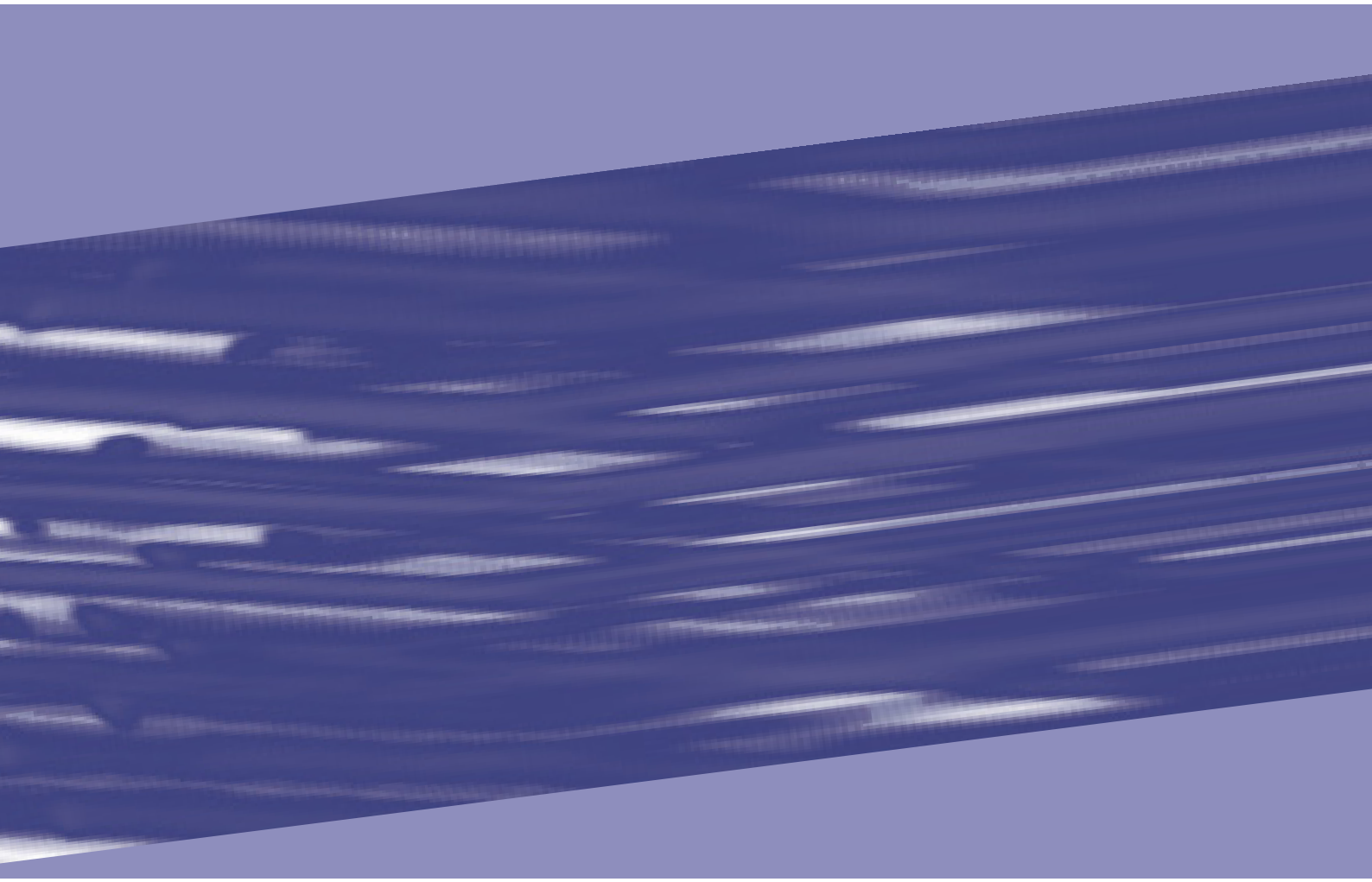
Comparative Research on the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration of Migrants



By Khalid Koser, Maastricht Graduate School of Governance
and Katie Kuschminder, Maastricht Graduate School of Governance

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The opinions expressed in the report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout the report do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IOM concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

This report has been published without formal editing by IOM.

This research was commissioned by the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection as part of its broader Irregular Migration Research Programme. The opinions, comments and analyses expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to acknowledge the hard work and support of the other members of the project management team (Gervais Appave, Noëlle Darbellay, Ana Fonseca, Marie McAuliffe and Alex Parrinder) as well as Julie Bauer, Susanne Klink, Frank Laczko and IOM colleagues in Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Greece, Indonesia, Iraq, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Switzerland, Turkey, Viet Nam, Refugee Action colleagues in the UK, and Ministry of Security and Justice Repatriation and Departure Services colleagues in the Netherlands involved in the study.

Publisher: International Organization for Migration
17 route des Morillons
1211 Geneva 19
Switzerland
Tel: +41.22.717 91 11
Fax: +41.22.798 61 50
E-mail: hq@iom.int
Internet: http://www.iom.int

© 2015 International Organization for Migration (IOM)

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Comparative Research on the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration of Migrants

By Khalid Koser, Maastricht Graduate School of Governance

and

Katie Kuschminder, Maastricht Graduate School of Governance

With assistance by: Paul Hayes, Sarah Langely, Marie McAuliffe, Elaine McGregor, Victoria Mence, Alex Parrinder, Nora Ragab, Georgina Sturge, Michaella Vanore, Vivianne van der Vorst, and Marieke van Houte

Universiteit Maastricht

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Australian Government
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

Contents

i. List of figures 6
ii. List of tables 6
FOREWORD 7
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 8

1. INTRODUCTION 10
1.1 Background 10
1.2 Focus of this report 10
1.3 Aims and objectives 10
1.4 Structure of the report 11

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE 12
2.1 Introduction 12
2.2 Understanding the migrant return decision 12
2.3 Defining and measuring sustainable return 14
2.4 Factors determining reintegration and the sustainability of return 15
2.5 Conclusions and next steps 18

3. METHODOLOGY 19
3.1 Introduction 19
3.2 Choice of study countries and respondents 19
3.2.1 Destination countries 19
3.2.2 Origin countries 19
3.2.3 Transit countries 20
3.3 Method of information collection 20
3.4 Recruitment of participants 21
3.5 Methodological challenges 23
3.6 Conclusions 24

4. OVERVIEW OF STUDY COUNTRIES AND PARTICIPANTS 25
4.1 Introduction 25
4.2 Destination countries overview 25
4.3 Transit countries overview 28
4.4 Origin countries overview 32
4.5 Profile of the respondents 33
4.6 Assisted voluntary return programmes 36
4.7 Conclusions 37

5. UNDERSTANDING THE DECISION TO RETURN 38
5.1 Introduction 38
5.2 Model of the return decision-making process 38
5.3 Factors influencing the return decision 39
5.4 Conditions in the origin country 40
5.5 Conditions in the destination country 40
5.6 Individual factors 41
5.7 Family/community level factors 43
5.8 Policy interventions 44
5.9 Information 45
5.10 Conclusions 45

6. DEFINING AND MEASURING SUSTAINABLE RETURN 47
6.1 Introduction 47
6.2 Defining sustainable return 47
6.3 An analytical framework for measuring sustainable return 48
6.4 Applying the return and reintegration index 49
6.5 Return and reintegration index comparative analysis by origin country 51
6.5 Conclusions 52

7. PROMOTING REINTEGRATION AND SUSTAINABLE RETURN 53
7.1 Introduction 53
7.2 Individual factors 53
7.3 Experiences prior to migration 54
7.4 Experiences in the destination country 57
7.5 Community of return 58
7.6 Conclusions 59

8. LINKING THE RETURN DECISION WITH SUSTAINABLE RETURN 61
8.1 Introduction 61
8.2 The decision to return and reintegration 61
8.3 Return, reintegration, and re-migration 63
8.4 Conclusions 64

9. CONCLUSIONS 65
9.1 Summary 65
9.2 Policy implications 65
9.2.1 Influencing the decision to return 66
9.2.2 Measuring sustainability 66
9.1.3 Promoting sustainable return and reintegration 66
9.3 Conclusions 67

BIBLIOGRAPHY 68

ANNEXES 73
Appendix 1: Literature review 73
Appendix 2: Origin country questionnaire: Summary of responses (All countries) 89
Appendix 3: Transit country questionnaire: summary of responses 127
Appendix 4: Destination country questionnaire: answers (all countries) 153
Appendix 5: Afghanistan country report 175
Appendix 6: Bangladesh country report 189
Appendix 7: Ethiopia country report 205
Appendix 8: Iraq country report 221
Appendix 9: Pakistan country report 237
Appendix 10: Sri Lanka country report 253
Appendix 11: Sudan country report 269
Appendix 12: Viet Nam country report 287
Appendix 13: Transit countries report 303
Appendix 14: Destination countries report 323
Appendix 15: Proposals for further research 339

List of figures

Figure 2.1: Factors determining the decision to return 13
Figure 4.1: Number of asylum applications by destination country, 2004–2013 26
Figure 4.2: New asylum applications in 2013 by country of origin and destination 27
Figure 4.3: Total number of assisted voluntary return by destination country, 2004–2013 28
Figure 4.4: Top ten countries for AVR in by destination country, 2013 29
Figure 4.5: Number of asylum applications by transit country, 2004–2013 30
Figure 4.6: UNHCR caseload in 2013 by country of origin and transit 31
Figure 4.7: Total number of AVRs by transit country, 2010–2013 32
Figure 4.8: Number of asylum applications by origin country, 2000–2013 33
Figure 4.9: Total number of assisted voluntary return by origin country, 2000–2013 34
Figure 5.1: Factors determining the decision to return 39

List of tables

Table 2.1: Key variables that may influence reintegration and the sustainability of return 17
Table 3.1: Origin countries participant recruitment 22
Table 3.2: Number of interviews per country 23
Table 4.1: Top countries for assisted voluntary return by transit country, 2013 32
Table 4.2: Overview of all participants 35
Table 4.3: Countries of origin of participants in transit countries 36
Table 4.4: Countries to which participants in origin countries had returned from 36
Table 4.5: Types of migrants eligible for assisted voluntary return in the destination and transit countries 37
Table 5.1: Decision-making factors by category, all countries 40
Table 5.2: Number of individuals choosing each decision-making factor, all countries 41
Table 5.3: Decision regarding return, by personal characteristics and migration indicators (frequencies), destination and transit countries only 43
Table 5.4: Involved in decision-making factors regarding return (multiple responses possible) 45
Table 5.5: Information on assisted voluntary return (AVR) programmes 46
Table 6.1: Return and reintegration index 52
Table 6.2: Return and reintegration index by country of return 52
Table 7.1: Reintegration, by demographic characteristics 55
Table 7.2: Reintegration, by situation prior to migration 56
Table 7.3: Sustainable return, by migration experience 57
Table 7.4: Reintegration, by destination country 58
Table 7.5: Reintegration, by situation in destination country 59
Table 7.6: Reintegration, by living context upon return 60
Table 8.1: Decision to return and reintegration 63
Table 8.2: Desire to re-migrate and reintegration 64

FOREWORD

Return migration is an integral and crucial component of international migration. Return is a critical focus of many governments' migration policies, including through assisted voluntary return and reintegration programmes, such as those delivered by IOM[1]. However, recent research on migrant decision making in relation to return is scarce and the existing evidence base is insufficient to reliably inform or support the development and implementation of effective return migration policies.

There are important gaps in knowledge about the key factors that lead migrants to decide to return and the role of policy interventions in their decision making processes. Furthermore, although significant international attention has been paid to reintegration and sustainable return as key factors within assisted voluntary return and reintegration frameworks, these concepts do not appear to have been consistently defined, or measured by the same indicators in different contexts – both across borders (including in different destination, transit and origin countries) and across programmes – making it difficult to reliably assess and comparably measure the effectiveness of approaches to return. This study intends to address some of these issues and thus inform a more consistent approach to gathering data and evidence, as well as the development of better frameworks for defining and measuring approaches to voluntary return and reintegration policies and programmes.

This research project was implemented through a highly effective collaborative partnership between: the Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, operating under its Irregular Migration Research Programme, which is aims to strengthen the evidence base on irregular migration to better inform policy and operational deliberations; Khalid Koser, Katie Kuschminder and a team of researchers from Maastricht University, applying knowledge and expertise in migration research and ensuring the research was conducted independently and objectively; and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), building upon its expertise on managing assisted voluntary return and reintegration services globally and thus able to provide access to data, beneficiaries and stakeholders in countries of origin, transit and destination and to assist in facilitating in-country fieldwork.

The study refers to the need for well-functioning monitoring and evaluative frameworks in voluntary return and reintegration programmes. It reflects the challenges associated with assistance in most cases being provided on a short term basis only, which makes it extremely difficult for IOM and other implementing actors to stay in touch with returnees for longer term monitoring and evaluation.

With regard to future research, the study not only identifies remaining gaps to be addressed but also provides an innovative, multi-dimensional tool to measure whether and in what ways returnees have reintegrated. While the return and reintegration index that has been developed needs to be further tested and adapted through future research, based on conditions on the ground that may contribute to or hinder reintegration in particular circumstances, it is an important contribution that may assist in informing a consistent approach to the assessment of return and reintegration, including the development of monitoring and evaluation frameworks and approaches to analyzing the impact of different reintegration packages in a more systematic way.

This collaborative approach to international comparative analysis represents an important milestone in research on assisted voluntary return and reintegration. It clearly demonstrates the value for IOM, states and migration academics of further research utilizing survey methodologies that can build on and expand the comparative scope of the project's findings, and can contribute to informing migration management and governance as well as better approaches to providing meaningful and effective assistance to migrants.

Bernd Hemingway
Director, Department of Migration Management

[1] Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) is a key domain of IOM`s work with migrants, civil societies and governments. Each year IOM assists around 40,000 migrants to return to their countries of origin through AVRR programmes with diversified levels of assistance towards their return and reintegration.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Sustainable voluntary return of migrants back to their origin countries is an important aspect of comprehensive migration management; yet it is not always clear whether and how policy enables return or promotes sustainable return and reintegration. A lack of accessible data and a lack of consensus on how to define key concepts such as sustainability make it difficult to assess the impact of assisted voluntary return policies; and their impact also varies across different types of migrants and settings.

2. This report presents the findings of a study that explored the factors influencing the decision to return, including the role played by return policy interventions. The study also aimed to enhance understanding of the concept of sustainable return, how to define it, and how to measure it. The study was conceived and commissioned as part of the Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Irregular Migration Research Programme and supported by the IOM. It involved fieldwork across 15 countries of origin, transit and destination; and is one of the largest comparative projects on this topic in recent years. At the same time, however, the sample size of respondents in each country is relatively small and this study is intended as a preliminary research project to test a new methodology that requires further expansion and testing.

3. An extensive literature review identifies gaps in knowledge and evidence; forms the basis for survey design and data analysis in this study; and exposes a number of policy assumptions that are not always supported by the existing evidence. Most of the research on the return decision-making process, for example, indicates that the removal of root causes may not be sufficient to ensure sustainable return. There is a degree of consensus in the research that the availability of assistance is not a key factor in determining whether migrants will return voluntarily. And there is no clear evidence that reintegration assistance reduces the propensity to re-migrate.

4. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 273 respondents in eight origin countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Iraq, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Viet Nam), three transit countries (Greece, Indonesia, Turkey) and four destination countries (Australia, Switzerland, the Netherlands, UK). These countries were selected for various reasons, including relevance to the Government of Australia; scale of asylum and return flows; and variety of assistance policies and programmes. In origin countries, interviews were conducted mainly with people who had returned at least 12 months prior. In transit and destination countries respondents were identified by support agencies, and on the whole had already expressed an interest in return. Overall significantly more men than women were interviewed. It was not possible systematically to compare return intentions and experiences across different return policies and programmes.

5. In this study the individual return decision is conceived as being influenced by: 'structural' conditions (conditions in the origin, transit, and destination country); individual conditions including individual attributes and social relations; and policy interventions. Overall respondents ranked the main categories of factors influencing their return decision as follows: by far most important were conditions in the country of destination, followed in order by individual factors, social factors, policy interventions and lastly conditions in the origin country. Within these broad categories, the following specific variables were found to be most significant for the respondents in making their decisions: the difficulty of finding employment/no right to work; being tired of living as an undocumented migrant; a desire to reunify with family at home; the opportunity to benefit from voluntary return programmes; and job prospects at home.

6. Building on earlier definitions, this study defines 'sustainable return' as when: 'The individual has reintegrated into the economic, social and cultural processes of the country of origin and feels that they are in an environment of safety and security upon return.' This definition assumes that reintegration is a necessary precondition for meaningful sustainable return. It adopts a comprehensive perspective on reintegration across the dimensions of economic, socio cultural and safety and security processes. It also highlights that the returnee must perceive that they are in conditions of safety and security upon return, which should remove the impetus for re-migration at least in the foreseeable future.

7. Using this definition, the study develops a multi-dimensional index to measure sustainable return. Five variables were identified to illustrate each of the three main dimensions of economic, socio-cultural, and safety and security; and thresholds defined to assess reintegration across each of these variables. Aggregating these variables provides a measure of reintegration across each dimension; whilst aggregating reintegration across all three dimensions allows an overall measure of reintegration. Applying this index to the returnees in the eight origin countries covered by this study, it was found that 56 per cent of returnees had re-integrated economically; 64 per cent

socio-culturally; and 71 per cent in terms of safety and security. Overall 37 per cent of the respondents were gauged to be reintegrated across all three dimensions; of whom returnees to Iraq were the least reintegrated and returnees to Viet Nam and Pakistan the most.

8. In order to assess what determines reintegration and sustainable return, the study distinguished: individual factors; migration experiences; structural factors during return including the community of return and attitudes from locals; and the role of assisted voluntary return programming. Key findings are: returnees who migrated for economic reasons were more likely to be reintegrated than those who migrated for other reasons; returnees who both had a sense of belonging to the community prior to migration and returned to the same community after migration were more likely to be reintegrated; women were less likely to be reintegrated upon return; returnees who were comfortable prior to migration were more likely to be reintegrated on return compared with those who were struggling prior to migration; and there does not appear to be a difference in reintegration between those whose decision to migrate was made collectively and those whose decision was made individually.

9. The study also explores the linkages between the return decision, reintegration, and sustainable return. There are indications from the data that a lack of integration in the destination country may for example impact reintegration on return, raising the prospect that policies positively designed to facilitate return may not promote reintegration downstream. Another key finding was that re-migration is not an adequate proxy for reintegration or sustainable return. While the majority of respondents interviewed in origin countries who had not reintegrated did plan to re-migrate, for most it was just an aspiration. A significant proportion of those who had failed to reintegrate did not plan to re-migrate, while a good proportion of those who had reintegrated did plan to re-migrate. Re-migration may be legal and therefore not problematic, and may be driven by factors other than those related to return and reintegration.

10. In addition to summarizing the key findings and outlining directions for further research, the final chapter suggests a series of policy implications arising from this study: Concerning the decision to return it is found for example that conditions in destination countries – in particular the ability to work and legal status - may strongly influence the decision to return; that other key factors influencing the decision to return are largely beyond the scope of direct policy interventions, such as family relations; and that overall return policy interventions are not considered a major influence on the decision whether to return. Concerning measuring sustainability the importance of a clear and comprehensive definition is emphasized; it is demonstrated that it is possible to develop an index for measuring reintegration; and it is concluded that ongoing monitoring of sustainability is possible, but involves trade-offs in terms of costs. Finally in terms of promoting sustainable return, it is concluded that many of the factors influencing the sustainability of return are beyond the influence of direct policy intervention, for example pre-migration experiences, living conditions in the destination country are significantly correlated with sustainable return and reintegration; and factors that influence return may also impact on its sustainability and reintegration, but sometimes in opposing directions. In particular, a negative decision on asylum was a strong determinant for return, but also a strong indicator for a lack of reintegration after return.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Sustainable voluntary return of migrants back to their origin countries is an important aspect of comprehensive migration management. It is widely recognized as the preferred mode of return and its take-up is a key issue in return management. It should ensure that the rights and dignity of the migrants involved are respected.

Both origin and destination countries support a wide range of policies and programmes intended to facilitate sustainable voluntary return. These include programmes that assist migrants who opt to go back to their countries of origin, by facilitating their economic and social reintegration. For example, the International Organization of Migration (IOM) runs Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programmes to assist migrants who are voluntarily returning to their countries of origin.[1] Although this concept was conceived by the IOM and its member States in the 1970s, other agencies and entities now also operate programmes providing direct return assistance to migrants, based on similar concepts of voluntary return, informed decisions and integration responses to reintegration needs.

Many AVRR programmes have been evaluated internally by the IOM and externally by others. Systematic and comparative assessment is however needed to better inform policy (Paasche, forthcoming). Programme criteria and conditions vary significantly, and it is not clear which settings are the most effective in enabling return, or promoting sustainable return and reintegration. A lack of accessible data and consensus on how to define and measure programme effectiveness makes it more difficult to assess the impact of assisted voluntary return. Programme impact also varies across different types of migrants and settings.

1.2 Focus of this report

This report presents the findings of a study that explored the factors influencing the decision to return, including the role played by return policy interventions. The study also aimed to enhance understanding of the concept of sustainable return, how to measure it, and how to promote it. The study was conceived and commissioned as part of the Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Irregular Migration Research Programme[2] and supported by the IOM. The research was conducted by a team at the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, and involved fieldwork across 15 countries of origin, transit and destination.

1.3 Aims and objectives

The overall aim of this research project is to inform policies and programmes for assisting the voluntary return and reintegration of migrants, including irregular migrants and unsuccessful asylum seekers. Three specific objectives support this aim:

- Analysis of the migrant return decision. Key factors of interest may be conditions in the country of origin; the availability of work and support in the country of destination; and changes in family circumstances. It is also important to understand who is involved in the decision, and what information the decision is based on. All of these variables may be expected to vary across different groups, for example by age, sex and legal status.
- Development of a framework for defining and measuring sustainable return. There is no clear consensus on what comprises sustainable return, and how it relates to reintegration; and different studies and policy evaluations use different criteria. One commonly cited indicator for sustainability, for example, is the extent to which returnees re-migrate. To inform further research and policy, and encourage a more consistent and systematic approach, one of the objectives of this study is to provide a comprehensive definition of reintegraton, and develop an instrument to measure it.
- An assessment of what factors determine reintegration and sustainable return. Of particular interest is to what extent policy interventions, either before, during, or after return, can promote reintegration and sustainable return.

[1] The IOM defines assisted voluntary return as 'the administrative, logistical, financial and reintegration support to rejected asylum-seekers, victims of trafficking in human beings, stranded migrants, qualified nationals and other migrants unable or unwilling to remain in the host country who volunteer to return to their countries of origin'. It defines reintegration as '…re-inclusion or re-incorporation of a person into a group or a process, e.g. of a migrant into the society of his or her country of origin or habitual residence' (IOM, 2011).

[2] Information on the Irregular Migration Research Programme is at: www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research/.

1.4 Structure of the report

This report is in nine parts. Chapter 2 provides the 'headlines' of an extensive literature review contained in Appendix 2. The literature review is based on published and unpublished data and evidence. It highlights the main gaps in extant knowledge and provides the basis for the methodological and analytical approach adopted here. Chapter 3 provides more detail on the methodology, including the selection of case study countries, the recruitment of participants and methodological challenges. Chapter 4 provides an overview of the 15 origin, transit and destination case study countries, as well as of the 273 migrant and returnee respondents. These data are used for analysis in the report.

