (2018) in their paper “Networks and migrants’ intended destination” in the Journal of Economic Geography, Vol. 18(4), pages 705-728. The authors rely on individual-level data to trace an individual’s direct connections to the migrant networks in different countries and their choice concerning the preferred country of destination. The authors find distance-one connections to be an important driver in the choice of destinations with a similar level of attractiveness.