Chapters 5 to 8 contain the substantive analysis of the report. Chapter 5 considers the factors influencing the decision to return, further testing a model developed in an earlier study co-authored by one of the authors of this report. Chapter 6 develops a new definition of 'sustainable return', and an innovative return and reintegration index which is subsequently tested, and may also be adapted for future studies as well as for policy evaluations. Chapter 7 considers the factors that promote reintegration and sustainable return. These three chapters address the three main objectives for this study.

Chapter 8 is an exploratory chapter that bridges the three previous chapters, examining the inter-linkages between return decision-making, reintegration and sustainable return.

Chapter 9 summarises the key policy implications arising from the report, with appropriate health warnings concerning wider applicability. In the spirit of this being an exploratory study that aims to inform further studies, this chapter also outlines contours for further research in this field.

The report is supported by a comprehensive list of references and extensive appendices. The first appendix contains the full and in-depth literature review. Appendices 2, 3 and 4 summarise responses to the surveys in origin, transit and destination countries respectively, and also shows how the surveys were structured. Appendices 5 to 12 are brief, stand-alone reports on each of the countries of origin in this study; each covers background information, recent data on migration and returns, and the key findings from this research. Appendices 13 and 14 condense this information for all the transit and destination countries respectively. Appendix 15 presents a brief proposal for further research, based on the lessons learned from this study.

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This is a summary of the literature review at Appendix 1. The literature review was undertaken for three main purposes. First, it was to help identify gaps in knowledge and evidence and guide the overall project. Second, and more specifically, it was to inform the development of survey tools and target data analysis. Third, it was for use as the basis for developing an analytical framework, which is an important output for this project in informing further systematic research in this area.

Initial observations are that the academic literature on return and reintegration is relatively thin, tends to focus on the repatriation of refugees, and also is quite dated. A series of evaluation reports on IOM return programmes was also reviewed for this project, but on the whole these are more concerned with the achievement of project benchmarks and cost effectiveness, than explaining the return decision or process, or assessing the overall impact of policies.

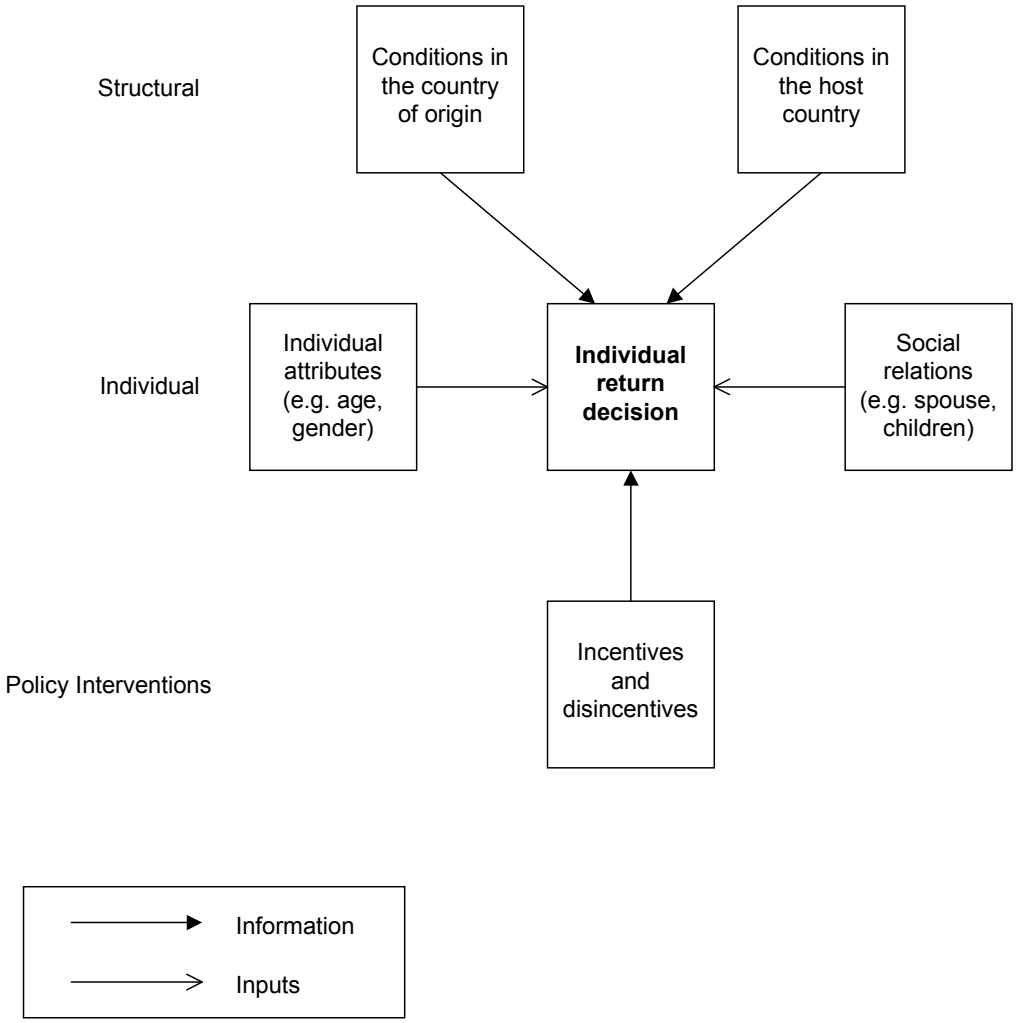
The current review is structured around three main themes, responding to the three main research objectives of the project as described in the last chapter and recapped here: (1) analysis of the migrant return decision, including factors that motivate or impede irregular migrants from returning voluntarily; (2) development of a framework for defining and measuring reintegration and sustainable return; and (3) an assessment of what factors and policies determine sustainable return.

2.2 Understanding the migrant return decision

While there is a well-established literature on how migrants make the decision whether and where to move, and some research on refugee return, there has been far less research on the migrant return decision-making process (Koser, 2013). It is reasonable to assume that some of the factors that help explain the decision to migrate may also apply to the decision to return—for example, that it is based on a comparison of opportunities at home and abroad, and that it is likely to be embedded in wider family strategies (Constant and Massey, 2002). However, there are also some important differences (Haug, 2008). For example, agents are less likely to be involved directly in the return process, and return usually does not involve a choice of destinations (at least at the national level). Most of the research on refugee return has tended to take place among refugees settled close to their country of origin. There is less academic research on the return decision by refugees in industrialised states, and still less among rejected asylum seekers and irregular migrants.

One of the few substantive and comparative studies on the return decision by asylum seekers, including rejected asylum seekers, was conducted for the United Kingdom Home Office in 2002–03 (Black et al., 2004). The study developed a simple model of the factors determining the decision to return (see Figure 2.1), that views the decision fundamentally as a comparison between political, economic and social factors at home and abroad. The decision is also posited to be influenced by individual and family-level or community-level factors, as well as by the policy framework. An essential part of the model is the extent to which decision-makers have information about conditions at home and about incentives and disincentives.

Figure 2.1 Factors determining the decision to return



The study, conducted among asylum seekers from eight nationalities in the United Kingdom (including, of relevance for this project, Afghans and Sri Lankan Tamils), established the following broad conclusions:

1. Security was cited as the most important factor determining return motivations, although its meaning varied between respondents from overall security in the country of origin to individual security on return. Employment also figured as an important factor, and analysis suggested that unemployment in the country of destination might encourage people to consider return but, equally, that employment does not deter them from considering return. The location of family members was the other principal factor cited, and there was a higher propensity to consider return among those without family in the United Kingdom and with family at home.
2. Younger respondents were more willing to consider return than older respondents, as were people without partners in the United Kingdom. People with children in the United Kingdom were less willing to consider return. There was no clear relationship between either sex or legal status and return motivations.
3. Assistance programmes, however configured, were not a decisive factor in return motivations for any respondents— although most respondents welcomed assistance once they had decided to return, in particular assistance with employment, training and money.
4. Almost half the respondents had never heard of assistance programmes. The majority of those who had, heard about them by word of mouth and many did not have an accurate impression of the programmes.
5. There was no information gap about conditions in the country of origin—those respondents in the United Kingdom who wanted to access information about their country of origin could do so.
6. The importance of security and employment in the country of origin for respondents in the United Kingdom suggested that sustainability issues may be a central factor in deciding whether or not to go home. However, some reported that they would not go home, even if the return was sustainable, while still others reported that they planded or expected to go home even if their return is not likely to be sustainable.

For the purposes of the current research, which is concerned with how rejected asylum seekers and irregular migrants can be encouraged to return voluntarily, it is worth highlighting the finding in the 2004 UK Home Office study that legal status was not apparently correlated with intentions to return. It is also worth noting that assistance programmes were not a primary decision factor in return motivations, something which has also been found in other studies. In a study in Norway of return decision-making by rejected asylum seekers from Afghanistan, found that the primary reason for selecting return packages was because '...all other options were worse', in particular the threat of deportation (Strand et al., 2008). Similarly, Black et al. (2004) found the threat of deportation was an essential component to take up of return programmes and called this the 'stick and carrot' strategy of policy-making. Therefore there is evidence that the threat of removal is a critical component to the take up of voluntary return programmes, whereas the programmes, in themselves, do not generally motivate return. There is no clear evidence that the size or content of return programmes changes this overall conclusion.

In the same vein, Collyer et al. (2009) found, in a study of returnees to Sri Lanka who had been living irregularly in the United Kingdom, that all returnees made the decision to return before being informed about return programmes. The anxiety of living irregularly 'wore people down' and affected their return decisions (Collyer et al., 2009: 27). Similarly an IOM study of Brazilian migrants in the European Union found that the primary motivation for return was a failed 'migration cycle' and that individuals had already made the decision to return prior to being informed of programme options (IOM, 2009).

2.3 Defining and measuring sustainable return

Surveying the literature, there have been four broad (and overlapping) approaches to defining sustainability, one distinguishing between individual and community-level impacts; a second focusing on comparisons with non-migrants and contemporaries after return; a third concerned with the re-establishment of networks; and a fourth that acknowledges there may be a significant difference between returnees' perceptions and on-the-ground realities. There has been far less research, however, on developing indicators to actually measure sustainability, which is one of the objectives for this project.

An early attempt to define sustainability for the purposes of measuring it distinguished 'individual' and 'community level' (or 'aggregate') sustainable return (Black et al., 2004). Individual sustainable return was defined as follows:

> 'Return migration is sustainable for individuals if returnees' socio-economic status and fear of violence or persecution is no worse, relative to the population in place of origin, one year after their return' (p. 39).

Aggregate sustainability was identified where:

> 'Return migration is sustainable for the home country or region if socio-economic conditions and levels of violence and persecution are not significantly worsened by return, as measured one year after the process is complete (p. 39).

A different approach to sustainability has tended to be adopted in the specific context of refugee return, focusing on the rights of the individual. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defines reintegration as:

> '...equated with the achievement of a sustainable return—in other words the ability of returning refugees to secure the political, economic, [legal] and social conditions needed to maintain life, livelihood and dignity' (UNCHR, 2004: 6).

This is furthered by:

> 'Reintegration is a process that should result in the disappearance of differences in legal rights and duties between returnees and their compatriots and the equal access of returnees to services, productive assets and opportunities' (UNHCR, 2004: 7).

According to UNHCR, reintegration equates to sustainable return. However, other sources define these concepts differently. In the case of voluntary migrant return, reintegration has been defined as:

> '...the process through which a return migrant participates in the social, cultural, economic, and political life in the country of origin' (Cassarino, 2008: 127).

The IOM uses a similar definition of reintegration as 'Re-inclusion or re-incorporation of a person into a group or a process, e.g. of a migrant into the society of his country of origin' (IOM, 2004: 54). Further specifications are made for different types of reintegration including social, economic and cultural reintegration (IOM, 2004).

Many people in poor countries—and even some middle-income and wealthier countries—do not achieve these aspirations systematically or on a regular basis. Resolving these tensions between universal aspirations and individual realities is important in understanding issues involved in reintegration and defining sustainability.

A final approach to defining sustainability—which applies across all of the other approaches briefly reviewed here—is that the perception of reintegration may be just as important—if not more so—than the realities. If a returnee perceives their living standards to have decreased relative to others, for example, or feels a sense of guilt or shame resulting from the migration experience, this may be an incentive to re-migrate.

Translating these various definitions into indicators for measurement and policy development is challenging and has rarely been undertaken, as noted in the following comment about evaluation from a 2006 study in Austria:

> 'Sustainability of voluntary return is seen as the criterion for the success of a return project. But in spite of this great importance of sustainability, return activities in Austria are not evaluated at all, or if so, then only unsystematically. Moreover, it is not quite clear which definition of sustainability prevails in Austria' (IOM and EMN, 2006: 46).

The diversity of definitions poses an immediate challenge to translating them into measurable indicators and an initial step in this study was to propose a single consolidated definition (see Chapter 6). This definition may be contested and require refinement, but an agreed definition of reintegration and sustainable return, is needed to effectively compare and assess the effectiveness of policies designed to achieve these outcomes.

The most commonly used indicator for the success of return programmes is the extent to which returnees do not re-migrate, and the extent to which their return dissuades others from migrating without authorisation. This has been referred to as 'physical' reintegration (Black et al., 2004). This is a key issue of concern. One study of returned Afghan rejected asylum seekers, for example, found that 74 per cent of respondents wanted to migrate again irregularly, suggesting that their reintegration was unsuccessful (Majidi, 2009). However, the brief review above suggests that this may not be a sufficient indicator. As shown, for example, some people may re-migrate even if their circumstances upon return are demonstrably better than when they first left, if their status in the community has decreased, or if their perceptions do not acknowledge their realities.

A third and related issue that arises from the preceding review is that the terms 'reintegration' and 'sustainable return' are often used interchangeably. It is reasonable to assume that these concepts are related—reintegration is usually a key precondition for sustainable return—but there may be instances where the concepts do not overlap. For example, people may return to their country of origin and stay long enough to be considered sustainable but without actually reintegrating. An example is where they would prefer to leave again but face obstacles to re-migrating. Equally, some people may reintegrate fully upon return, but still consider re-migrating. An example is if better opportunities arise elsewhere. Separating out these concepts, as well as understanding how they may be inter-related, is important. In this study it was difficult to access many respondents more than a year after return, which made it hard to draw firm conclusions on whether their return has been sustainable in the longer-term. Instead, this study focused on how to define and measure reintegration, noting that normally this is a critical step towards sustainable return.

2.4 Factors determining reintegration and the sustainability of return

A combination of individual and structural factors in both the origin and destination country have been found to influence reintegration and sustainability of return (Rogge, 1994; Black & Gent, 2006). An immediate and important policy implication is that the circumstances of migrants in the country of destination may influence their prospects for reintegration and sustainable return. What is less clear from the existing literature, however, is to what extent policy interventions in the form of assistance also promote these outcomes.

While it seems intuitive that individual factors such as age, sex and family ties may influence reintegration and sustainable return, the evidence is not conclusive. The 2004 United Kingdom study cited above, for example, found

that young single men who had returned to Bosnia and Herzegovina and UNSC resolution 1244-administered Kosovo* had better chances in the job market at home, but were equally most likely to take the risk to re-migrate (Black et *al*., 2004). The individual experience of the migration cycle may also impact the sustainability of return. In a recent study, Cassarino (2014) found that migrants with an 'interrupted' migration cycle, including assisted voluntary returnees unable to achieve their migration goals, had substantial difficulties reintegrating back home, such as being more likely to be unemployed. This is similar to other studies that have found rejected asylum seekers and migrants unable to obtain residence permits in the country of destination faced additional challenges upon return such as being unable to build sustainable livelihoods, and not feeling a sense of belonging in the return society (Ruben et al., 2009).

A range of agents may also be involved in the early stages of the migration cycle, variously influencing departure, movement and, potentially also entry and initial settlement. These agents range from legitimate recruitment agents, travel agencies, employers to illicit clandestine agents, travel agencies and employers, migrant smugglers and traffickers (Salt and Stein, 2002). There appears to be no research on how legitimate agents may influence return motivations or reintegration prospects. However, it is clear from several case studies that the involvement of smugglers at the start of the migration cycle may influence the course of the cycle. Most significantly, migrants may be reluctant to return at all if they are still in debt to smugglers after their initial migration. The impact of debt on reintegration and sustainability is unclear. While it heightens the need to find employment or alternative sources of income, it may expose returnees to direct threats from smugglers and, as a result of both these pressures, it may exacerbate the propensity to re-migrate (Koser, 1997).

There is also evidence that experiences after arrival in the destination country can influence both the propensity to return and whether return is sustainable. Here the distinction between individual and structural factors in the destination country blurs. Again the evidence is not conclusive. As a general observation, and contrary to a widely-held assumption, integration in the destination country may encourage sustainable return (Al-Ali et al., 2001; Bilgili & Siegel, 2013; Carling & Pettersen, 2012; de Haas & Fokkema, 2011). Regular employment should provide migrants the wherewithal to return and invest in their reintegration but, conversely, they may be unlikely to return unless they can secure a job at a commensurate level and salary in the origin country. Secure legal status enables migrants to return home on a regular basis and plan for return but, on the other hand, it provides an exit strategy after return which arguably may reduce the commitment to invest in reintegrating. More broadly it has been suggested that enabling transnationalism—basically economic and social relationships across borders—may facilitate sustainable return.
There are also structural factors in the origin country that influence individual propensities to reintegrate and remain. These include origin country policies towards returnees, including critical elements such as property restitution and citizenship rights, the attitudes of the local community and their families towards returnees, and the number of people returning at the same time (Kibreab, 2003; Rogge, 1994). Furthermore, safety and security in the origin country is central in decision-making factors in return. In a recent study examining returns from the Netherlands from 2001–11, it was evident that assisted voluntary return is much lower to countries with low levels of safety and security (Leerkes et al., 2014).

As noted above, the attitudes of the local population towards returnees can also be a critical factor determining sustainable return. In Afghanistan, for example, Schuster and Majidi (2013) found that deportees from Europe are treated as though they are 'contaminated'. Shame arising from a lack of acceptance from the local population for a failed migration attempt highly influenced the deportees' desire to re-migrate. Social networks are essential for a sustainable return by promoting connections and acceptance within the local community (Cassarino, 2004; van Houte & de Koning, 2008).

Finally, there is a suggestion that targeted programming can increase the sustainability of return (Whyte & Hirslund, 2013). This project will contribute to efforts to understand the role of different forms of reintegration assistance (such as cash support, psycho-social support, and different forms of in-kind support) in enabling sustainable return. This is a key research gap where anecdotal evidence is only available on small-scale and about individual programmes.
Table 2.1 categorises and consolidates the known main factors potentially affecting reintegration and the sustainability of return, combining individual and structural factors. It combines factors that emerged from the literature review with those based on the research experiences, and informal discussions prior to the fieldwork for this project. Perhaps the most important category missing from the table is assistance, for example, in the form of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programmes (AVRR). An important goal for this project was to integrate assistance into the analytical framework on return and reintegration, and make an initial assessment of whether and how it influences sustainable return.

* Hereinafter referred to as Kosovo/UNSC 1244.

Table 2.1 Key variables that may influence reintegration and the sustainability of return

	Variables from literature review
Returnees' characteristics	Age
	Sex
	Ethnicity
	Religion
	Rural/urban
	Sexual orientation
Experiences before exile	Pre-migration accommodation
	Pre-migration education
	Pre-migration employment status
	Pre-migration job
	Previous migration history
	Remittances received pre-migration
	Socio-economic status
	Number of dependents
	Sense of belonging
Decision-making factors in migration	Migrated via a smuggler or not
	Individual or collective decision
	Reason for migration
	Cost of migration
	Goals of migration
	Voluntary or rather forced migration (trafficking)
Experiences in country of destination	Migrated alone or with family
	Language learned
	Children educated
	Income
	Employment
	Discrimination
	Feelings
	Perceived value of experiences abroad
	Maintained ties to country of origin
	Sent remittances
	Freedom of movement
	Education
	Extent of social integration/friendships
Public policy on asylum	Legal status in country of destination
	Accommodation status in country of destination
Conditions of return	Return to pre-migration community
	Return alone or with family
	Ability to bring back assets and belongings
	Receipt of return assistance
	Receipt of reconstruction assistance
	Follow-up from return organisation
	Assets regained
	Acceptance within community
	Remaining migration debt
	Employment
	Household vulnerability
	Safety and security
The decision to return	Willingness to return
	Reasons for return
	Sources of information about return
	Influences in the return decision
	Threat of forced returns/forced removals

2.5 Conclusions and next steps

As indicated above, the intended contribution of this literature review is at least fourfold.
First, it can help identify gaps in knowledge and evidence, and several have become clear in the preceding analysis. Overall, there is not enough research and nor is the existing research recent enough to allow a confident answer to the central research questions for this project: how do migrants make the decision to return; what is sustainable return; and what determines it? While the current project will not provide categorical answers to these questions (and some limitations on this study have already been noted) it is one of the largest-scale projects undertaken on this topic, and has the added value of being genuinely comparative across a wide range of national settings. In addition, this project is intended to inform, in practical terms, further research.

A second contribution of the literature review was to help guide survey design and data analysis. A good example concerns which respondents to target in the country of origin. Black et al. (2004) propose that an assessment about the success or otherwise of return and reintegration should be measured at least one year after return, and this is reinforced by other research which stresses that reintegration is a long-term process (Fransen & Kuschminder, 2012). It can be difficult, however, to identify returnees one or more years after their return, and to expect them to recall critical decisions made during their return and reintegration. Similarly, the extent of the focus on returnees' perceptions or on-the-ground realities, or individual or aggregate level indicators of sustainable return, also influences survey design and the data required.

A third purpose of the literature review was to help develop an analytical framework that can be used as the foundations for further research in this area. There are some models and frameworks in the existing literature, for example, the model for understanding the decision to return illustrated in Figure 2.1 above. It is also possible to compile a list of factors that may influence the sustainability of return as in Table 2.1 above. However, this review also highlighted key factors that are not yet integrated in a consolidated framework. Examples are how experiences in earlier stages of the migration cycle influence those in later stages, and the role of policy interventions in supporting sustainable return and reintegration.

Finally, as asserted above, a review of the literature can also expose specific policy assumptions. Most of the (limited) research on the return decision-making process, for example, indicates that the removal of root causes may not be sufficient to ensure sustainable return, and yet this assumption appears to prevail in some instances. Equally, there is a degree of consensus in the research that the availability of assistance is not a factor in determining whether migrants will return voluntarily, including irregular migrants and rejected asylum seekers. Yet often policy debates concern what level of support to offer to incentivise return. In addition, there is no clear evidence to date that reintegration assistance reduces the propensity to re-migrate. Providing a better evidence-base to inform policy deliberations is clearly an important objective for this project.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

As stated in the Introduction (Chapter 1), a primary objective of this research is to develop a methodology for measuring reintegration and sustainable return as well as the relationship between these outcomes and factors influencing decisions to return. A key component of this was to pilot the methodological approach, and assess how far it could be replicated for future research. The intention was to establish a methodology that can also inform approaches to ongoing monitoring of assisted voluntary return and other return programmes, such as those delivered by the IOM.

This chapter defines the methodological approach used in this study by discussing: the choice of study countries and respondents; the methods of information collection; and methodological challenges encountered in the research, with suggested mitigation strategies for future research. Chapter 9 revisits the methodology, looking at its relevance and wider application.

3.2 Choice of study countries and respondents

The study countries were divided into the three groups of destination, transit and origin countries. These categories were applied for simplicity and comparative purpose, recognizing that, in reality, all study countries may fit more than one category.

3.2.1 Destination countries

Four destination countries were included in the study: Australia, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Australia was included as the project was conceived and commissioned under the department's Irregular Migration Research Programme, which is designed to establish an evidence-base to inform policy deliberations on irregular migration to Australia. The Netherlands was selected because of its diversity of assisted voluntary return programming. The United Kingdom represents one of the top destination countries for migrants and has among the largest assisted voluntary return flows globally. Finally, Switzerland was selected because of the regular increase in assisted voluntary return flows over the past five years. Between them the four destination countries encompass different regional migration networks, have different experiences with assisted voluntary return and return more generally, and represent different overall migration policy settings.

The participation criterion for the study was that the individual had to be eligible for assisted voluntary return. The requirement of eligibility differs between the study countries depending on their policies (as is explained in Chapter 4). Working within this basic eligibility criterion, the research team aimed to include diverse nationality groups within each destination country.

3.2.2 Origin countries

The eight origin countries included in this study were Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Iraq, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Viet Nam. These were selected as they are major source countries of asylum seekers in the destination countries (including irregular maritime migrants to Australia). While this enabled a reasonably large-scale comparison, even eight origin countries do not necessarily provide a comprehensive insight into return decision-making, reintegration and sustainable return on a global scale. In the initial project conception, Islamic Republic of Iran and Somalia were included as additional countries. However, due to difficulties for fieldwork in these countries, they were both excluded from the final study.

Fieldwork was completed in the capital city of each country, except for Iraq, Pakistan and Viet Nam. In Iraq, interviews were conducted in Erbil, the capital of the Kurdistan Regional Government, as it was first a safer location at the time of interviews, and received larger numbers of returns than Baghdad. In Pakistan, Lahore was determined to be a more appropriate location for the interviews than Islamabad, in part because of the capacity of the IOM. In Viet Nam, Vinh was deemed the best location.

In these origin countries the requirements for eligibility were threefold: first, the individual had to have returned a minimum of 12 months prior to the time of interview; second, the individual had to have returned from an industrialised state (that is, Europe, North America or Australia); and third, the individual had to have participated in assisted voluntary return. In some countries the first requirement was reduced to nine months (Afghanistan and Ethiopia) to facilitate access to a sufficient number of respondents. But for future research, where possible, the 12 months criterion should be maintained, as this is considered a minimum amount of time necessary to make any claims

regarding sustainability of return. In addition, in the majority of IOM programmes, assistance concludes at 12 months, meaning that returnees should be self-sufficient. In Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and Sri Lanka a small number of participants (2, 2 and 7 respectively) had not returned from industrialised states. Unfortunately, the numbers were too small to permit a comparison between return from richer and poorer states, although there are good reasons to suppose that the process may be different. All participants in the study had participated in assisted voluntary return.

3.2.3 Transit countries

The initial project conception included one transit country, Indonesia, because of its importance within the Australian migration context. However, to increase understanding of decision-making in transit, both Greece and Turkey were added as comparative transit cases. As indicated in Chapter 2, migration decision-making (whether to remain, move onward or return) in transit countries is understudied and this study adds significantly to the evidence-base, without claiming to be comprehensive or representative. The primary selection criterion in the transit countries was that the individual be eligible for assisted voluntary return. Within this selection criterion, the project aimed to include people who had volunteered for assisted voluntary return and those who had not, in order to widen of the perspective on decision-making factors.

3.3 Methods of information collection

This study included three primary sources of data collection:

- A comprehensive literature and policy review was conducted on assisted voluntary return and reintegration and sustainable return. The headlines of the literature review are presented in the previous chapter and the full review included as Appendix 1. This review in particular helped identify key factors to be covered in the surveys on return decision-making and sustainable return; as well as providing a basis for assessing where the findings of this study reinforce or vary significantly from previous studies (see Chapter 9).

- An analysis was conducted of data on returns from the various destination countries, and of IOM-assisted voluntary return data for the selected origin countries. The department facilitated access to returns data through requests to its counterparts in each destination country. An overview of the results of the destination country analysis is presented in the next chapter and is further elaborated in Appendix 14. To conduct an analysis of IOM returns data in each origin country, each IOM mission was asked to complete a detailed spreadsheet on the returnees to their country over the past three years. In some country contexts, this proved a difficult task, as IOM field staff were not trained on data collection and entry, and this task was additional to their full workload. For these reasons, it was not possible to obtain a full dataset from each country and the data analysis was restructured to focus primarily on aggregate returns statistics. The results of this analysis are shown in the next chapter.

- Finally, primary data were collected through interviews with migrants and returnees in the destination, transit and origin countries, as well as with key stakeholders wherever possible to gain further information on the context of assisted voluntary return. Further research would benefit from extending the range of key stakeholders consulted, for example to include representatives from national, sub-regional and municipal authorities.

A semi-structured interview questionnaire was used with migrants and returnees (Appendix 2). Semi-structured interviews allow for a balance of structured, close-ended questions and open qualitative questions that give the interviewee space to respond in their own words. Whenever possible, interviews were recorded in this way to capture the qualitative elements of the interview and provide direct quotes from interviewees. In future research, focus group discussions may be useful to complement interviews and provide more qualitative insights into elements of return.

A separate questionnaire was used in the origin countries and destination countries, and a slightly modified version of the destination country questionnaire was used in the transit countries. All of the questionnaires followed a life-cycle approach and, wherever possible, had the same questions to ensure comparability. The origin country questionnaire was based on seven key sections: experiences and life prior to migration; the decision to migrate; arrival and experiences in the destination country; decision-making factors in return; arrival and experiences upon return; current situation (including employment, living situation, and networks); and current challenges and reintegration. This questionnaire aimed to take a holistic view on reintegration and vulnerability, and formed the basis for the subsequent analysis in Chapters 6 and 7. The life-cycle approach was used to gather an understanding of the various factors that could influence reintegration and sustainable return as identified in the literature review (as summarised in Chapter 2).

Similar to the origin country questionnaire, the destination and transit country questionnaires were based on five key sections. The first three sections were more or less the same as the origin country questionnaire of life prior to migration, decision to migrate, and experiences in the destination country upon arrival. The fourth section then focused on the current situation in the country of migration with more detailed questions than the origin country questionnaire. The fifth section looked at decision-making factors in relation to return. Across all three questionnaires, decision-making factors in relation to return were kept as standardised as possible so that comparisons could be made between the three types of study countries (Chapter 5).

All three questionnaires included information on demographics at the end of the questionnaire. All interviews took place between April and September 2014.

3.4 Recruitment of participants

Recruitment of participants depended on the country context. In each destination country, the department assisted the research team by seeking the cooperation of the appropriate government authority. Through this participation, the government in each destination country connected the research team with appropriate individuals or organizations for arranging and completing interviews. In each country this worked slightly differently.

In Australia, both the department and the IOM requested interviews with clients in Sydney. Department clients unfortunately refused to participate in the study. It was suggested that a recent data breach had lowered client trust, and this arguably affected participation. All interviews in Australia were therefore completed with IOM clients in Sydney. It follows that the choice of respondents represents a bias towards those who have already decided to return. In the Netherlands, all interviews were arranged by the Department of Return and Repatriation. Individuals who no longer had a legal right to stay in the Netherlands were selected for interview in four different venues: family centres; detention centres; restricted-movement centres; and non restricted movement centres. The case workers approached their clients to participate in the interviews. As the interviews in the Netherlands were arranged directly by the Department of Return and Repatriation there was no bias towards return in these interviews.

In Switzerland, the interviews were arranged by IOM Bern in cooperation with its staff in asylum reception centres. Interviews were conducted in five different locations in Switzerland: Basel, Chiasso, Lugano, Zurich and Kreuzlingen. A strong effort was made to include both those who had and those who had not yet decided to return.

In the United Kingdom, all interviews were coordinated by Choices, the provider of assisted voluntary return in the United Kingdom since 2011. Interviews were conducted in both Manchester and London. Although an effort was made to include individuals who had not chosen to return, there was a strong bias in these interviews towards individuals who had already selected for assisted voluntary return.

In the origin countries, all participants were recruited by the IOM and the vast majority of interviews took place at the IOM office. In a few cases where it was not possible for participants to come to the IOM office, interviews took place in another location, for example in cafes. Table 3.1 shows the recruitment information for the origin countries. This includes the number of people called by the IOM, the number of people actually contacted, the number of refusals from people who did not want to participate in an interview, the number of ‘no-shows’ by people who had agreed to participate but did not show up to the interview, and the number of people actually interviewed. For any further research, the message from this table is that organizing sufficient interviews requires a significant input of time and resources.

Table 3.1: Origin countries participant recruitment

	Number of people called	Number of people contacted	Number of refusals	Number of no-shows	Number interviewed
Afghanistan	27	27	1	7	19
Bangladesh	50	35	1	0	25
Ethiopia	129	-	(35 agreed)*	16	19
Iraq	74	53	11	2	22
Pakistan	40	38	4	6	20
Sri Lanka	120	60	30	5	20
Sudan	47	-	22	7	17
Viet Nam	44	-	4	0	15

*The number of refusals was not recorded, however, 35 people agreed to an interview.

For the transit countries, as a result of each country's unique context, participants were selected in different ways. In Indonesia, all participants were refugees or asylum seekers living in IOM-provided accommodation in various locations in Jakarta, and the interviews were arranged by the IOM. In Turkey, the majority of interviews (19) took place at a removal centre in Istanbul and the remainder (6) at the IOM office. All interviews in Turkey were arranged by the IOM. In Greece, the majority of interviews took place at the IOM office in Athens. Participants were recruited at the IOM office from among those who had or were in the process of registering for assisted voluntary return assistance and had received pre-departure training for assisted voluntary return. Six interviews were conducted outside the IOM office and these arranged by a non-government organization.

It is evident that the method of recruitment affected the characteristics of the samples in the destination and transit countries. It is important to reiterate that the results of the study cannot be viewed as representative of the migrant populations in each study country and that this study is largely exploratory research on decision-making factors in relation return, which aims to inform future research in this area.

All the questionnaires were administered in face-to-face interviews by a researcher from Maastricht University. Informed consent was obtained at the beginning of the interview, and whenever consent was given the interviews were recorded. The majority of interviews were conducted with interpreters (79.3 per cent). Interpretation was provided by IOM native-speaking staff in all countries, except for Australia, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Turkey, where independent interpreters were used. While the use of IOM interpreters met the needs of the project, the researchers observed differences in respondents' behaviour and comfort in the transit and destination countries where independent interpreters were used. This illustrates the importance of interpreters being independent of return service providers in future research.

Table 3.2 shows the total number of people interviewed in each country. As there are more origin countries, the origin countries represent 55 per cent of the total sample. This is followed by the transit countries, representing 25 per cent of the total sample and the destination countries, representing 20 per cent of the total sample.

Table 3.2: Number of interviews per country

Country	Number of interviews	% of total sample
Destination		
Australia	7	2.5
Netherlands	15	5.3
Switzerland	18	6.4
United Kingdom	15	5.3
Sub-total	**55**	**19.5**
Transit		
Greece	30	10.6
Indonesia	15	5.3
Turkey	25	8.9
Sub-total	**70**	**24.8**
Origin		
Afghanistan	19	6.7
Bangladesh	25	8.9
Ethiopia	19	6.7
Iraq	22	7.8
Pakistan	20	7.1
Sri Lanka	20	7.1
Sudan	17	6.0
Viet Nam	15	5.3
Sub-total	**157**	**55.6**
TOTAL	**282**	**100**

It is important to note that in some countries a 'thank you' payment or transportation allowance was given to participants after completing the interview. The size of the allowance varied depending on the advice of the local partners.

3.5 Methodological challenges

As evidenced in Table 3.1 and noted above, in some of the study countries, recruitment was a challenge despite the best efforts of the IOM, the department and the relevant local government authorities and non-government organizations. Clearly it can be difficult to follow-up with people after they return. In some cases the IOM may not have had contact with the person for six or 12 months, as the monitoring and follow up contact with the returnees depends very much on the extent of the reintegration assistance provided and the nature of of the projects that benefited the returnees.[3] During this time the person may have changed their phone numbers (or not have a phone number), moved or re-migrated. In Ethiopia, Iraq and Sri Lanka there was a fairly high number of people whom the IOM could not contact. This study did not seek to trace people through methods beyond contacting them by phone. However, in one study conducted by IOM Bern, IOM staff in origin countries did work to trace what had happened to migrants by contacting their family and/or friends and visiting their homes. In this case they found that 11 per cent of returnees had re-migrated at the time of monitoring (IOM, 2013). For future research, where resources allow, it would be important to attempt to contact interview participants as systematically as possible. This is more feasible in countries where returnees are clustered in main cities than in countries where they are dispersed more widely. There may also be implications for how donors and the IOM gather and maintain data on assisted returnees, and for how donors, the IOM and other agencies should integrate more research elements into projects to be able to collect and analyse data. Even where potential respondents were contacted, as depicted in Table 3.1, refusal rates and 'no shows' were significant, especially in Ethiopia and Sri Lanka. There may be various reasons, including people not wanting to be rude by refusing to participate at the outset. However, this adds an additional challenge to recruitment.

[3]For example if migrants are only entitled to receive a one-off cash payment after arrival, or are not eligible for a continued process of assistance and longer-term reintegration assistance usually provided in-kind (where the IOM or a partner facilitates the provision of training, or purchasing of equipment for small business set-up), the ability to stay in touch with migrants decreases significantly to a one-off contact or no contact at all. This also affects the IOM's ability to recruit a considerable number of people for research purposes.

For recruitment in the destination and transit countries, a further challenge was to find an appropriate balance between people who were and were not interested in return. One reason is that in three of the four destination countries, return service providers played a central role, or worked alone, in recruiting participants. One recommendation for further work in this area is for a more diverse recruitment strategy that incorporates other organizations assisting migrants who would be eligible for assisted voluntary return. For a more representative understanding of decision-making on return, future research would benefit from contacting hard-to-reach groups, such as undocumented migrants living irregularly in transit and destination countries.

Challenges also arose during the interviews in different country contexts. On the whole, interviews were more challenging and participants were less willing to trust the interviewers in the destination countries. This makes sense as these participants were still in the process of making decisions regarding their return and trying to understand their rights and options to stay in the destination country. It was more common that interviews were not recorded in the destination countries as a result. As mentioned previously, it was also highly beneficial to have independent interpreters in the transit and destination countries to establish trust with the participants.

In addition, it was generally more difficult to discuss return in the destination countries. In particular, participants who were not interested in return did not want to discuss the subject. This is highly understandable, however, from a research perspective it is more difficult to assess their decision-making factors. There are no 'quick-fixes' for future research. Gaining confidence requires a trusted entry point, a neutral setting, independent researchers and interpreters, and time.

In the origin countries, certain questions also posed difficulties in certain contexts. Most notably, in the case of Pakistan, respondents were uncomfortable being asked the question, 'Do you trust the government?'. As discussed in Chapter 6, this presented a challenge for constructing the return and reintegration index used in this study, that was mitigated by simply assigning a blanket 'no' response to this question for all participants from Pakistan. In terms of the index, an additional challenge was that any time a participant did not want to answer a question, was undecided in their response, or did not know their answer to a question that was included as a variable in the index, their case had to be removed from the overall index and noted as missing data. In this project, the index was tested with different variables after the data collection was finalised. For future research, as the index is now established, researchers should focus on ensuring usable responses to all the variables in the index.

Six different researchers conducted the survey interviews. Training was held to go through the surveys at the beginning of the project, however, there were some interviewer inconsistencies. Further training and piloting of the survey with all interviewers could have improved these inconsistencies.

Noting the exploratory nature of this research, the questionnaire sought to include a wide range of elements that may affect sustainable return, reintegration, vulnerability and migrant decision-making. In reflection on the completed study, the questionnaire may be revised to be more succinct for future research.

Finally, and as alluded to above, this study has highlighted the need for further data recording by the IOM, something the IOM has identified as a priority. The IOM is developing a global database that will record key statistics and qualitative data on reintegration from its assisted voluntary return and reintegration programme beneficiaries. Better data recording is needed to inform analysis, research and policy development.

3.6 Conclusions

The methodology used in this study was established to be replicable across future countries of origin, transit and destination, and to enable comparison between and across these three categories of countries. The countries selected for study in this research represent a range of situations of destination, transit and origin countries for assisted voluntary return. The primary objective of the methodology in the destination and transit countries was to interview migrants eligible for assisted voluntary return regarding their decision-making factors on return. Recruitment was a key challenge. For future research, it would be valuable to work with a variety of actors in destination and transit countries to ensure a wide representation of migrants eligible for assisted voluntary return in different situations, and who may be engaging with different providers of assisted voluntary return in the selected countries.

In some of the origin countries, recruitment also posed a challenge. In future studies greater effort should be made to follow up with hard-to-reach returnees through visits and by contacting their family and friends. This requires investment of time and capital but would be a worthwhile endeavour.

This study also piloted a questionnaire developed to assess decision-making factors in return, and factors influencing the sustainability of return. As discussed in Chapter 6, with the return and reintegration index now provisionally completed, the questionnaire in the origin countries could be shortened to test it in the future. Finally, in terms of ongoing monitoring of assisted voluntary return for the IOM, the return and reintegration index presents a replicable tool that can be used for this purpose across any origin country.

4. OVERVIEW OF STUDY COUNTRIES AND PARTICIPANTS

4.1 Introduction

As explained in Chapter 1, this study aimed to take a comparative approach to understand the complexities of return decision-making and its implications for reintegration and sustainable return across a selection of destination, transit and origin countries. This chapter provides a brief overview of the context of the 15 different study countries and the participants. More detailed information on the countries is in Appendices 5 to 14. Through a brief profile of the countries and participants, and an overview of the differences in assisted voluntary return and reintegration programming, this chapter highlights the diversity of migration and return trends across the study countries, and provides the basis for the analysis in subsequent chapters.

4.2 Destination countries overview

The four destination countries in this study are Australia, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. These four countries have had very different migration and return trends over the last decade. Figure 4.1 shows the number of asylum applications in each country since 2004 based on UNHCR asylum trends data. There may be a discrepancy in some cases between the UNHCR data and the government data on asylum applications. However, for comparability, the UNHCR source is used below. In the United Kingdom figures have significantly decreased from 2004. Despite this decrease, the United Kingdom still receives the highest number of applications among the four countries. In Australia and Switzerland the steady increase to 2012 has since reversed, while in the Netherlands there was an increase in applications in 2012.

Figure 4.1: Number of asylum applications by destination country, 2004–13

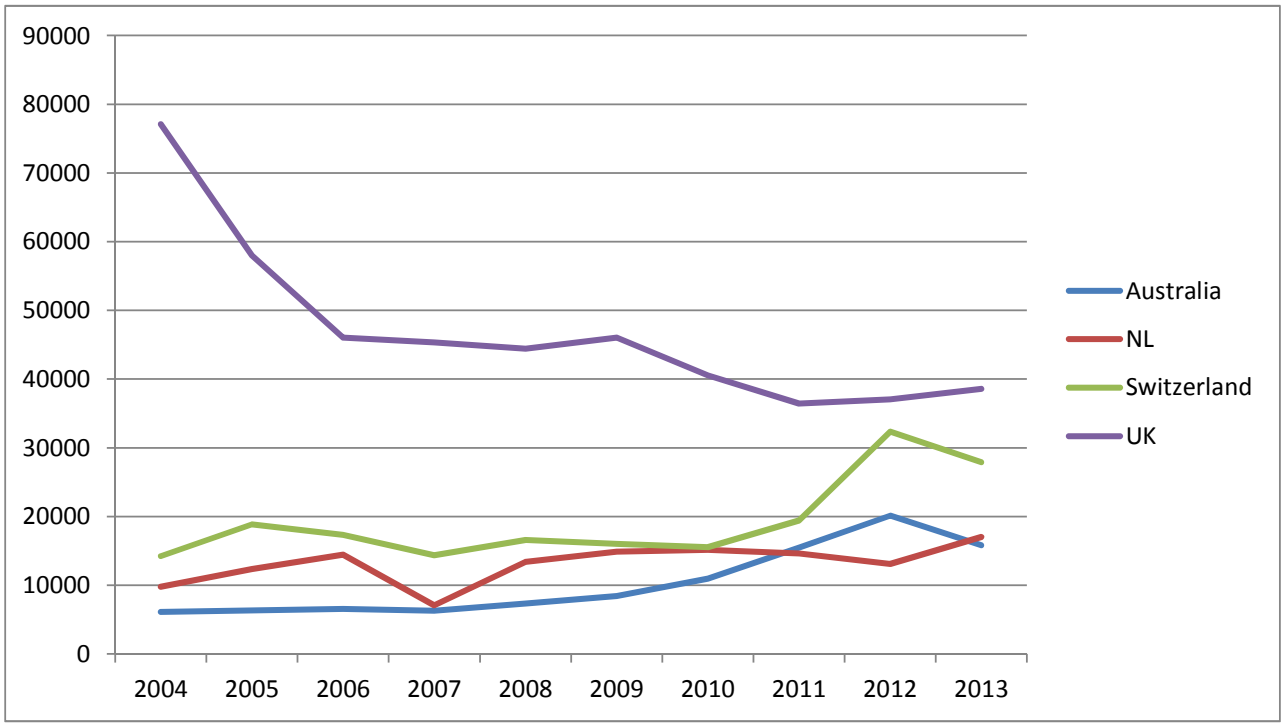
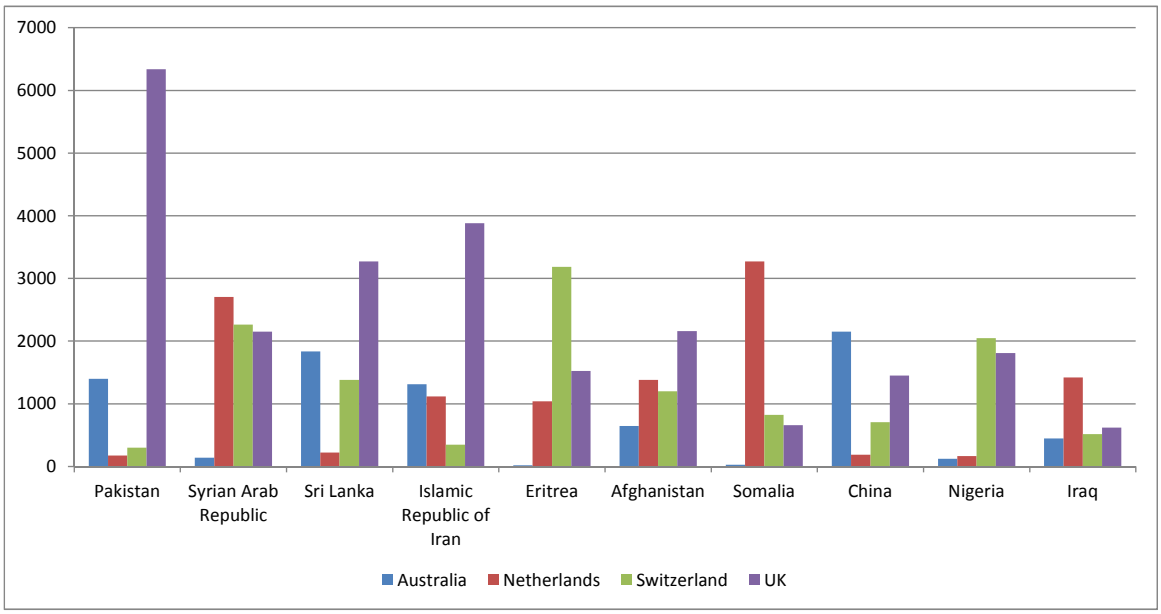


Figure 4.2 shows the number of new asylum applications by origin country to each destination country in 2013. These origin countries represent the highest number of asylum applications across the selected destination countries. Some significant differences are worth noting: in both Australia and the United Kingdom the top origin countries are Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Sri Lanka; in Switzerland the top origin countries are Eritrea, Nigeria and Syrian Arab Republic; and in the Netherlands the top origin countries are Iraq, Somalia, and Syrian Arab Republic. It is likely that migrant networks account for some of these patterns. For example, there is a large Pakistani community in the United Kingdom, but as outlined in the literature review (Chapter 2), a range of other variables also influence asylum patterns.

Figure 4.2: New asylum applications in 2013 by country of origin and destination

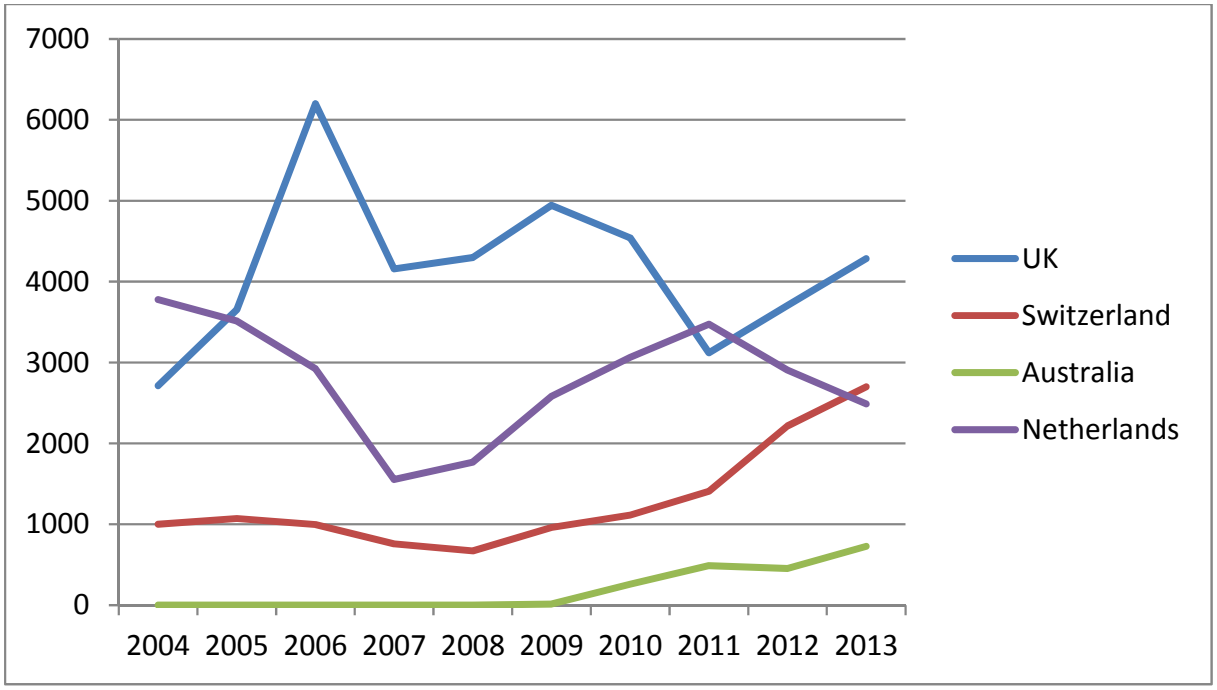


Source: UNHCR, 2014.

These asylum figures illustrate very different trends for each destination country. This arguably has an impact on return trends as research has indicated that individuals from different countries of origin are differentially inclined to opt for assisted voluntary return, in part related to conditions in their origin country (see Chapter 2).

Figure 4.3 shows the total number of assisted voluntary returns from each destination country from 2004–13, based on data from destination country governments, specifically requested for this project. As the United Kingdom has experienced much higher asylum applications, and asylum seekers are one of their key assisted voluntary return target groups, it is not surprising that the number of assisted voluntary returns from the United Kingdom is significantly greater than the other countries. The decline in the assisted voluntary return uptake from the United Kingdom may reflect the decline in asylum applications noted in Figure 4.1 above. In Switzerland, however, there has been a steady increase in the number of assisted voluntary returns despite a decline in asylum applications since 2012. Until 2014, the Swiss reintegration package was permitted to Dublin II cases in Switzerland. This means that, because assisted voluntary return is not generally offered in Italy, migrants could come to Switzerland to receive assisted voluntary return and a reintegration package. It was suggested by key informants in Switzerland that this had contributed to the increased take up of assisted voluntary return. From 2014, Dublin II cases were permitted return assistance in Switzerland, but not granted comprehensive reintegration assistance. Australia has much smaller numbers of assisted voluntary returns in comparison to the other countries. The Netherlands shows a decrease in assisted voluntary return uptake in 2011, which probably reflects a changing policy environment from 2010, when stricter asylum and return policies were implemented.

Figure 4.3: Total number of assisted voluntary return by destination country, 2004–13

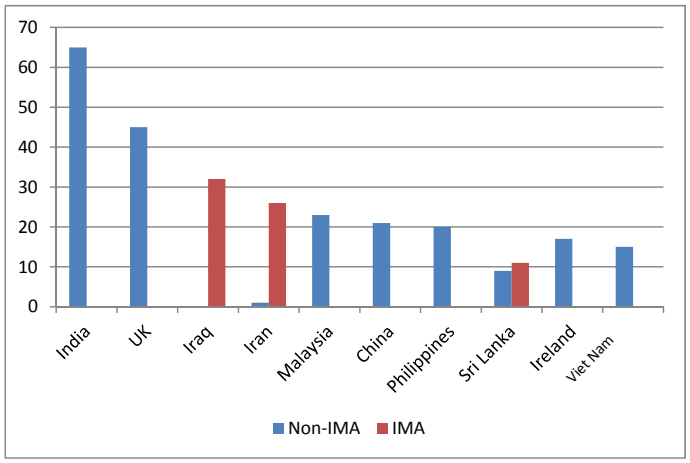


Source: Respective country governments, 2014.

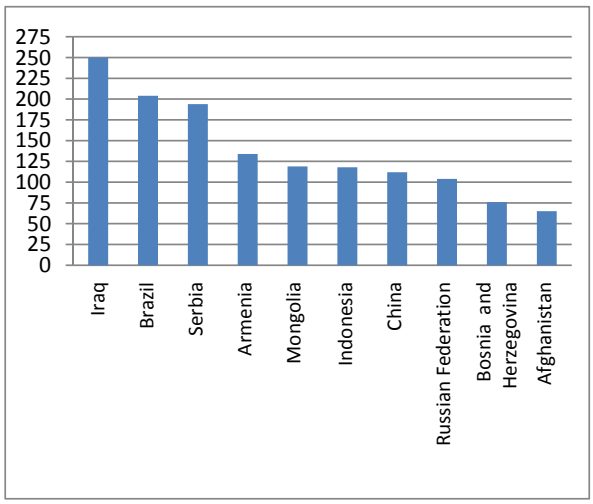
Figure 4.4 shows the top 10 countries for assisted voluntary return from each destination country in 2013. Iraq is the only origin country in the top 10 in all four destination countries. Otherwise the assisted voluntary return trends are quite different. Again, there are some similarities between the United Kingdom and Australia, with China, India and Sri Lanka among the top 10 countries for assisted voluntary return for both. However, countries for assisted voluntary return from Switzerland and The Netherlands are quite different from the United Kingdom and Australia.

Figure 4.4: Top 10 countries for assisted voluntary return by destination country, 2013

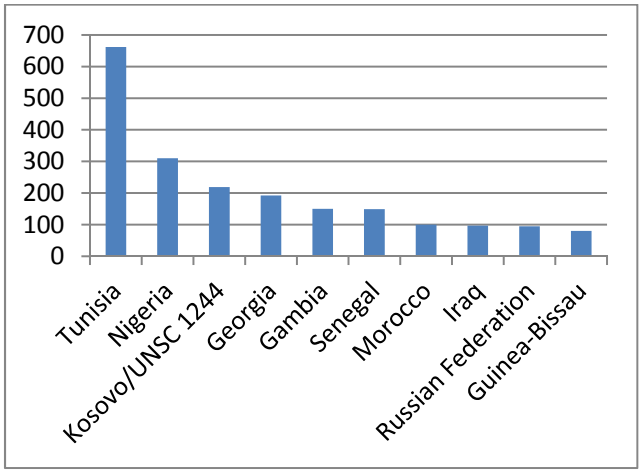
Australia



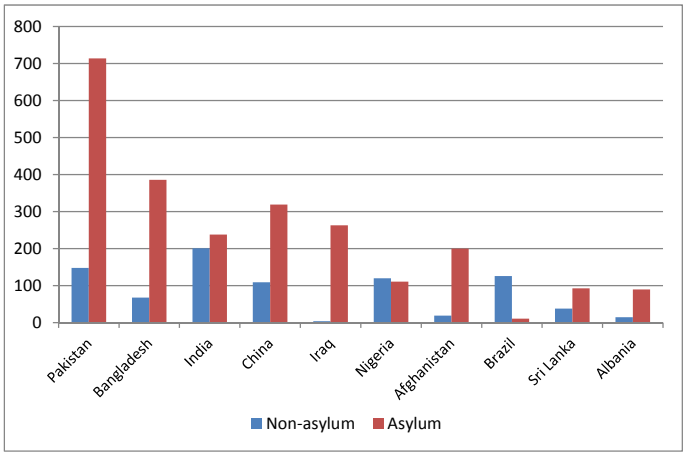
The Netherlands



Switzerland



United Kingdom



Source: Authors' own calculations based on respective country governments' data, 2014.

In addition to the differences in asylum and returns data, there are several differences in the policy environment, asylum process and treatment of asylum seekers in each destination country. Figure 4.4 highlights the prominence of assisted voluntary return as the end of the asylum process in the United Kingdom, as the majority of assisted voluntary returns are former asylum seekers. This is the also the case in the Netherlands where, according to 2013 statistic from IOM the Hague, 59 per cent of assisted voluntary return participants were asylum seekers or rejected asylum seekers. In Switzerland, at the federal level only asylum seekers are eligible for assisted voluntary return, so all individuals in Figure 4.4 above are current or rejected asylum seekers. In Australia, the data is represented differently, as it divides between 'non-irregular maritime arrivals' and 'irregular maritime arrivals'. However, migrants can be asylum seekers within both of these categories.

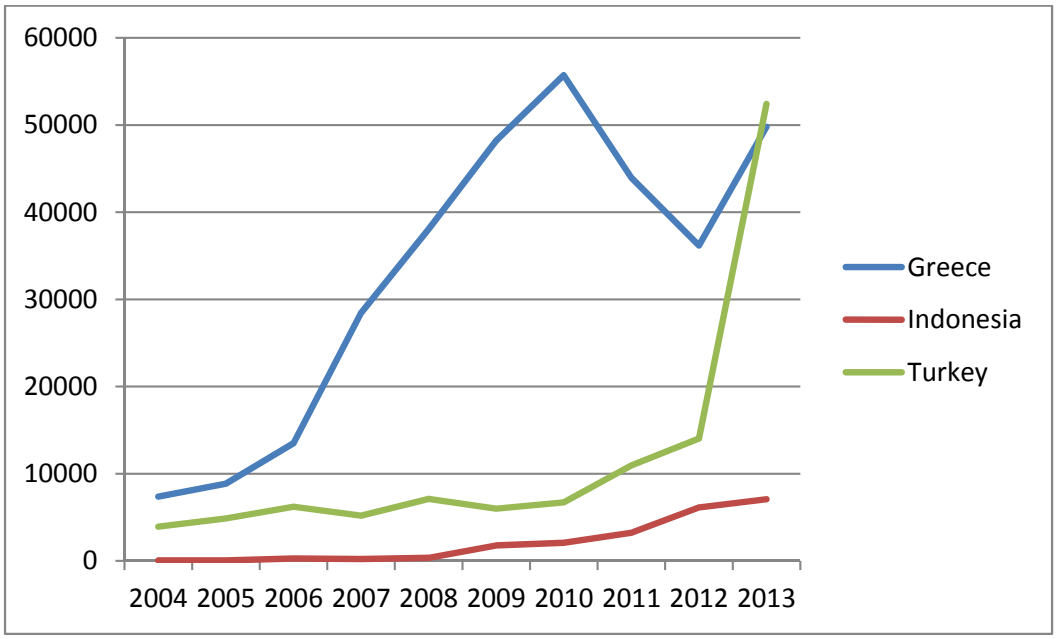
It was not within the scope of this study to examine the policy environment and asylum process in each country. However, it is important to keep these differences in mind in assessing decision-making factors in return across different country conditions.

4.3 Transit countries overview

The three transit countries covered by this study were Greece, Indonesia and Turkey. In each of these countries conditions and the migration situation have changed rapidly in the past five to 10 years, particularly as Greece and Turkey have increasingly become destination countries. Figure 4.5 shows the number of asylum applications reported by the UNHCR in each country from 2004–13. There has been a steady increase in each, with large accelerations in applications in Turkey in 2012 and in Indonesia from 2011. Although there was a decline in asylum applications in Greece in 2010, according to key informants this is most likely due to the fact that the asylum system was so overburdened in Greece that claims were not being made or processed.

It should be noted that the estimated size of the irregular migrant populations in each of these countries are thought to be much larger than the asylum seeker applications represented in Figure 4.5. In the fieldwork conducted for this study, the majority of participants in both Greece (70 per cent) and Turkey (84 per cent) had not applied for asylum. In the case of Turkey, 40 per cent of these participants were from Afghanistan and in May 2013, the UNHCR in Turkey stopped accepting Afghan asylum claims for processing and froze all existing asylum claims (Al Jazeera, 2014).

Figure 4.5: Number of asylum applications by transit country, 2004–13

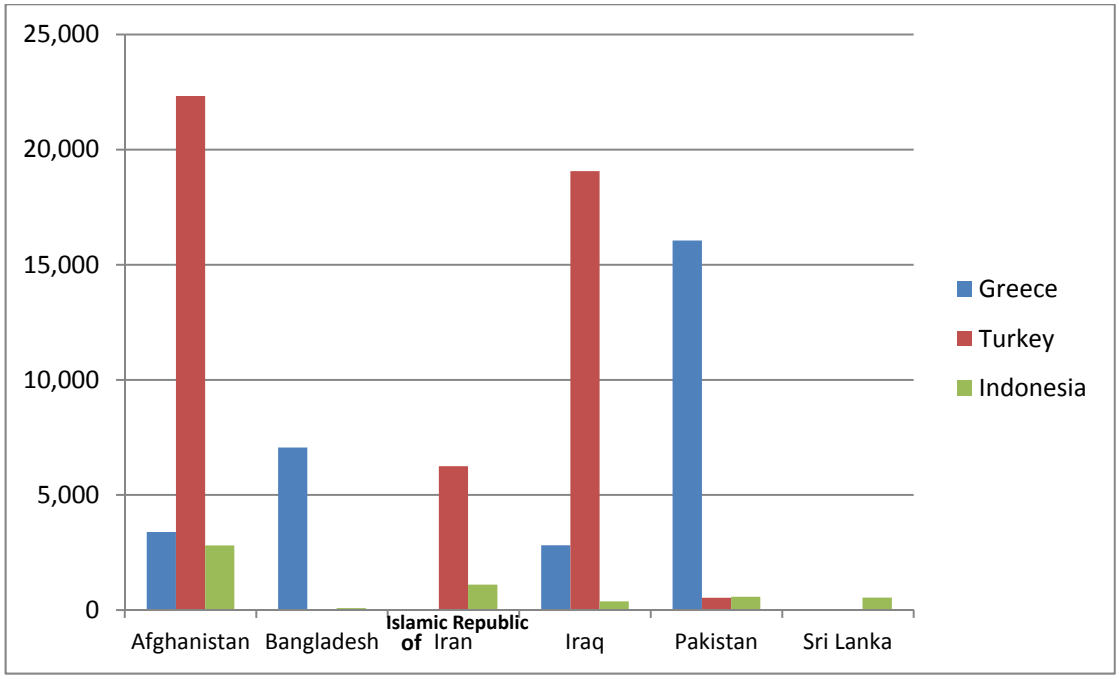


Source: UNHCR, 2014.

On the whole, the scale of asylum seeker applications in Greece and Turkey are substantially higher than to Indonesia. At the time of writing, the current insecurity in Iraq was resulting in Turkey hosting large numbers of Syrian refugees in particular.

Figure 4.6 shows the primary origin countries of asylum applicants to each transit country. This represents the total number of asylum applicants from each origin country who were residing in the country in 2013, not just the new applicants in 2013. There are striking differences in these numbers, which most likely reflects different migration systems between the countries. Although Afghans are no longer able to file new applications with the UNHCR in Turkey (and existing applications have been placed on hold by the UNHCR), they are still one of the largest asylum-seeking groups. According to the Turkish National Police, Pakistanis comprised the fourth largest irregular migrant group apprehended by police in 2011 (UTSAM, 2013). Although there is variation in the trends between countries, it is also noteworthy that the same origin countries are for the most part represented in each transit country.

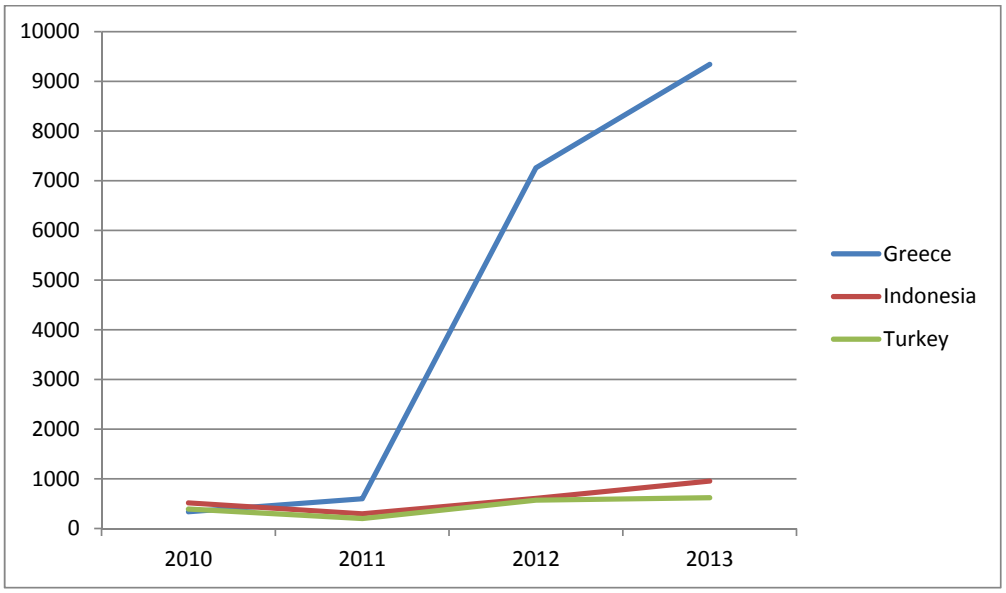
Figure 4.6: UNHCR caseload in 2013 by country of origin and transit



Source: UNHCR, 2014.

Figure 4.7 shows the number of assisted voluntary returns from each transit country per year. Greece has a substantially larger number of assisted voluntary returns, which is unsurprising as Greece has historically had the highest numbers of asylum seekers. Accordingly, as the primary provider of assisted voluntary return in Greece, IOM Greece also has a larger operation and staff than the other two transit countries. The office is also much more active in providing information to migrants regarding assisted voluntary return. For example, it regularly disseminates leaflets and posts large billboard posters in migrant areas and advertisements on the metro system. These types of information dissemination are not found in Turkey or Indonesia. In Turkey, there is not sufficient funding to support the increased assisted voluntary return that could be generated by similar information campaigns.

Figure 4.7: Total number of assisted voluntary return by transit country, 2010–13



Source: IOM, 2014.

Table 4.1 shows the primary countries of return from each transit country. It is striking that over half of all returns from Greece are to Pakistan. One obvious reason is the size of the Pakistani population in Greece, but a second reason highlighted by key stakeholders is that Pakistanis are specifically targeted in Greece by the police. They also have become a particular target for the 'Golden Dawn' movement. Twenty-five per cent of Pakistani participants (4) interviewed in Greece reported having been attacked and badly beaten while in Greece and additional participants reported living in fear.

Table 4.1: Top countries for assisted voluntary return by transit country, 2013

	Greece	Indonesia	Turkey
Pakistan	4957	84	133
Bangladesh	1444	197	14
Afghanistan	710	49	205
Georgia	405	-	25
Iraq	311	21	-
Islamic Republic of Iran	89	363	-
Sri Lanka	53	109	-
Morocco	247	-	-
Myanmar	-	82	-
Turkmenistan	-	-	71

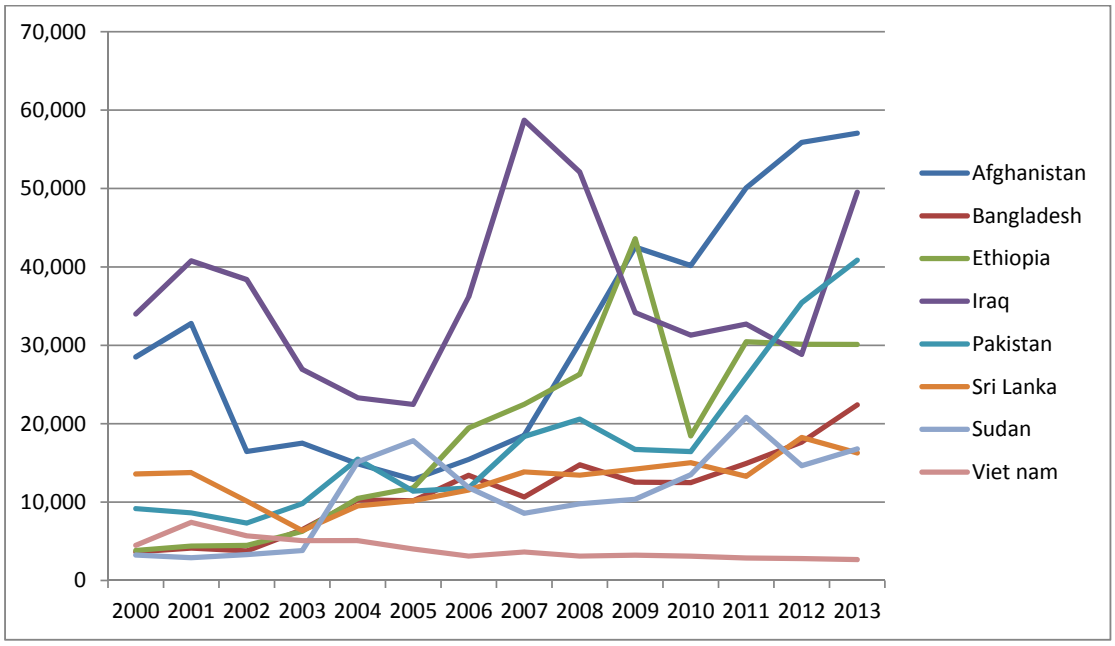
Source: Authors' own calculations based on IOM statistics.

Overall, there are more similarities between the asylum applications and assisted voluntary return trends in the transit countries than in the destination countries. One potential reason could be that more people in transit countries are less likely to have achieved a migration outcome than those in destination countries, and this would therefore impact on their decision-making, including in relation to return and assisted voluntary return.

4.4 Origin countries overview

Figure 4.8 shows the number of asylum seekers recorded by the UNHCR from each country of origin from 2000–13. From 2005, there was a large increase in applications from Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Pakistan, and a smaller increase in applications from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Sudan. Applications from Viet Nam are fairly consistent, while applications from Iraq show the most variation. It is hard to predict or explain asylum trends but the variations in conditions in the origin countries are likely to be an important reason for these different trends. While it is not within the scope of this report to provide a detailed analysis of conditions in these various countries, the relevance of origin country conditions becomes clear through the analysis of the return decision-making in the following chapter.

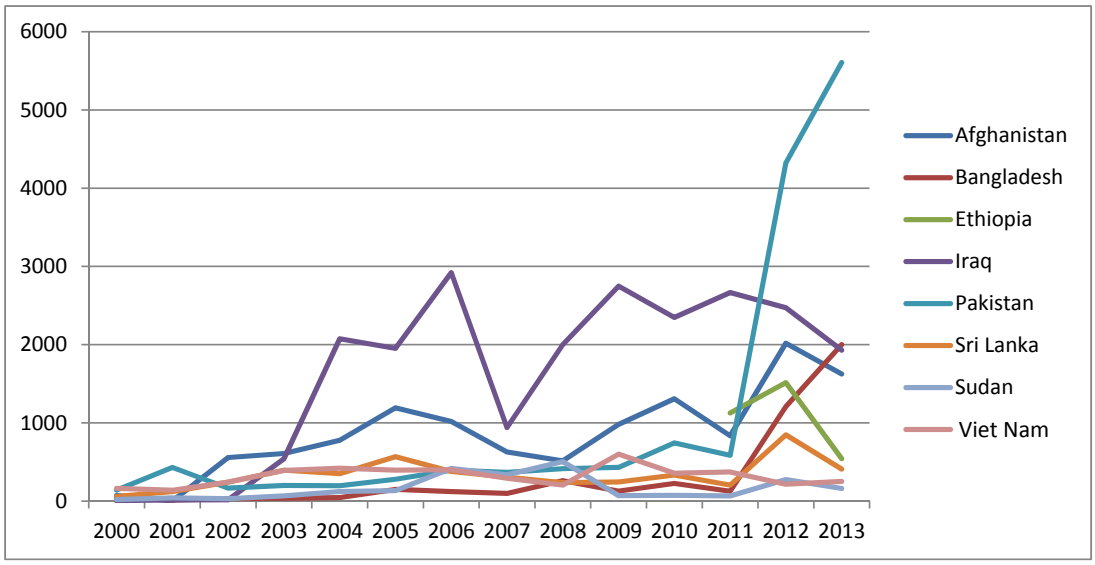
Figure 4.8: Number of asylum applications by origin country, 2000–13



Source: UNHCR, 2014.

Given these asylum application figures, it is not surprising that in absolute numbers, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq also have the largest numbers of assisted voluntary return as shown in Figure 4.9. The large increase in assisted voluntary returns to Pakistan and Bangladesh can also be attributed to the introduction of assisted voluntary return in Greece in 2010.

Figure 4.9: Total number of assisted voluntary return by origin country, 2000–13



Source: IOM, 2014.

Note: These figures reflect all IOM-assisted voluntary returns to the origin country. For example, these trends include group returns from the Middle East to Ethiopia, and therefore do not only represent returnees from industrialised states, as was one of the criteria for participant selection in this study (see Chapter 3).

The respective origin countries are experiencing very different caseloads of assisted voluntary return from a few hundred returnees in Sudan and Viet Nam to more than 5,000 in Pakistan. As mentioned in the previous section on assisted voluntary return trends from Greece, the majority of Pakistan assisted voluntary returns are from Greece and the large increase in 2011 is a result of the start of assisted voluntary returns in Greece in 2010.

4.5 Profile of the respondents

A total of 273 migrants and return migrants were interviewed across the 15 countries. Table 4.2 shows key characteristics of these participants that inform further analysis in the subsequent chapters. While migrant status is not shown (the categories vary too widely across the destination countries to permit a consolidated overview here), it is referred to throughout the subsequent analysis as an important variable. The data are aggregated across all the countries, as there were no striking differences in these characteristics across the countries. Disaggregated analysis is provided in the subsequent chapters. The average age of participants was 35, with a range of people interviewed from 17 to 88 years old. Four participants interviewed in transit and destination countries were unaccompanied minors at their time of arrival, all of whom were from Afghanistan. The situation of unaccompanied minors must be examined within a particular context of vulnerability; however, this was not within the scope of this study.

Across the different countries, the majority of participants interviewed were male (82 per cent of the sample). In some countries, such as Ethiopia, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam, there was a slightly higher representation of women, whereas only one woman was interviewed in Afghanistan and no women were interviewed in Pakistan. The limited representation of women in the study broadly reflects both the asylum and return trends across the study countries. Analysis in the next chapter suggests that men and women approach the return decision in different ways, which highlights why further research to try to redress the gender bias in this study would be valuable (for example, through focus group studies with women), to gain a less gendered understanding of the return decision-making process.

Table 4.2: Overview of all participants

	req	%
Age (in years)		
Range	17 to 88	
Average	35	
Sex		
Male	229	81.8
Female	51	18.2
Total[†]	280	100
Migrating unit (including those that have decided to return in destination and transit countries*)		
Individual	204	80.0
Nuclear family	23	9.2
Single parent family	14	5.5
Couple	9	3.5
Total[†]	255	100
Duration abroad (in years)		
Less than one year	47	16.7
1–5 years	103	36.5
5–10 years	65	23.1
10–20 years	28	9.9
20+ years	39	13.8
Total	282	100
Reasons for migrating		
Security/political situation	97	34.9
Employment	124	44.6
Education	11	3.9
Health reasons	6	2.2
Family formation/reunification	5	1.8
Housing	13	4.7
Other	22	7.9
Total[†]	**278**	**100**

Source: Authors' own calculations.

Note: *34 participants in the transit countries and 25 participants in the destination countries were planning to return via assisted voluntary return.

The majority of participants had migrated on their own (80 per cent). This reflects asylum trends to the destination and transit countries that primarily comprise individuals. The average duration abroad, either at the time of interview in the transit or destination country, or reported after return, was five years. It is interesting that close to half of the participants (46.8 per cent) had been abroad for five years or longer, and close to one quarter (23.7 per cent) for 10 years or longer. Scholars have argued that when a migration episode becomes too long, such as over 19 years, reintegration becomes more difficult upon return (King, 2000). The most frequently cited reason for migration was employment (44.6 per cent), followed by security/political situation (34.9 per cent).

Tables 4.3 and 4.4 show the origin countries of participants in the transit countries, and the countries from which participants returned to their origin countries. The participants interviewed in the transit countries are fairly reflective of the largest migrant groups within these transit countries.

Table 4.3 Countries of origin of participants in transit countries

	Freq.	%
Pakistan	20	28
Afghanistan	19	27
Bangladesh	6	9
Islamic Republic of Iran	6	9
Other	19	27
Total	70	100

Source: Authors' own calculations.

Table 4.4 Countries to which participants in origin countries had returned from

	Freq.	%
Norway	32	20
United Kingdom	27	17
Greece	25	16
Belgium	15	10
Switzerland	9	6
France	7	4
Other European country	25	16
Africa and the Middle East	10	6
North America and Australia and Pacific	7	4
Total	157	100

Source: Authors' own calculations.

It is interesting that the largest number of participants in the origin countries had returned from Norway. This indicates that there would be value in further comparative research that includes Norway. The Peace Research Institute Oslo has been conducting research on assisted voluntary return from Norway through the Possibilities and Realities of Return Migration (PREMIG) project and has further information on assisted voluntary return from Norway. Another possibility for further research may be to more closely try to match origin and destination countries. A large number of participants in origin countries had also returned from Greece, but this was only to Pakistan and Bangladesh. All 15 participants in Viet Nam had returned from the United Kingdom, which contributed to the high number of returns from the United Kingdom.

Participants interviewed in the four destination countries were from a broad mix of 32 different countries. Unlike the transit countries, there was no large representation from specific origin countries.

On the whole, the sample was broadly reflective in terms of citizenship in the origin and transit countries of the assisted voluntary return uptake to and from countries. In the destination countries the sample was the most diverse. As mentioned, future research could aim to further link destination and origin country trends in the country selection.

4.6 Assisted voluntary return programmes

Assisted voluntary return programmes vary considerably by country of origin, transit and destination. It is important to note that although the IOM is the largest provider of assisted voluntary return, including the full process of pre-return, return and reintegration, there are multiple other service providers involved in assisted voluntary return programmes in origin, transit and destination countries. It was not possible to map all of the different programmes in each study country in this project. However, some of the variations are described in this section.

Table 4.5 below shows the differences in eligibility for assisted voluntary return in the destination and transit countries in this study. In addition to the differences in eligibility for assisted voluntary return, there are also differences in entitlements (for example, whether applicants are eligible for return assistance and/or reintegration assistance) as well as in the levels and types of assistance on offer. For instance, in Switzerland, Dublin II migrants are only eligible for return assistance of 500 Swiss Francs and not for the full reintegration package, with the exception of the country-specific programme for Guinea. The reintegration package in Switzerland varies by country and tends to be higher for countries that have a migration partnership with Switzerland, which was not the case for any of the origin countries in this study. In the Netherlands, on the other hand, there are more than five different providers offering different types of return assistance. In the United Kingdom all return logistical assistance is through the organization Choices (with the IOM providing reintegration in some origin countries and a variety of other actors in other countries). In Australia assisted voluntary return is through the IOM.

Table 4.5: Types of migrants eligible for assisted voluntary return in the destination and transit countries

	Australia	The Netherlands	Switzerland	United Kingdom	Greece	Indonesia	Turkey
Current asylum seekers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Rejected asylum seekers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Irregular migrants	X	X	X*	X	X	X	X
Individuals in detention		X		X	X	X	X
Other migrants	X			X			

* The cantons of Geneva and Vaud offer assisted voluntary return for irregular migrants.

Reintegration assistance can range from the low end of a few hundred Euros (usually named by the IOM as 'pocket money' or 'immediate cash assistance') to the high end of €5000 with longer-term reintegration modalities (including in-kind assistance). Differences in packages are dependent on the cost of living and business start-up in the country of origin and whether it is an individual or members of a family unit returning.

In the transit countries studied, all assisted voluntary return is provided by the IOM and there is a wide range of eligibility. The assistance available is quite different between the three transit countries. In Turkey, for example, returnees are given a plane ticket and assistance in getting the right documents for return (such as medical check and identification papers), but no reintegration assistance. In contrast, return and reintegration packages in Indonesia range from a return ticket home and USD 50 to USD 2000 per person for a family of up to five, to certain countries.

Due to the large caseload in Greece, the IOM operates two separate programmes, one for return assistance and the other for reintegration assistance. Return assistance includes a plane ticket home and a €400 cash grant regardless of the country of return. In order to receive reintegration assistance, applicants must prepare a plan as to how they will use it. They need to have some experience (ideally three to five years) doing what they propose to do, such as running a shop or farming, and they need to have a plan that can be feasibly implemented given the community or family support they have in the place of return. Applicants who have a local business partner are more likely to receive the assistance. Selected applicants, regardless of origin country or type of business receive €1500 for reintegration assistance. The majority of returns from Greece receive return assistance but not reintegration assistance.

Finally, it is important to recognize that the IOM offices in origin countries manage returns from multiple countries with various packages, forms of in-kind assistance and monitoring required. For countries with high numbers of returnees, this can be a complicated process, and in the countries with low caseloads this can also be challenging as specialised staff for supporting reintegration might not be available due to lack of regular funding. In addition, when examining assisted voluntary return, the country of migration takes on a prominent role not only in terms of experiences in that country, but also in terms of assisted voluntary return packages and options for return.

4.7 Conclusions

This chapter has highlighted the differences in asylum and return trends across the 15 different countries examined in this report. It provides a brief overview of the differences between country contexts, particularly as relevant to the different study groups and country contexts that form the basis for the subsequent analysis. It is important to reiterate that the sample of migrants and returnees in this study are not representative of their respective country contexts. Further research would be required with a much larger sample to draw conclusions regarding each country case.
The analysis from this chapter has already indicated two key issues to be explored further. First, conditions in the destination and transit countries play a vital role in decision-making factors in return, and this is discussed in the following chapter. Second, there is a gender bias in the sample that should be examined further in regards to decision-making factors in return and reintegration. However, further work is required to provide a fuller understanding of the specific challenges women face in return, and the challenges faced by other vulnerable groups such as children, youth, unaccompanied migrant children, migrants with health related needs and victims of trafficking. These issues are explored further in the following chapters.

Finally, for the range of reasons cited above, this study has been unable to systematically assess how different types and amounts of assistance may differentially influence the return decision-making process, or subsequent reintegration and sustainable return. As explained in the Chapter 9 (Conclusions) and Appendix 15, this is considered more appropriate for an evaluation than a research study, and would require a very different methodological approach.

5. UNDERSTANDING THE DECISION TO RETURN

5.1. Introduction

One of the conclusions from the review of the limited existing literature on return decision-making (Chapter 2) was that this decision is complex and may be unpredictable. Multiple factors are usually involved, including individual factors ranging from previous experiences of migration through personal aspirations and psychological issues. This means that it is hard to extend findings from one person or one group to any other person or group.

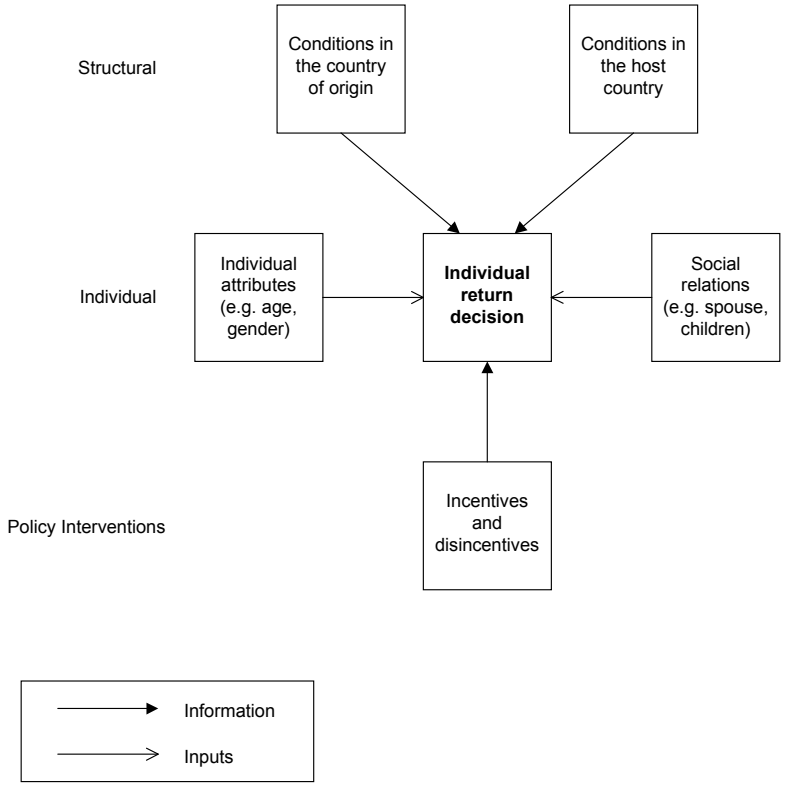
Nevertheless, this research has the potential to provide new insights into the decision to return. It is based on a relatively large dataset, collected during fieldwork and through interviews with 273 migrants and return migrants in 15 countries. Most of the limited studies on return include only interviews in destination countries. In contrast, this study included interviews in destination, transit and origin countries. This allowed for a holistic perspective on the return decision, covering people who have not yet made the decision, those who have, and those who have already returned and can provide a retrospective. Lastly the data are used to test a model of return, which may provide a framework for further comparative research.

The first section of this chapter provides the analytical framework for the remainder, restating the simple model described in more detail in Chapter 2 above. The subsequent section provides a detailed analysis of the relative importance of the variables discerned in the model, including comparing and contrasting the decision-making factors as reported in transit and destination countries. The conclusion summarises the key findings of the chapter.

5.2 Model of the return decision-making process

As explained in detail in Chapter 2, the model shown here again in Figure 5.1 has been used in this study for the purposes of research design and subsequent analysis around the return decision-making process. It conceives the individual return decision as being influenced by: 'structural' conditions (conditions in the origin and destination country); individual conditions including individual attributes and social relations; and policy interventions. The model also recognizes the significance of information about conditions in origin and transit countries, and about policies, which may vary significantly between individuals and groups.

Figure 5.1: Factors determining the decision to return



5.3 Factors influencing the return decision

Table 4.3 in Chapter 4 summarised the propensity of respondents in destination countries to return. To recap: about 60 per cent had decided to return; 21 per cent decided not to return; and most of the remainder was undecided. These proportions are not surprising as the majority of respondents in destination countries were identified for this study by the IOM and therefore had probably already sought information about return programmes.

To better understand the return decision, the surveys in destination, origin and transit countries included similar questions (see the summary of responses in Appendix 2 to 4), identifying the factors affecting the return decision, how the decision was made, and the role of assistance programmes.

Table 5.1 shows aggregate data on the factors influencing the decision to return. This is aggregated across country categories (origin, transit and destination) and across the broad categories of conditions identified in Figure 5.1 above. Across all the respondents in all the countries surveyed, conditions in the destination country were cited most often as an important factor in the decision whether to return (by 54.2 per cent of respondents) and cited significantly more frequently than any other factor. This was particularly the case for respondents reporting from the origin countries. The second most cited category was individual factors, followed by social factors, policy interventions, and lastly conditions in the origin country.

Table 5.1: Decision-making factors by category, all countries

	Origin		Destination		Transit		Total	
Category	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Conditions in origin country	11	7.0	5	9.1	8	13.1	24	8.8
Conditions in destination country*	93	59.2	27	49.1	28	45.9	148	54.2
Individual factors	59	37.6	22	40.0	13	21.3	94	34.4
Social factors	40	25.5	23	41.8	19	31.1	82	30.0
Incentives/ disincentives (policy interventions)	32	20.4	13	23.6	5	8.2	50	18.3
Sample size	157	-	55	-	61	-	273	-

*For transit countries this refers to the country in which they are currently living, not their intended destination.
** Total at the end of each category refers to the total number of individuals who have at least one factor in that category.

It is not entirely surprising that this finding contrasts with the research on refugee return reviewed briefly in Chapter 2 (which emphasises conditions in the origin country) given the different reasons for leaving the origin country (refugees versus mainly economic migrants). However, the contrast with other research on asylum seekers is more striking. Among the asylum seekers surveyed for the United Kingdom Home Office 2002–03 study cited in Chapter 2 for example, security and employment opportunities in the origin country were identified as the most important factors determining return. Even in the wider literature on migration and development, it is often emphasised that return for development is unlikely to take place unless conditions in the origin country are conducive. Yet within this study, conditions in the origin country appeared to be relatively unimportant in the decision-making process, and were also cited as least important by those who had already returned.

There is one more contrast worth highlighting here before more detailed analysis below. Much of the literature on asylum and irregular migration in particular suggests that policy settings and conditions in destination countries may not be the most important factor in determining immigration trends and patterns. However, the initial findings of this research suggest that policy settings and conditions in destination countries may be critical in determining the return decision.

Table 5.2: Number of individuals choosing each decision-making factor, all countries

		Origin		Destination		Transit		Total	
Category	**Factor**	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**	**Freq.**	**%**
Conditions in origin country	Employment opportunity or job prospects in origin country	4	2.5	1	1.8	1	1.6	6	2.2
	Political change or change in legal status in origin country	2	1.3	1	1.8	0	0.0	3	1.1
	Improvement in security situation of origin country/end of conflict	3	1.9	2	3.6	0	0.0	5	1.8
	Better Living conditions in home country compared to destination	2	1.3	1	1.8	1	1.6	4	1.5
	Felt political commitment or desire to help rebuild country of origin	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Unsafe conditions in home country	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	9.8	6	2.2
	Total	**11**	**7.0**	**5**	**9.1**	**8**	**13.1**	**24**	**8.8**
Conditions in destination country	End of work/study permit in host country	6	3.8	4	7.3	0	0.0	10	3.7
	Cannot support self/dependents financially	17	10.8	10	18.2	8	13.1	35	12.8
	Difficulty finding employment/no right to work	44	28.0	17	30.9	19	31.1	80	29.3
	Negative decision regarding asylum request	33	21.0	7	12.7	0	0.0	40	14.7
	Lack of security, or being discriminated against in host country	10	6.4	1	1.8	3	4.9	14	5.1
	Lack of access to social services/health care	7	4.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	2.6
	Tired of being in detention center	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	6.6	4	1.5
	Total	**93**	**59.2**	**27**	**49.1**	**28**	**45.9**	**148**	**54.2**
Individual factors	Psychological problems (for example depression or frustration)	12	7.6	5	90.1	1	1.6	18	6.6
	Tired of living as undocumented	20	12.7	10	18.2	5	8..2	35	12.8
	Inability to meet migration aspirations including work or educational goals	10	6.4	7	12.7	5	8..2	22	8.1
	Dignity of return as a normal passenger	1	0.6	1	1.8	1	1.6	3	1.1
	I felt I had no other choice	25	15.9	5	9.1	3	4.9	33	12.1
	Total	**59**	**37.6**	**22**	**40.0**	**13**	**21.3**	**94**	**34.4**
Social factors	Nostalgia about home country and way of life	5	3.2	4	7.3	2	3.3	11	4.0
	Family (desire for reunification in country of origin)	24	15.3	19	34.5	14	23.0	57	20.9
	Changes in family circumstances (e.g. death of relative)	12	7.6	6	10.9	8	13.1	26	9.5
	Problems of integration in destination country	5	3.2	0	0.0	n/a	n/a	5	1.8
	Shame of return	0	0.0	1	1.8	1	1.6	2	.73
	Total	**40**	**25.5**	**23**	**41.8**	**19**	**31.1**	**82**	**30.0**
Incentives/ disincentives (policy interventions)	To benefit from voluntary return programmes offered by destination country	19	12.1	6	10.9	1	1.6	26	9.5
	To benefit from an incentive offered by origin country	1	0.6	0	0.0	1	1.6	2	7.3
	Destination country policies	2	1.3	4	7.3	1	1.6	7	2.6
	Political change in destination country (i.e. most crackdowns, more hostile)	5	3.2	1	1.8	0	0.0	6	2.2
	Given a period of time to wind up affairs and leave voluntarily (i.e. to comply with the law)	15	9.6	4	7.3	3	4.9	22	81
	Total	**32**	**20.4**	**13**	**23.6**	**5**	**8.2**	**50**	**18.3**

*Total at the end of each category refers to the total number of individuals who have at least one factor in that category.

5.4 Conditions in the origin country

As explained above, very few respondents in any origin, transit or destination country identified conditions in the origin country as influential in their decision whether to return. As a result, the total number of responses is very small, and not suitable for detailed analysis. There was only one item within the broad category of conditions in the origin country not cited as relevant by any respondent at all, and that was a sense of political commitment or desire to help rebuild the country of origin. It is likely that this would be a more relevant consideration for returning refugees, or return members of the diaspora.

5.5 Conditions in the destination country

As highlighted above, across all the respondents, conditions in the destination country significantly outweighed any others as factors identified as influencing the return decision. The data in Table 5.2 provide more specificity. For 80 respondents across all the countries surveyed (almost 30 per cent of the respondents) not having the right to work or difficulty in finding employment was cited as important. The second most cited (by 40 respondents or 14.7 per cent) was a negative decision on an asylum request. Ranked sequentially after employment and asylum status were financial factors (35 individuals or 12.8 per cent); a lack of security and discrimination (14 individuals or 5.1 per cent); the expiry of a work or student permit (10 individuals or 3.7 per cent); a lack of access to social services (seven individuals or 2.6 per cent); and that the respondent was 'tired of being in a detention centre' (four individuals or 1.5 per cent).

Given the prevailing discourse in many migrant destination countries that access to social services is an important magnet for asylum seekers and other migrants, it is interesting that no respondent interviewed in any destination country cited lack of access to these services as a factor influencing their return decision. It is not clear from the data whether this was not much of an issue because most respondents legally had access to social services, had found alternative access, or simply had not required these services by the time of the survey, but the conclusion stands that for the vast majority access to social services was not apparently a 'make or break' issue in considering whether or not to stay in the destination country. Second (recognizing the very different meaning of the term 'security' among most origin and destination countries) more respondents (14) reported insecurity in the destination country as a factor than those concerned with insecurity in their origin country (6).

Table 5.3 below allows for disaggregation across the various origin, transit and destination countries. It is particularly noteworthy that conditions in the destination country were cited as an important factor by more respondents who had returned to their origin country than by those still living in the destination country at the time of the survey (59.2 per cent compared with 49.1 per cent). It may be that circumstances were not as bad after return as expected, and so origin country factors had receded in their minds, or that perceptions of the challenges of life in the destination country had magnified after return. It is also worth noting that the variable 'difficulty finding employment/no right to work' category was roughly equally prioritised by respondents in transit countries (31.1 per cent) and destination countries (30.9 per cent), in both cases by only about one-third of respondents. In destination countries at least some of the remaining two thirds may have had the legal right to work. In transit countries, however, it is unlikely that any of the respondents did. This may imply that it was relatively easier to find informal work in the transit countries in question.

5.6 Individual factors

Of the five categories listed in Table 5.2 (conditions in origin countries; conditions in destination countries; individual factors; social factors; and policy interventions), individual factors were the second most cited category influencing the return decision, by just over one-third of respondents. Of the specific variables covered within this category, of most concern was that people were 'tired of living as undocumented', followed by 'I felt I had no other choice', 'inability to meet migration aspirations', 'psychological problems', and the importance of 'dignity of return as a normal passenger'. This last variable was only cited by a total of three respondents. Yet it is often assumed that one of the reasons rejected asylum seekers and irregular migrants subscribe to organized return programmes is to avoid the indignity (and potential subsequent reintegration challenges) of deportation.

The quotes below provide some more qualitative insights into the role of various individual factors in influencing the return decision:

> 'There is nothing there for me. You just eat and sleep, no school no work, it's like a prison. So it's better, when I returned I really became normal and peaceful in my mind. When I was there, I cried every day.
>
> Ethiopian, age 32, returned from the Netherlands

> 'You know, living here is very hard. Especially for those who are alone and for women who are alone here... So I hope your research helps the migration community to be better...There is no activity and the process is so long and it makes us more stressful, more depressed.'
>
> Iranian, age 29

Table 5.3 below provides further insights into the relevance of individual characteristics in the return decision-making process. It focuses on respondents in destination and transit countries only, and divides them into three categories covering those who had decided to return at the time of the survey, those who had decided not to return, and those who were undecided. While a small number of respondents (seven) in destination countries were undecided about their return plans, none were apparently undecided in transit countries. Perhaps circumstances in transit countries left little space for doubt. The categories (decided to return, decided not to return, undecided) were then correlated with various individual characteristics including age, sex, marital status, children and whether the respondent had migrated alone, provided in the profile of respondents in Chapter 4.

Table 5.3: Decision regarding return, by personal characteristics and migration indicators (frequencies), destination and transit countries only

Indicator	Destination countries				Transit countries		
	I have decided to return	*I have decided not to return*	*I don't know*	**Total**	*I have decided to return*	*I have decided not to return*	**Total**
Age							
18–29	9	3	1	13	22	11	33
30–39	13	6	4	23	14	9	23
40+	12	3	2	17	5	8	13
Total	34	12	7	53	41	28	69
Sex							
Male	28	9	5	42	36	19	55
Female	6	3	2	11	5	8	13
Total	34	12	7	53	41	27	68
Married							
Yes	15	8	3	26	12	10	17
No	19	4	4	27	29	18	47
Total	34	12	7	53	41	28	69
Has children							
Yes	15	7	4	26	17	9	26
No	19	5	3	27	24	19	43
Total	34	12	7	53	41	28	69
Migrated alone							
Yes	30	6	4	40	39	27	66
No	4	6	3	13	2	0	2
Total	34	12	7	53	41	27	68

* The year spans (e.g. 18–29 years) means equal to or more than the lower number but less than higher number.

The data on age show no obvious trends. The majority in each age category in both transit and destination countries had decided to return, with the exception of people aged 40+ in transit countries (of whom five had decided to return and eight not to). These findings contrast with those reported in the United Kingdom Home Office study , which found that younger respondents were the most willing to consider return, although the age categories used for that study were more fine-grained than those for the current study. Another contrast is that the majority of respondents interviewed for the United Kingdom Home Office study were aged 18 to 29 years old, while in this study the majority age group was 30 to 39.

The data on sex are a reminder (see Chapter 4) that this study covered significantly more men than women. As stated, addressing this disparity would be a valuable focus of further research. Of the 42 men interviewed in destination countries, 64 per cent had decided to return, 19 per cent had decided not to return, and 17 per cent were undecided. Among the 11 women interviewed, six had decided to return, three had decided not to return, and two were undecided. In transit countries, overall almost twice as many participants had decided to return as the number who had decided not to return. However, more women had decided not to return than to return. The small number of women interviewed makes it hard to draw conclusions but, as illustrated in the quote below, for at least some women the decision whether to return may largely be made by their husbands:

> 'Actually I wanted to stay longer in the UK, but then my husband, at that time a driver. He had a car and was a driver without a license, and he was caught by the police and he was deported. I followed my husband back, otherwise I wanted to stay.'
>
> Vietnamese, age 32, returned from the United Kingdom

Table 5.3 also correlates return intentions with whether or not the migrants were married and had children. There are no clear patterns concerning marital status. In both destination and transit countries more respondents, both married and unmarried, had decided to return rather than not to return, although the differentials varied quite widely (for example, in transit countries almost as many married people had decided not to return as the number of married people who had decided to return). There is also no clear pattern when it comes to children. In both transit and destination countries more people, whether or not they had children, had decided to return than those who had decided not to return. As explained in Chapter 3these findings are skewed to an extent by the fact that most respondents for this study were identified via the IOM or other service providers, and were therefore likely to have already engaged with those providers on return.

The correlations between return intentions and whether or not the respondent migrated alone are more interesting. The significant majority of those who had migrated alone to destination countries had decided to return, whereas a small majority of those who had migrated alone to transit countries had decided not to return. More of those who had not migrated alone to destination countries had decided not to return than those who had decided to return, whereas it was the opposite in transit countries.

5.7 Family/community level factors

Factors broadly categorised as 'social factors' (Table 5.2) were cited third most often among all the categories of factors identified in the model in Figure 2. By far the most important was a desire to rejoin family members at home, cited 57 times. As a single factor, this is the second most cited across Table 5.2, following the difficulty of finding work under the 'conditions in destination country' category. Here is a strong reminder that migration, and return migration, are as much social processes as they are economic and political processes. And as the literature review in Chapter 2 found, it is difficult (legally, practically and sometimes ethically) for policy to intervene directly in social processes of migration. Another social factor was changes in family circumstances (cited 26 times). It is unclear whether this refers to changes in circumstances among family in the destination country or the origin country, but it seems more likely to be in the latter. Nostalgia about the origin country and its way of life was cited nine times:

> 'I missed the homeland. When we were in the country I just wanted to go out. I missed my country so much, missed everything from the trees to the corner of the street, everything I missed. I cried during the first two years.'
>
> Sudanese, age 38, retuned from Greece

Other emotional factors were also cited:

> '…mother was sick, very sick and this was the main reason for me to return back, no other reasons. The results of my asylum claim came late, and I did not have time enough to wait. So if my mother was not sick I would never have returned.'
>
> Sudanese, age 28, returned from Sweden

Perhaps the most surprising results in this category were that problems of integration and the shame of return ranked at the bottom of the variables. Many of the challenges of integration, for example to do with legal status and finding a job, are covered elsewhere in the survey and data. However, the specific factor of 'integration' could have been expected to figured more highly here.

Another way that social factors intersect with the return decision-making process is where other family members are involved in making the decision. Only 15 per cent of the respondents in this study had made the decision to migrate alone. As shown in Table 5.4 family members and friends were also involved in the return decision-making process.

Table 5.4: Involved in decision-making factors regarding return (multiple responses possible)

	Origin		Destination		Transit		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Family in destination	21	13	9	16	1	2	31	12
Family in transit country	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a
Family in origin	60	38	18	33	33	72	111	43
Friends in destination	32	20	8	15	2	4	42	16
Friends in transit country	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	4	n/a	n/a
Friends in origin	4	3	0	0	3	7	7	3
Government authorities in destination/transit	16	10	12	22	6	13	34	13
Government authorities in origin	4	3	0	0.0	1	2	5	2
IOM in country of destination/transit	28	18	3	5	2	4	33	13
IOM in country of origin	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Employer in destination/transit	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Other (rejected) asylum seekers	2	1	1	2	0	0	3	1
No one else	41	26	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Other	10	6	12	22	1	2	23	9

Reporting on their decisions after they had already returned home, respondents in origin countries named family members back at home as the most important influence in decision-making (38 per cent). Family members in the origin country were also most involved in the decision whether to return for those interviewed in destination countries (33 per cent) and transit countries (72 per cent). The particularly high response in this category for the latter group was presumably because so few had family members in the transit country to consult, whereas for those who had made it to their destination, family members there were also significantly involved in the decision. These findings illustrate the importance of policy interventions being considered not just at the individual migrant level, but also in the wider family context.

Finally, 13 per cent of respondents in transit and destination countries reported that both government authorities and the IOM were involved in the decision. Among respondents interviewed in destination countries, 22 per cent reported that government authorities had been involved in the decision, compared with only five per cent referencing the IOM.

5.8 Policy interventions

It is not clear from this study if policy interventions play an important role in the decision whether to return. As an entire category, this was only the fourth most important of the five categories considered in the survey: cited by only about one-fifth of the respondents. Equally, as discussed, the variables considered here overlap and probably combine to influence the return decision. It is also worth reiterating that aspects of the return decision may be beyond direct policy intervention, for example regarding certain individual and social characteristics.
Table 5.2 identifies the various specific factors grouped together as 'policy interventions'. The most important, cited 26 times, was the possibility to benefit from voluntary return programmes, closely followed by compliance with the law to leave voluntarily.

This basic analysis deserves greater attention. One reflection on these data is that return policy may be most effective when it combines 'sticks' with 'carrots'. The respondents weighed almost equally the lack of any other option other than to return (a 'stick') with the prospect of return assistance (a 'carrot'). This has important implications, as explained in Chapter 9. In addition, these findings reinforce an assertion made in the literature review (Chapter 2) that one reason migrants take-up return programmes is because the alternative (to be deported) is unacceptable. The reason for this is outlined earlier in this chapter. Apparently the shame of return is not of real concern, nor the desire to return as a 'normal passenger'. Instead, what is implied here is that the main concern of migrants is to abide by the law. It may be asserted that, even though some migrants do not abide the law when they enter or settle and work in a destination country, once they have decided to return, it may be that abiding by the law becomes more important.

5.9 Information

As well as having assistance programmes in place, it is equally important that their intended beneficiaries know about them, understand who they apply to, what they offer, and under what circumstances. Migrants' knowledge about immigration policy in particular may often be subject to rumour and speculation (see Chapter 2). To begin to explore whether or not there is an information gap around assistance for return, respondents in origin and destination countries were asked what they knew about assistance programmes and how they knew about them.
Across all four destination countries surveyed, 47 respondents had heard of assistance programmes and only seven had not. It is somewhat surprising that any respondents had not come across these programmes, as they were identified by the IOM, other return service agencies, or the government. Arguably this finding provides a control for the entire study: it is unlikely that any of the respondents had not heard of assistance programmes, but for some reason they did not acknowledge that they had. The majority (about 55 per cent) had heard about return programmes from government authorities or their caseworkers, while a further 15 per cent had heard from the IOM, and 12 per cent from friends or family in the destination country.

Table 5.5: Information on assisted voluntary return (AVR) programmes

	Destination		Transit		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Had previously heard of AVR assistance						
Yes	47	87	45	75	92	81
No	7	13	15	25	22	19
Total	54	100	60	100	114	100
If yes, found out about AVR assistance from…						
Government authorities/caseworker	23	55	5	11.1	28	32
IOM (other than native counsellor)	6	14	8	17.7	14	16
Other NGO/IO	3	7	5	11.1	8	9
Others in asylum accommodation	1	2	1	2.2	2	2
Friends/family in destination country	5	12	2	4.4	7	8
Friends/family in transit country	0	0.0	14	31.1	14	16
Friends/family in origin country	1	2	6	13.3	7	8
Other	3	7	4	8.8	7	8
Total	42	100	45	100	87	100

It is worth separately considering information dissemination in transit countries—a significant gap in existing research that this study can at least start to fill. In the transit countries, 45 respondents (75 per cent) knew something about return programmes. Of these, 14 reported receiving the information from friends and family in the transit country; eight from the IOM; and the remainder from government authorities, a non-government organization, friends or family in a destination country, and friends or family in the origin country, in that order.

5.10 Conclusions

Based on the model of return decision-making presented above and explained in Chapter 2, this chapter has drawn on data from respondents across the origin, transit and destination countries to try to understand the decision to return. Overall respondents ranked the five main categories of factors influencing the return decision as follows: by far most important were conditions in the country of destination, followed in order by individual factors, social factors, policy interventions and lastly conditions in the origin country. As discussed this ranking is striking and in contrast to most other studies on return, in particular the positions of the final two categories.

Within these broad categories, the following specific variables were found to be most significant for the respondents in making their decisions: the difficulty of finding employment/no right to work; tired of living as an undocumented migrant; a desire to reunify with family at home; the opportunity to benefit from voluntary return programmes; and job prospects at home.

Discerning policy implications from this analysis is challenging, not just because of the limitations of the methodology noted in Chapter 3, but also because in reality the categories and variables distinguished here intersect and influence each other. Even though it may not be possible to highlight specific policy interventions, a number of wider policy implications are flagged here. First, the results suggest that neither 'sticks' nor 'carrots' alone work as policy interventions, and instead a judicious mix may be most effective. Second, there may be certain aspects of the return process that are largely beyond the influence of policy interventions, for example some of the social and cultural factors that may influence attitudes towards return and towards women. Finally, there is a reality check: policy interventions were not considered by most participants as a fundamental reason for their decision, and some said they did not even know about return programmes and other assistance programmes.

6. DEFINING AND MEASURING SUSTAINABLE RETURN

6.1 Introduction

The terms of reference for this project specifically identified as a discrete objective the development of a framework for defining and measuring the sustainability of approaches to voluntary return and reintegration. Such a framework was necessary to design the methodological approach for this project and to structure analysis in the following chapter (Chapter 7), much as the return decision-making model provided a framework in the last chapter. However, while the model for return decision-making drew on earlier research, sustainable return has not been modeled previously, and developing a framework was an original contribution for this study. By testing the framework used here, this study is able to assess its value for further research in this field.

This chapter first defines sustainable return in this study, then details the analytical framework for sustainable return and finally applies the framework with the data collected in the origin countries.

6.2 Defining sustainable return

As stated in the literature review (Chapter 2), there is currently no single agreed definition of sustainable return. Still several key elements can be distinguished from across the definitions overviewed in the literature review. These include:

- *Reintegration*—Reintegration and sustainable return are usually intrinsically linked. A migrant can arguably not be sustainably returned if they have not reintegrated into the country of origin.
- *Re-migration*—This can include an intention to re-migrate or an actual re-migration, of which the intended or actual re-migration may be regular or irregular. This measure can be problematic, however, in that desires to re-migrate may occur for multiple reasons such as study purposes or family reunification. This means it is possible people are sustainably returned, but still desire to re-migrate. Methodologically, assessing an intention to re-migrate is also difficult.
- *Subjective opinions/individuals' perceived situation*¬—It is recognized that individuals' perceptions of their own situations can be as important as objective measures of their situation. This is centrally important for sustainable return (and the potential for re-migration) as migration is based on a complex series of decision-making factors, often reflecting an individuals' perception of their situation, as demonstrated in Chapter 5.
- *Temporal elements*—A key question for defining sustainable return is when is an individual sustainably returned? Does this occur after six months, 12 months or three years, for example? Different studies reviewed in Chapter 2 have used each of these timeframes. Moreover, a cross-sectional study can only assess sustainable return at one particular moment in time. This reflects a static assessment of a fluid process that can change over time.
- *Current status compared to pre-migration status*—It has also been argued that if a returnee is not in a worse situation than they were before to their original migration, they can be considered to be sustainably returned. However, as their pre-migration conditions would have instigated their initial migration this is problematic in terms of providing a benchmark for return.
- *Status compared with the local population*—Sustainable return and reintegration are frequently assessed as a comparison of the circumstances of the returnee with those of the local population. This can be problematic, however, in that returnees' perceptions of their return may be very different to their actual relative status. It is also unclear which segment of the local population is most appropriate to compare with.
- *Individual or family/community/aggregate level*—A critical distinction in the definition of sustainable return is whether the unit of analysis is the individual, family or community. Sustainable return will be defined differently across these levels.
- *Type of returnee*—Several definitions either directly or indirectly make a reference to the type of returnee referred to. The most common distinction is between refugee and non-refugee returnees.

For the purposes of this study, the components above reflect critical issues that must be considered in defining sustainable return. A number of considerations guided the definition adopted in this study. First, it focused on individual returnees, recognizing (as highlighted in Chapter 5) the role the family and community may play in the return and reintegration of individuals. Further research could usefully focus on family and community members. Second, this study did not make an assessment of the local population, and therefore cannot (objectively) compare returnees' status relative to that of the local population in this definition. The proposed definition and approach does, however, highlight the importance of self-perception and includes both subjective and objective indicators. Reflecting the ambiguities of re-migration for assessing sustainable return, re-migration has been excluded from this definition. However, the

relationship between sustainable return and re-migration is discussed. Finally, the focus of this study was people who have returned voluntarily and with assistance (mainly through assisted voluntary return programmes). Clearly for a different study, with different parameters, a different definition of sustainable return might be more appropriate.

In this study, therefore, 'sustainable return' is therefore defined as when:

> The individual has reintegrated into the economic, social and cultural processes of the country of origin and feels that they are in an environment of safety and security upon return.

This definition assumes that reintegration is a necessary precondition for meaningful sustainable return. It adopts a comprehensive perspective on reintegration across the dimensions of economic, socio cultural and political-security processes. This definition also highlights that the returnee must perceive they are in conditions of safety and security upon return, which should remove the impetus for re-migration at least in the foreseeable future.

According to this definition, sustainable return is achieved by: economic reintegration whereby an individual is able to sustain a livelihood and is not in a situation of economic vulnerability; social and cultural reintegration whereby the returnee is actively incorporated into the receiving society, for example at the local community level; and political-security reintegration whereby the returnee feels they have access to safety and justice upon return.

Within this study, as stated in the methodology (Chapter 3), participants were interviewed at a minimum of nine months since return. Twelve months was the initial selection criterion, as this was considered the shortest amount of time required since return to gauge sustainability. However, it was not feasible to meet this requirement in some countries. As mentioned above, this is a somewhat arbitrary time period as there is no evidence about the timeframe required for sustainable return to be achieved. Further research is required to examine the relationship between time since return and sustainability of return.

6.3 An analytical framework for measuring sustainable return

Using the definition and building on the measures established above, a return and reintegration index was created, combining the three dimensions of economic, socio-cultural and safety-security criteria. As return and reintegration cannot be measured by one variable, an index is useful because it allows all the variables of interest to be combined to create a single measure.

The methodology used to develop the index follows that developed by Roelen and Gassman (2012)—based on work by Alkire and Santos (2010) and Alkire and Foster (2011)—to create a multidimensional child wellbeing index. The methodology consists of three simple steps and is replicable for the case of developing a multidimensional return and reintegration index.

The three steps were:

- First a threshold was identified for each return and reintegration measure detailed above (described in Table 6.1 below) to assess if each returnee was reintegrated according to that variable. For example, on the measure 'employment', an individual was assessed as reintegrated if they were employed. Individual variable reintegration rates were then determined by counting the number of returnees who met the threshold requirement. This is a basic measure—for example it cannot gauge how long the returnee has been employed or the conditions of employment—but it provides a benchmark for understanding sustainability.
- Second, return and reintegration rates were determined for each dimension. The dimension 'reintegration' rates reflect the number of returnees who have achieved a sufficient level of reintegration across the dimension variables. Each variable was given an equal weight within the dimension. A returnee was considered reintegrated if the weighted indicator for the dimension was equal to or above 0.6. This means that returnees had to meet a level of reintegration of at least three of the five variables in each dimension to be considered reintegrated. There are a number of assumptions in this step, regarding the weighting of variables and the 'cut-off' point for reintegration, which can be adjusted for further research.
- The third step was to create an overall return and reintegration index by aggregating the reintegration rates across the three dimensions. Each dimension was equally rated at one-third of the total index. An individual was therefore considered to be reintegrated if they exceed the 60 per cent threshold across all three dimensions. Once again these arbitrary weightings and thresholds may be adjusted as necessary in future.

As per the definition above, sustainable return occurs when an individual is reintegrated across the three dimensions. One method for determining sustainable return is to assess the potential to re migrate or actual re-migration. The relationship between the return and reintegration index and respondents' potential to re-migrate is discussed in Chapter 8.

6.4 Applying the return and reintegration index

Table 6.1 presents the results of the return and reintegration index based on each dimension of economic, socio-cultural and political-security reintegration. In the economic dimension, 56 per cent of returns in the sample may be considered reintegrated in three out of five of the economic dimension indicators. Within this dimension, returnees were most vulnerable on the number of income sources in the household, as 35 per cent of returnees' households did not have more than one income source. Seventy per cent of returnees were employed, and this does include self-employment or part-time employment. Note: this measure does not assess if the self-employed have a business that is generating a profit or incurring losses and it does not reflect whether or not the employment is stable. Fifty-seven per cent of returnees currently had no debt. Of the 43 per cent of returnees who were currently in debt, 45 per cent had incurred the debt for their original migration. Costs of migration were cited as high as USD 12,000, which is generally a much larger sum than return allowances offered. Similarly, 57 per cent of returnees currently owned land or their house. Finally, in terms of self-perception, 53 per cent of returnees perceived that they were currently struggling economically.

On the socio-cultural dimension, 64 per cent of returnees were reintegrated. Within this dimension, returnees were most likely to participate in local events (79 per cent), but least likely to be a member in an organization (21 per cent). Organizations in the survey included informal groups such as funeral or savings associations, which were quite common in several of the study countries, suggesting that the returnees had low levels of participation relative to the rest of the population. The majority of returnees identified themselves as having networks they could rely on for support (69.7 per cent) and having transnational networks (66.9 per cent). It is concerning that 41 per cent of returnees expressed that they were generally dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their life in the past month.

Overall, returnees showed the highest levels of reintegration in the safety and security dimension, at 71 per cent. The majority of returnees reported feeling safe in their home (79.2 per cent) and in their community (69 per cent). Further, the majority had not experienced personal harassment since return (78.6 per cent) and felt they could access justice if their rights were violated (60.8 per cent). The variable trust in the government is skewed due to the non-response to this question in Pakistan. It was not deemed appropriate to ask this question in Pakistan, but in order to not lose the entire case of Pakistan from the analysis, all respondents from Pakistan were assessed as not having trust in the government. If this variable is examined without Pakistan, trust in the government rises to 34.3 per cent. With or without the inclusion of Pakistan, roughly only one-third of returnees reported having trust in the government upon return.

On the whole, 37 per cent of returnees are reintegrated based on the index. This finding is explored further in the next section which examines reintegration by origin country and in the next chapter which examines the relationship between different variables and the return and reintegration index.

Table 6.1: Return and reintegration index

Variable	Threshold	Individual reintegration rates	n
Economic dimension:			
Employment	Individual is employed	69.9	156
Income sources	Individual's household has more than one source of income (more of a vulnerability indicator than reintegration)	35.1	154
Perceived economic situation	Individual does not consider themselves to be struggling	47.4	156
Debt	Individual has no debt	57.4	155
Land/housing	Individual owns land or house	57.3	157
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the economic variables		**56.2**	**153**
Socio-cultural dimension:			
Networks	Individual identifies themselves as having a network that they can rely upon for support	69.7	155
Transnational networks	Individual maintains a transnational network	66.9	154
Participate in local events upon return	Individual participates in local events	78.6	154
Self-perception of personal life	Individual is not generally dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their personal life on average in the last month	59.1	154
Membership in organisations upon return	Individual participates in one or more organisations	21.0†	157
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the socio-cultural variables		**64.2**	**151**
Safety and security dimension:			
Perceived safety in home	Individual identifies feeling safe in their home	79.2	154
Perceived safety in the community	Individual identifies feeling safe in their community	69.0	155
Trust in the government	Individual identifies that they trust the government	29.94*	157
Access to justice	Individual feels that they could access justice if their rights were violated in their country of return	60.8	153
Experienced personal harassment since return	Individual has not experienced personal harassment since return	78.6	154
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the safety and security variables		**71.3**	**150**
Percentage of participants reintegrated across all three dimensions		**36.8**	**144**

†In Afghanistan the question regarding membership in organizations was not asked. In this index, all respondents from Afghanistan have therefore been entered as not having membership in organizations.

*In Pakistan the question regarding trust in the government was not asked due to the sensitivity of responses to this question. In this index, all respondents from Pakistan have therefore been entered as not having trust in the government. This was also the case for 12 other respondents from different countries as this question had a higher than average non-response rate.

6.5 Return and reintegration index comparative analysis by origin country

Table 6.2 shows the breakdown of reintegration by country of return. It must be noted that the sample size at the country level is quite small and the results should be interpreted comparatively within the context of the study, and not as indicators representing reintegration to each country as a whole. A much larger sample would be required to make deductions regarding each country as a whole.

Table 6.2: Return and reintegration index by country of return

	Reintegrated		Not reintegrated		Total	
Afghanistan	5	26.3	14	73.7	19	100.0
Bangladesh	9	39.1	14	60.9	23	100.0
Ethiopia	4	22.2	14	77.8	18	100.0
Iraq**	3	15.8	16	84.2	19	100.0
Pakistan**	11	61.1	7	39.9	18	100.0
Sri Lanka	4	21.0	15	79.0	19	100.0
Sudan	8	57.1	6	42.9	14	100.0
Viet Nam**	9	64.3	5	35.7	14	100.0
Total	53	36.8	91	63.2	144	100.0

Significance based on a T-test of means. *** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 * p<0.1.

It is evident from Table 6.2 that returnees to Viet Nam and Pakistan were more likely to be reintegrated. Returnees to Viet Nam in this study had all returned from the United Kingdom and were a particular migrant group: the IOM in Viet Nam advised that the group interviewed from Viet Nam tended to be better off economically compared with conditions in their local communities, which were poor provinces in Viet Nam. As migration to the United Kingdom is very expensive, the average migrant from Viet Nam would not be able to get there and, as such, the participants in this study's situation of migration and return is quite different from other returnees in Viet Nam returning from other countries.

In Pakistan, it appears that the reintegration assistance was highly meaningful in establishing employment in that country. Although several participants reported having employment on return, and were considered to be reintegrated according to the index, others were apparently in worse situations than before migration. Some had sold assets to migrate, based on information primarily received from smugglers and other migrants, such as the participant who went to Greece because he was advised he could make a lot of money there:

> 'I sold my house; I had the dream to make a bigger house. But I could not even pay my own journey home… [If I had stayed] I would have had more than now.'
>
> Pakistani, age 36, returned from Greece

Returnees from Iraq were the least likely to be reintegrated on return. Note, the fieldwork in Iraq was conducted just as 'Islamic State' (IS) had started its insurgency and this could have impacted participants' responses. During the fieldwork, some participants mentioned how the current crisis affected their lives including restrictions in traveling and day labour work that was an important source of employment.

In addition, returnees to Iraq had the lowest levels of socio-cultural reintegration. This can be attributed to two key elements. First, shame of return was a central theme in the interviews. There is a Kurdish saying 'if you ride a horse it's a shame, but if you leave the horse it's twice the shame', which one participant related to his migration as follows:

> 'If you go back to Europe it's shame, if you come back, it's twice the shame.'
>
> Iraqi, age 35, returned from Belgium

Experiences of shame also led returnees to withdraw from their social networks:

> '[I am] ashamed that friends are richer than me…since I came back I haven't communicated a lot with others.'
>
> Iraqi, age 25, returned from Switzerland

This relates to the second element of changing social networks. A key informant in Iraq explained that the culture is changing in the Kurdistan Regional Government with the end of the previous war (prior to the current IS insurgency). Social networks were changing as the economy was booming with increasing working and business hours. The culture was becoming more focused on the family and business life and less on wider networks, as had been the norm previously. It is understandable that a combination of changing cultural norms and the shame of an unsuccessful migration could affect the socio-cultural reintegration of returnees in Iraq.

It is striking that Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Sri Lanka also had very low percentages of returnees who were reintegrated. Similarly to Iraq, Afghans reported low levels of reintegration in the safety and security dimension, which is unsurprising given the current instability in Afghanistan. Ethiopians, Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans reported the lowest levels of economic reintegration. Within the study countries, Ethiopia has the lowest Human Development Index ranking (173/187) and has high levels of unemployment and underemployment. Further information to contextualise these differences is highlighted in the individual country reports in Appendix 3.

6.5 Conclusions

This chapter has provided the basis of the analytical framework for measuring sustainable return through the return and reintegration index. The index highlights the multidimensional nature of reintegration and the importance of the three dimensions of economic reintegration, socio-cultural reintegration, and safety-security. The interplay between these dimensions determines if an individual is reintegrated or not. It is evident that participants in the different origin countries had varying levels of reintegration, with returnees to Iraq being the least likely to be reintegrated and returnees to Viet Nam and Pakistan the most likely to be reintegrated. The next chapter further examines the factors that may determine the extent to which the returnees were reintegrated.

7. PROMOTING REINTEGRATION AND SUSTAINABLE RETURN

7.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the factors that influence sustainable return, drawing on the return and reintegration index presented in the last chapter. Building from the literature review (Chapter 2), the following categories of factors will be examined:

- individual factors
- the migration cycle, including experiences prior to migration and in the destination country
- structural factors during return including the community of return and attitudes from locals
- the role of assisted voluntary return programming.

As stressed in Chapter 2, these factors may overlap, and separating them out into categories is, to an extent, artificial. At the same time, this separation is helpful for analysis, and potentially also for targeting policy interventions to promote reintegration and sustainable return.

7.2 Individual factors

The literature review in Chapter 2 found no systemic evidence on the impact of individual factors such as age, sex and education levels on reintegration and sustainable return. However, in one study comparing Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo/UNSC 1244, it was found that young men were more likely to be able to find employment upon return (Black et al., 2004).

Similarly in this study's sample there was no significant relationship either between age or sex and reintegration, as measured by the aggregate return and reintegration index. Individuals in their 30s were the most likely to be reintegrated and individuals over 50 or between 17 and 29 years of age were the least likely to be reintegrated. It is important not to overstate the extent of reintegration among any cohorts: even for the most reintegrated cohort overall, considerably fewer than half the individuals could be considered reintegrated. More positively, even among the least reintegrated cohorts, around one-third could be defined as reintegrated.

One potential reason for the lower levels of reintegration with the younger cohort of those aged between 17 and 29 years is perhaps that they have higher expectations for migration, and so their disappointment upon return was more acute. Whether such disappointment is a barrier to re-migration is unclear. Alternatively, it may be that for these younger respondents their migration was a household strategy, and resentment by the household was either perceived or real after returning in 'failure'. These are the sorts of nuances that even semi-structured research cannot uncover, and as suggested in Chapter 3, for further research it may be worth supplementing large surveys with smaller-scale and more qualitative methods.

Although the total numbers are small, it may also be noteworthy that only 24 per cent of female returnees were reintegrated compared with 40 per cent of male returnees (still less than half). This is in line with conclusions of other studies that reintegration is a gendered process, often more difficult for women than men (Wong, 2013). A female returnee to Bangladesh stated:

> 'I will migrate again if possible because the society here is very bad—real life in Bangladesh is very difficult. In the UK no one will ask you: "You have a husband or no?" you know? "You are doing something or not?" Here the social situation is very bad.'
>
> Bangladeshi, age 39, returned from Belgium

Besides illustrating how individual factors (in this case sex and marital status) may impact reintegration, this quote alone raises several other policy-relevant issues. First, it reinforces the point made at the start of this chapter that there is overlap between the analytical categories distinguished here. In this case, for example, the individual circumstances of the returnee collide with structural factors on return: the attitude of the local community. Second, it suggests that policy interventions targeting returnees only may not be sufficient to promote their reintegration. In this case, for example, the local community might be considered an equally relevant target for education and information dissemination. Reintegration can be more difficult for women, especially unmarried women or single mothers, particularly when returning to countries with specific gendered norms and expectations such as marriage

Table 7.1: Reintegration, by demographic characteristics

	Reintegrated		Not reintegrated		Total	
Age	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
17–29	11	31.4	24	68.6	35	100
30–39	22	44.0	28	56.0	50	100
40–49	14	37.8	23	62.2	37	100
50+	6	27.3	16	72.7	22	100
Total	53	36.8	91	63.2	144	100
Sex						
Male	47	39.5	72	60.5	119	100
Female	6	24.0	19	76.0	25	100
Total	53	36.8	91	63.2	144	100
Highest level of education						
None or primary	8	30.8	18	69.2	26	100
Secondary	30	36.1	53	63.9	83	100
Tertiary	14	51.8	13	48.2	27	100
Total	52	38.2	84	61.8	136	100

Significance based on a T-test of means. *** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 * p<0.1

A noteworthy relationship was found between education and reintegration. Those with no primary education, or only with primary education, were reintegrated less than those with a secondary education who, in turn, were reintegrated less than those with a tertiary education.

On one hand it those educated to a tertiary level may be expected to be more likely to find employment upon return. One participant from Ethiopia had worked at a University prior to migration and, on return, was able to get his old job back. In Sudan, four participants with tertiary education were able to receive good employment positions in their respective fields immediately on return. For those tertiary educated returnees who were reintegrated, all felt their employment positions had contributed to their reintegration.

On the other hand, however, still only 52 per cent of those with tertiary education were reintegrated, and it may be that the most educated are the most likely not to find work commensurate with their skills and training.

When examining this further, it is striking that the greatest differences in reintegration between those with no education and those with tertiary education were in the social-cultural and safety security dimensions. The educated are the most likely to be reintegrated in these two dimensions, with 82 per cent reintegrated in the safety-security dimension and 76 per cent in the social and cultural dimensions, as opposed to 56 per cent (safety-security) and 57 per cent (social and cultural) for the uneducated. In regards to the social and cultural dimension, one plausible reason is that the networks of the tertiary educated could be more informed regarding migration and accepting of their return, whereas the networks of the uneducated may be less accepting and lack information on the realities of migration. It is hard to speculate about the apparent correlation between education and safety and security, other than perhaps to observe that often those who are most vulnerable to insecurity in conflict zones are the poor, who have little recourse to the authorities.

7.3 Experiences prior to migration

As illustrated in the full literature review (Appendix 1), an individual's situation prior to their migration can have a significant impact on their potential to be reintegrated upon return. In general, for example, earlier studies have indicated that those who are well off prior to migration (for example, in terms of personal security, employment and financial resources) have a higher likelihood of also being well off on return.

In contrast, this study's findings indicated no significant relationship between reintegration and either employment prior to migration or an individual's self-perception of their standard of living prior to migration (Table 7.2). For both those who were and were not working prior to migration around 40 per cent were reintegrated and 60 per cent were not. In regards to standard of living prior to migration, however, a higher percentage of those who were comfortable

prior to migration were reintegrated (46 per cent) compared with those who reported struggling prior to migration (27.9 per cent).

The study found instead that Social and political-security experiences prior to migration were significant factors in determining likelihood of reintegration. Twenty-two per cent of participants stated that they did not have a sense of belonging to the community prior to migration. This group was found to be significantly less likely to be reintegrated compared with those who did have a sense of belonging prior to migration (42 per cent). This highlights the role of networks and community on return. If these connections are not in place prior to migration, reintegration is likely to be more difficult to achieve. It is also worth stressing that the majority even of those who did report some sense of belonging to the community prior to migration were not reintegrated after return. When examining this further, this finding holds across all three dimensions of the index.

It is also not surprising that individuals who reported experiencing threats to their personal security prior to their migration were also significantly less likely to be reintegrated (27.1per cent) compared with those who had not apparently experienced threats prior to migration (47.9 per cent). Also, unsurprisingly, those who had reported experiencing threats prior to migration were particularly less reintegrated on the safety-security dimension of the return and reintegration index, at 60 per cent reintegrated, compared with 86 per cent of those who had not cited experienced threats prior to migration. This has important policy implications in at least two ways. First, it suggests that some people have risked returning home, despite the chance that insecurity they experienced before migration would be sustained, possibly because their circumstances in the destination country were so dire. Further, some of these respondents applied for asylum and had their claims rejected. Indeed, of the 78 respondents who said they had experienced threats prior to their migration, 36 per cent cited a rejected asylum claim as one of their return decision-making factors.

Table 7.2: Reintegration, by situation prior to migration

	Reintegrated		**Not reintegrated**		**Total**	
Working prior to migration	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
No	13	32.5	27	67.5	40	100
Yes	40	39.2	62	60.8	102	100
Total	53	37.3	89	62.7	142	100
Standard of living prior to migration						
Struggling	17	27.9	44	72.1	61	100
Coping	13	40.6	19	59.4	32	100
Comfortable	23	46.0	27	54.0	50	100
Total	53	37.1	90	62.9	143	100
Sense of belonging to community prior to migration						
No**	5	17.2	24	82.8	29	100
Yes**	47	42.0	65	58.0	112	100
Total	52	36.9	89	63.1	141	100
Threat to personal security prior to migration						
No**	34	47.9	37	52.1	71	100
Yes**	19	27.1	51	72.9	70	100
Total	53	37.6	88	62.4	141	100
Reason for migration						
Security/political***	9	20.0	36	80.0	45	100
Employment***	35	51.5	33	48.5	68	100
Education	0	0.0	4	100.0	4	100
Family formation	2	40.0	3	60.0	5	100
Other	7	35.0	13	65.0	20	100
Total	53	37.3	89	62.7	142	100

Significance based on a T-test of means. *** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 * p<0.1. 'Family formation' includes family reunification.

This discussion relates to the question of motivations for migration in the first place. The two most commonly cited reasons for migration across the entire group of respondents were security/political reasons or economic reasons, as illustrated in Appendix 2. Seventy-nine per cent of individuals who cited their reason for migration as security/ political reasons also stated that they experienced threats to their personal security prior to migration. Twenty-seven per cent who stated employment as their key reason for migration also reported having experienced threats to their personal security. This reinforces the point emphasised in the literature review in Chapter 2 that migration often takes place for multiple motivations—economic, social, political—which can be difficult even for migrants themselves to distinguish, let alone immigration or asylum officers, or researchers. At the same time, individuals who stated security/ political reasons for their migration were significantly less likely to be reintegrated (20 per cent) than individuals who cited employment as their main reason for migration (51.5 per cent). In fact, the group of respondents who reported employment as their primary reason to migrate were the only group covered in Table 7.2 of whom over half had reintegrated. In other words, even though migration may occur for multiple motivations, it appears that where it is predominantly for economic reasons, these can be the easiest barriers to overcome upon return and reintegration. It is also worth noting that this is the area where policy interventions are most effective.

This discussion indicates the need to further examine whether and how the early stages of the migration cycle impact reintegration and sustainable return. For the purposes of this analysis, two aspects of the early stages of the migration cycle were isolated to test against reintegration (this selection was guided by the findings of the literature review). One was whether the decision to migrate was made alone (rather than collectively) and the other was whether a smuggler was used (Table 7.3).

Table 7.3: Sustainable return, by migration experience

	Reintegrated		Not reintegrated		Total	
Decision to migrate made alone	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
No	38	36.2	67	63.8	105	100
Yes	15	39.5	23	60.5	38	100
Total	53	37.1	90	62.9	143	100
Use of smuggler						
No	17	31.5	37	68.5	54	100
Yes	36	40.0	54	60.0	90	100
Total	53	36.8	91	63.2	144	100

Significance based on a T-test of means. *** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 * p<0.1

There appears to be little variation between making the decision to migrate alone and making the decision collectively, and being reintegrated. For both groups, around one-third of respondents were reintegrated. One man from Afghanistan migrated at the decision of his family when he was 22 years old. Upon return he stated:

> 'Yes it was very hard for me when I returned, they said: "Oh you did not get the visa? Why didn't you stay in the UK?". They thought that I did something criminal over there; that that was the reason why they wanted to deport me. It was a very big shame for me.''
>
> Afghani, age 28, returned from the United Kingdom

Acceptance by family is an essential part of reintegration upon return. Particularly in the Afghan context, Schuster and Majidi (2012) argue that the shame of return from an unsuccessful migration is felt in the whole family. Arguably this is felt even more acutely where the decision to migrate is made alone, and there are no family members involved with whom to share the blame for 'mistakes'.

Although not statistically significant, individuals who migrated with a smuggler were more likely to be reintegrated (40 per cent) than individuals who did not migrate with a smuggler (31.5 per cent). On the surface, this is surprising. However, it is worth noting that in most of the origin countries considered in this study, migrating with a smuggler was considered the norm. Indeed the majority of participants in this study used a smuggler in their migration (63.7 per cent). In this sense, using a smuggler is less likely to be a significant variable in reintegration, as it was a strategy adopted by a wide range of respondents. But it may also be that using a smuggler is one proxy for economic wellbeing (only those with access to at least some resources can afford to pay a smuggler) and, as indicated above, those who were generally better-off before migration found reintegration less of a challenge than others.

7.4 Experiences in the destination country

Participants had returned from a total of 25 different countries of destination and, as mentioned in Chapter 4, the top four countries were Norway (32), United Kingdom (27), Greece (25) and Belgium (14). There is a clustering effect of return from Greece being primarily to Pakistan and Bangladesh, and 56 per cent of returnees from the United Kingdom went home to Viet Nam. Table 7.4 shows reintegration by destination country. According to these data, returnees from the United Kingdom were significantly more likely to be reintegrated 60.9 per cent) whereas returnees from Belgium were significantly less likely to be reintegrated (21.4 per cent). The situation of the United Kingdom, however, must be interpreted with caution. As discussed in Chapter 6, all returnees in the sample in Viet Nam had returned from the United Kingdom and this represented a highly specific migration stream. When excluding Viet Nam from the sample, there were 12 remaining participants who returned from the United Kingdom. Only one of these participants was reintegrated upon return. For all the other destination countries, around one-third of returnees were reintegrated according to the return and reintegration index. This could not be defined as success.

Table 7.4: Reintegration, by destination country

	Reintegrated		**Not reintegrated**		**Total**	
Country returned from	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Norway	8	26.7	22	73.3	30	100
United Kingdom***	14	60.9	9	39.1	23	100
Greece	10	38.5	16	61.5	26	100
Belgium**	3	21.4	11	78.6	14	100
Other N/W European country	9	37.5	15	62.5	24	100
Other S/E European country	4	36.4	7	63.6	11	100
Africa and Middle East	3	30.0	7	70.0	10	100
N. America and Australasia	2	33.3	4	66.7	6	100
Total	53	36.8	91	63.2	144	100

Significance based on a T-test of means. *** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 * p<0.1.

Table 7.5 examines the relationship between the living situation in the destination country, employment, and time spent in the destination country, and reintegration. The living situation on arrival comparison indicates that individuals in asylum reception centres were significantly less likely to be reintegrated. Only 21 per cent of this group could be described as reintegrated according to the index. This raises several questions that require further exploration such as: Does the duration of stay in asylum reception impact reintegration? Are there specific experiences in asylum reception that impact reintegration? The sense from the interviews was that long periods in asylum centres may, for example, result in depression and alienation, and perhaps a sense of dependency, all of which may be expected to impact on self-motivation to reintegrate after return. Although the sample size for detention centres is very small, it is striking that those respondents who had spent time in asylum centres were even less likely to be reintegrated than those in detention centres. This presents another area for further research.

Table 7.5: Reintegration, by situation in destination country

	Reintegrated		Not reintegrated		Total	
Living situation on arrival	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Asylum/reception centre ***	12	21.4	44	78.6	56	100
Other asylum location	2	66.7	1	33.3	3	100
Detention centre	2	28.6	5	71.4	7	100
Family/friend's house	17	43.6	22	56.4	39	100
Hotel/motel	0	0.0	1	100.0	1	100
Other**	17	50.0	17	50.0	34	100
Total	50	35.7	90	64.3	140	100
Worked in destination						
No	15	34.9	28	65.1	43	100
Yes, informal sector	25	47.2	28	52.8	53	100
Yes, formal sector	8	28.6	20	71.4	28	100
Total	48	38.7	76	61.3	124	100
Time in destination						
Less than 1 year	10	33.3	20	66.7	30	100
1–3 years	16	48.5	17	51.5	33	100
3–5 years	7	30.4	16	69.6	23	100
5-10 years	12	41.4	17	58.6	29	100
More than 10 years	6	26.1	17	73.9	23	100
Total	51	37.0	87	63.0	138	100

Significance based on a T-test of means. *** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 * p<0.1

The majority of returnees were not legally entitled to work while in the destination country, however, 41 per cent had worked informally at some point during their stay, as shown in Appendix 2. Informal work could range from a few sporadic days of wage earnings to a full-time job. On the whole, the data in Table 7.5 indicates that there is no clear relationship between working or not working in the destination country and reintegration. Interestingly those who had worked informally were better reintegrated than those who had worked legally (47.2 per cent compared to 28.6 per cent). An insight into this finding may be provided by the case of one returnee to Bangladesh who worked legally in the agricultural industry in Italy, and had to pay €1000 for an agricultural visa. His earnings, however, were not enough to pay for his living costs and migration debt. Therefore, he was not able to bring any money back with him on return. However, with the assistance from the IOM he was able to establish a shop on return that now provides him with a livelihood. It is also possible that those working in the formal sector were not legally entitled to do so and therefore may have had to pay additional costs for forged documents or fixers to help them find and maintain these positions.

Finally, it might be expected that reintegration would become more unlikely when migrants had been away for a longer period of time. Indeed, participants who had been abroad for over 10 years were the least likely to be reintegrated, although this was not statistically significant. There was, however, little variation in the correlation between duration abroad and reintegration for other time periods— ranging between 33 and 47 per cent for all other time periods. A recent study has argued that duration abroad itself is not significant in returnee reintegration, rather it is the experiences abroad that matter more (Kuschminder, 2014).

7.5 Community of return

Structural factors and conditions in the country of origin were highlighted in the literature review (Chapter 2) as factors that may influence reintegration. The individual country reports in Appendix 5 to 12 provide further details on the conditions in each origin country and Chapter 6 provides an overview of the differences in reintegration for each country.

Within the broad range of conditions in the country of origin, the community-level has been described as an especially important factor in reintegration. Table 7.6 shows the percentage of participants who had returned to the same community with whom they lived before they left, and the percentage of participants who had returned to an urban versus rural area, against the return and reintegration index.

Individuals who returned to the same community where they lived before they left were significantly more likely to be reintegrated, compared with individuals who returned to a different community than the one they left: 44.9 per cent compared with 19.5 per cent. This has potentially important implications for policy, suggesting a correlation between community of return and reintegration, and highlighting the risks of return where access to the community of origin is not yet feasible. Two potential reasons to explain this are first, that people only return to the same community when they do not feel their safety and security will be violated in the community, therefore already suggesting a higher level of reintegration within this dimension. Second, people return to the same community when they have existing networks or support services within that community, which would also suggest higher levels of reintegration in the socio-cultural dimension. In addition, individuals who returned to an urban community were more likely to be reintegrated than those returned to a rural community.

Table 7.6: Reintegration, by living context upon return

	Reintegrated		Not reintegrated		Total	
Returned to same community as before	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
No ***	8	19.5	33	80.5	41	100
Yes ***	44	44.9	54	55.1	98	100
Total	52	37.4	87	62.6	139	100
Returned to urban area						
No	16	39.0	25	61.0	41	100
Yes	36	36.7	62	63.3	98	100
Total	52	37.4	87	62.6	139	100

Significance based on a T-test of means. *** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 * p<0.1.

It can be assumed that individuals returning to the same communities as before would be more likely to be reintegrated as they would have networks in these communities—although the issues of shame and blame raised above may mitigate this. Seventy per cent of respondents returned to the same community they were living in prior to migration. Networks can assist with socio-cultural reintegration and can be essential for economic reintegration through the access to resources that they provide, such as employment information or opportunities. Reasons for individuals returning to a different community included that their family who had stayed in the origin country had moved, that they did not feel safe returning to the same community or, in some cases, that due to their migration they had been able to build a house that was in a different area. One participant from Afghanistan who was not able to return to his community of origin explained his situation as follows:

> 'When I was travelling back, I thought they would take care of me and that I took a good decision. I thought I would have comfortable life and that is was good decision. I hoped that I could take good care of my family. But it turned out to be the opposite of what I was thinking.'
>
> Afghan returnee from the United Kingdom (age not stated)

In general, it is thought that return migrants more frequently return to urban areas, however, some studies have found that returnees are most likely to return to their communities of origin, regardless of whether they are rural or urban (McCormick & Wahba, 2004). The majority of returnees in this study did return to urban areas (70.9 per cent). It is noteworthy that returnees to rural areas were more likely to return to a different community (45 per cent) than returnees to urban areas (23 per cent).

7.6 Conclusions

This chapter has examined the relationship between different variables pertaining to the circumstances and experiences of the returnees and their migration cycle, and reintegration as measured by the return and reintegration index. Several factors were assessed to have a significant relationship with reintegration. These included: having a sense of belonging in the community prior to migration, the reason for migration, the country of destination, residing in an asylum reception centre, and returning or not returning to the same community on return. Between them, these variables elicit two key summary findings: first, returnees who migrated for economic reasons were more likely to be reintegrated when compared to returnees who migrated for other reasons including political-security factors. Second, returnees who both have a sense of belonging to the community prior to migration and return to the same community after migration are more likely to be reintegrated. This suggests that although the reasons for migration are complex and often involve multiple factors, there can be a difference on return between those migrating for economic purposes compared with those migrating for security and political reasons. In addition, it highlights the importance of networks in the return and reintegration process, as networks are most likely a core part of the community of return that contribute to reintegration processes.

Although the relationship is not necessarily statistically significant there are several other key pieces of information highlighted in this chapter. First, women were less likely to be reintegrated upon return, recognizing, however, there were very few women included in the sample. This could be attributed to gender specific challenges in the reintegration process and suggests the need for further research on the specific challenges of female reintegration. Second, returnees who were comfortable prior to migration were more likely to be reintegrated on return compared with those who were struggling prior to migration. This is logical in that those with more resources prior to migration are in general more likely to have resources on return. Third, there does not appear to be a difference in reintegration between those whose decision to migrate was made collectively and those whose decision was made individually. This is a potential area for further research as it could be hypothesised that when migration is a family decision, reintegration is more difficult on return due to the lack of migration success; or alternatively that the family is more supportive on return as they were part of the migration decision. Both possibilities could be explored further to better understand this relationship. Fourth, it is noteworthy that although not significant in terms of reintegration, the majority of participants in the sample migrated via a smuggler. This illustrates the prominence of smugglers in the study countries and highlights the need for further research on the role of smugglers in migrant decision-making processes as well as return and reintegration.

8. LINKING THE RETURN DECISION WITH SUSTAINABLE RETURN

8.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters have analysed as largely separate issues the decision to return, and reintegration and sustainable return. Analysis in each chapter has alluded to links between these issues. On one hand, surprisingly, conditions in the origin country did not appear to be a concern for most respondents in deciding whether or not to go back. This contrasts with the findings of the United Kingdom Home Office study cited earlier, which found that the prospects for sustainable return were a consideration for a good number of respondents thinking about going home. On the other hand, linkages have been demonstrated between experiences in destination countries—for example living in an asylum centre—and reintegration after return.

This chapter examines further some of the linkages between the decision to return and sustainability of return. It considers how the variables that played a role in the return decision-making process (presented in Table 5.2) also impact on reintegration as measured by the return and reintegration index. It also considers the relationship between the wider circumstances of reintegration and the inclination towards re-migration.

One policy question asked in this chapter is: to what extent do conditions of return impact sustainability? In other words, how interventions before or during return may affect the longer-term outcome. A second question is: to what extent is re-migration a viable proxy for sustainable return, as is often assumed?

8.2 The decision to return and reintegration

Table 8.1 lists in the first two columns the categories and variables found to varying degrees to have influenced the return decision (see Table 5.2 and the discussion in Chapter 5). In Table 8.1 the categories and variables are matched against the return and reintegration index, as shown in the remaining columns. At one level this table simply extends the analysis presented in the last chapter, by listing further factors that may influence reintegration. However, this analysis appears in this chapter rather than in Chapter 5 because the literature review found that these factors are usually associated with the return decision, not reintegration. These are usually understood as two different processes, and this chapter investigating the extent to which they are associated: To what extent do the factors that influence return also influence reintegration? And what are the policy implications?

The response rates on conditions in the origin country are too few to enable meaningful analysis. From the next category, ‘conditions in destination country’, however, a few entries are notable. Against four variables in this category, around two thirds of respondents (albeit in some cases out of a very small total number) were not reintegrated. These variables are ‘lack access to social services/health care’, ‘negative decision regarding asylum request’, ‘lack of security or being discriminated against in the destination country’, and ‘end of work or study permit’. While all four of these variables make good sense as drivers for return, it is not as clear how they may impact reintegration. However, there is a potentially significant policy implication. It seems that a lack of integration, broadly defined, in the destination country makes return more likely, but at the same time may make reintegration less likely.

Table 8.1: Decision to return and reintegration

		Not reintegrated		Reintegrated		Total	
Category	Variables	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Conditions in origin country	Employment opportunity or job prospects in origin country	2	50.0	2	50.0	4	100.0
	Political change or change in legal status in origin country	1	100.0	0	0.0	1	100.0
	Improvement in security situation of origin country/end of conflict	3	100.0	0	0.0	3	100.0
	Better living conditions in home country compared to destination	0	0.0	2	100.0	2	100.0
	Total	**6**	**60.0**	**4**	**40.0**	**10**	100.0
Conditions in destination country	End of work/study permit in host country	4	66.7	2	33.3	6	100.0
	Cannot support self/dependents financially	8	47.1	9	52.9	17	100.0
	Difficulty finding employment/no right to work	18	45.0	22	55.0	40	100.0
	Negative decision regarding asylum request	22	68.8	10	31.2	32	100.0
	Lack of security, or being discriminated against in host country	6	66.7	3	33.3	9	100.0
	Lack of access to social services/health care	6	85.7	1	14.3	7	100.0
	Total	**52**	**58.4**	**37**	**41.6**	**89**	100.0
Individual factors	Psychological problems (e.g. depression or frustration)	6	60.0	4	40.0	10	100.0
	Tired of living as undocumented	9	47.4	10	52.6	19	100.0
	Inability to meet migration aspirations including work or educational goals	2	22.2	7	77.8	9	100.0
	Dignity of return as a normal passenger	1	100.0	0	0.0	1	100.0
	I felt I had no other choice	16	66.7	8	33.3	24	100.0
	Total	**31**	**57.4**	**23**	**42.6**	**54**	100.0
Social factors	Nostalgia about home country and way of life	3	60.0	2	40.0	5	100.0
	Family (desire for reunification in country of origin)	12	52.2	11	47.8	23	100.0
	Changes in family circumstances (e.g. death of relative)	1	11.1	8	88.9	9	100.0
	Problems of integration in destination country	3	60.0	2	40.0	5	100.0
	Total	**17**	**47.2**	**19**	**52.8**	**36**	**100.0**
Incentives/ disincentives (policy interventions)	To benefit from voluntary return programmes offered by destination country	9	50.0	9	50.0	18	100.0
	To benefit from incentive offered by origin country	1	100.0	0	0.0	1	100.0
	Destination Country Policies	2	100.0	0	0.0	2	100.0
	Political change in destination country (i.e.: most crackdowns, more hostile)	3	60.0	2	40.0	5	100.0
	Was given a period of time to wind up affairs and leave voluntarily (i.e. to comply with the law)	12	80.0	3	20.0	15	100.0
	Total	**21**	**67.7**	**10**	**32.3**	**31**	**100.0**

Two of the variables in this category have significant enough frequencies to enable a little more analysis. Twenty-two (68.8 per cent) of those respondents who had received a negative decision on their asylum request had not reintegrated according to the index. More research is required to understand why receiving a negative decision on asylum should also reduce the likelihood of reintegration. Part of the answer may lie in the discussion in Chapter 6 and the previous chapter about the 'shame of failure'.

Meanwhile 18 respondents who had 'difficulty finding employment/no right to work' were not reintegrated either. Again this makes sense as a reason to return: if you can't make ends meet you may be more willing to go home. Equally, reintegration may be a challenge, for example because you have no savings or have been out of the labour market for a considerable period. But more striking is that just over half of those who reported challenges in finding work in

the destination country were now reintegrated in the origin country. The lack of certainty around the link between employment abroad and reintegration at home deserves further attention.

From the next two categories, 'individual factors' and 'social factors', there are three more particularly striking entries in Table 8.1—and again caution is required in extrapolating these or invoking policy responses. First, 16 of 24 respondents whose reasons for departing the destination country included that they 'felt they had no choice' were not reintegrated. This reinforces a point made in the last chapter about the lasting impact of helplessness and depression, especially for people who had spent considerable periods in asylum reception centres. Second, 12 people (just over 50 per cent), who stated the desire to be reunited with family as a reason to return were, nevertheless, not reintegrated. There may be a number of reasons, for example that their lack of reintegration was across dimensions other than the social-cultural, or that they had returned to a location away from their family. Again, further research is required.

Potentially of most direct policy relevance, the final set of variables in the category 'policy interventions' deserves closer attention. Perhaps most striking is that 12 of 15 respondents who reported having had 'time to wind up their affairs and leave voluntarily' were not reintegrated a year or so after coming home. In other words, a policy intended to facilitate return has no positive impact on reintegration, and may even somehow hamper it. Fifty per cent of those who stated that one of the reasons they chose to return was to 'benefit from voluntary return programmes' were not reintegrated, although the other 50 per cent were.

Overall these findings are inconclusive. Sometimes factors that influence the return decision also apparently impact reintegration, sometimes they do not. Policies designed to promote or facilitate voluntary return may or may not have downstream impacts, sometimes negative and sometimes positive. The lack of clarity justifies further research, as do the potential implications for policy. Could it be that policies promoting return actually undermine reintegration?

8.3 Return, reintegration, and re-migration

As explained in the literature review (summarised in Chapter 2, in full in Appendix 1), the propensity for returnees to re-migrate is often viewed as a proxy for sustainable return; and in some policy contexts avoiding re-migration is one of the main benchmarks of the effectiveness of return and reintegration assistance. This study's definition of sustainable return and the return and reintegration index deliberately did not include re-migration, as explained in Chapter 6, primarily because it is hard to distinguish the causes for re-migration. Some returnees may re-migrate because their return has been unsuccessful and they have failed to reintegrate; and others for reasons unconnected with their return experience, or even after a positive return experience.

If for no other reason than its policy significance, re-migration—and the relevance of return and reintegration—is still worth discussing in the context of this report.

Table 8.2 demonstrates very simply the frequency and percentages of respondents in origin countries who expressed a desire during their interviews to re-migrate, against whether or not they can be considered reintegrated according to the index.

Table 8.2: Desire to re-migrate and reintegration

	Reintegrated		Not reintegrated		Total	
Do you wish to re-migrate?	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
No* **	32	50.0	32	50.0	64	100
Yes* **	19	24.7	58	75.3	77	100
Total	51	36.2	90	63.8	141	100

These data deserve some discussion. First Oover half the respondents interviewed in origin countries that responded to this question (83 of 153, or 54 per cent) expressed a desire to re-migrate. It is worth remembering that the majority of these returnees had received return assistance, and in some cases reintegration assistance. For the sake of comparison this is a smaller percentage than the total who were not reintegrated according to the index (see Table 6.1), at 63 per cent. The easy implication is that at least some of those who were not yet reintegrated still did not intend to re-migrate. Second, 50 per cent of those respondents who did not intend to re-migrate were not reintegrated according to the index. That is, although they were not reintegrated, they still intended to stay in the country of return. Third, over 75

per cent of those respondents who did intend to re-migrate were also not reintegrated. Fourth, the remaining quarter of those respondents who did intend to re-migrate were nevertheless reintegrated.

To be clear: there is a strong correlation between lack of reintegration and a desire to re-migrate. What is more surprising is the proportion of people who were not reintegrated but still did not plan to re-migrate, and the proportion who were reintegrated who did plan to re-migrate. Clearly these findings are subject to various health warnings, but at the very least they demonstrate that the relationship between a failure to reintegrate and a desire to re-migrate is not linear or straightforward.

Some of the complexity of the relationship may also be illustrated with some qualitative analysis. Of those respondents who reported a desire to re-migrate, for example, 21 per cent specified that they had already made concrete plans to re-migrate, while for the others it was still largely notional. Thinking about re-migrating, and actually re-migrating, are two quite different things, especially bearing in mind the costs of migration (either regular or irregular). Furthermore, 86 per cent of the group wishing to re-migrate specified that they planned to migrate legally and, as stated in Chapter 2, irregular re-migration is the principal policy concern.

As an example, one participant from Ethiopia had received his Masters degree while in the destination country during the processing of his asylum claim. The asylum claim was rejected and he returned to Ethiopia. However, he was accepted for a scholarship to complete his PhD at the same university in the destination country. At the time of the interview, he was arranging to go back to takeup the offer. His greatest concern was that as he was returning to the country within two years he would have to pay back his return and reintegration assistance, which he had already used for subsistence for the previous 18 months.

In a second example, a participant from Afghanistan was rejected for asylum in the United Kingdom. His family had arranged for him to marry an Afghan woman living in Australia, and he wanted to go directly from the United Kingdom to Australia but was told by the authorities this was not possible. He accepted assisted voluntary return to return to Afghanistan so that he could be married and have his application processed to go to Australia. At the time of interview he was waiting to migrate legally to Australia.

8.4 Conclusions

This largely exploratory chapter explores linkages between the key aspects of this study: the return decision, and sustainable return and reintegration. In this study, in the wider literature, and in many policy settings, these are treated as different processes requiring different analysis and interventions. Analysis in the earlier chapters hinted that this may not be the case—that the circumstances around the decision to return may also impact subsequent reintegration—and the analysis in this chapter reinforces this. Clearly further research is required.

This raises tentative, but potentially significant, policy implications. There are indications that a lack of integration in the destination country (social, economic, safety) may impact reintegration on return. Yet, in effect, a lack of integration is the policy approach adopted to encourage migrants, especially irregular migrants and rejected asylum seekers, to return. If the effectiveness of these policies is measured against the benchmark of sustainable return and reintegration, which these polices risk undermining, there is at the least an implication for more coherent policy goals.

Perhaps of more concern is the idea that even policies positively designed to facilitate return may not promote reintegration downstream, for example allowing people time to wrap up their affairs or providing return assistance.

In terms of re-migration, the analysis here reinforces the proposition earlier in this report that re-migration is not an adequate proxy for sustainable return or for reintegration. While the majority of respondents interviewed in origin countries who had not reintegrated did plan to re-migrate, for most it was just an aspiration. A significant proportion of those who had failed to reintegrate did not plan to re-migrate, while a good proportion of those who had reintegrated did plan to re-migrate. Re-migration may be legal and therefore not problematic, and may be driven by factors other than those related to return and reintegration.

9. CONCLUSIONS

9.1 Summary

The overall aim of this project has been to inform policies and programmes for assisting the voluntary return and reintegration of migrants, including irregular migrants and unsuccessful asylum seekers. This project set out to achieve this aim via three objectives: first, an analysis of the migrant return decision, including by irregular migrants; second, development of a framework for defining and measuring the sustainability of approaches to voluntary return; and third, an assessment of what factors determine sustainable return and reintegration.

This report has presented and analysed a significant amount of original, primary data, collected among 273 respondents across 15 countries of origin, transit and destination. This is among one of the most comprehensive studies of return and reintegration conducted, based on the number of respondents covered, the number of countries compared, and the combination of origin, transit, and destination countries. This is confirmed by the literature review in Chapter 2. After explaining the methodology (Chapter 3) and providing a profile of the respondents (Chapter 4), an understanding of the factors influencing the decision to return was developed, and the role of motivating factors including return policy interventions was examined and assessed (Chapter 5). The most important variables affecting the decision whether to return were identified as: the difficulty of finding employment or no right to work; being tired of living as an undocumented migrant; a desire to reunify with family at home; and the opportunity to benefit from voluntary return and reintegration programmes. Chapter 6 developed a new definition of sustainable return, of which reintegration is a critical component, and developed and tested an index for measuring sustainable return. Across all three identified dimensions, only 37 per cent of the study respondents in origin countries could be considered reintegrated according to this index. Chapter 7 identified the key factors influencing reintegration and sustainable return, distinguishing individual factors, experiences prior to migration, experiences in the destination country, and the community of return. Chapter 8 examined some of the links between the decision to return, reintegration and sustainable return, including highlighting that re-migration is not necessarily a valid proxy for a lack of sustainable return.

This final chapter of the report specifies the policy implications that arise from the analysis, bearing in mind its limitations, while Appendix 15 charts some future directions for research building on this study.

9.2 Policy implications

In making initial policy recommendations, a number of reservations are worth flagging: The first concerns the research topic itself. The decision to return, reintegration, and the sustainability of return all often depend on highly individual characteristics and experiences, many of which defy accurate measurement or prediction. In part, therefore, the value of this research has been to identify areas where policy is unlikely to make a difference. At the same time, however, it does allow at least for preliminary conclusions about where policy interventions can be effective.

A second reservation concerns the research process. While every effort has been made to ensure a degree of trust between interviewer and respondent, there can be no guarantee of the accuracy of the responses provided by respondents. In part this reflects the sensitive and sometimes vulnerable situation in which some respondents found themselves. It also reflects the nature of the research, which in some cases depended on participants' recall up to a year after making certain decisions and taking actions; as well as requiring responses to hypothetical questions, from which final actions may diverge significantly.

A related consideration concerns access to evidence and data. Various aspects of return programmes have been monitored and evaluated in several of the study countries, including by governments and relevant organizations. However, this information was not always easily accessible, and neither was it collated in a single location. In several origin countries the tracking of returnees is not systematic or thorough enough to answer important questions regarding reintegration and sustainable return. This has implications for the management, analysis, and publication of data and evidence by government authorities and international organizations.

Fourth, a key gap in this study is determining the role of assisted voluntary return and reintegration packages in the overall reintegration process. All participants in this study had received reintegration assistance, and therefore the study was not able to compare their experiences with those of other assisted voluntary returnees who did not receive reintegration assistance. Neither could it systematically compare the relevance or differential outcomes of different types of assistance packages. This has direct implications for programme management and assisted voluntary return policy design, and should be explored in further research.

A final reservation concerns the wider applicability of these findings. None can be considered representative of the nationality groups or countries surveyed, let alone of migrants or returnees more generally. The purpose of focusing on a semi-structured interview approach was therefore to identify and explore relevant issues, rather than provide firm conclusions.

Bearing in mind these reservations, while also recognizing the uniquely comprehensive and comparative nature of the study, the findings in the report have implications for policy in three main areas: influencing the decision to return, measuring sustainability, and promoting sustainable return and reintegration.

9.2.1 Influencing the decision to return

- Conditions in their origin countries were generally not an important influence on the respondents' decisions on whether to return. This is likely to reflect the fact that nearly half of respondents migrated for broadly economic reasons, and would likely differ among asylum seekers and refugees.
- Conditions in destination countries may strongly influence the decision to return. For many respondents an inability to work and insecure legal status in particular were important incentives to return, although rarely in isolation from other individual and social factors.
- Other key factors influencing the decision to return are largely beyond the scope of direct policy interventions. For example, the desire to reunite with family members at home, or a change of family circumstances there, were also important factors in the return decision. Family members were also often involved in the decision-making process.
- Policy interventions are not considered a major influence on the decision whether to return.
- Enabling policy interventions can influence the decision to return as much as restrictive policies. For many respondents, the opportunity to benefit from voluntary return programmes, and the chance to wind up their affairs before departure, facilitated their return decision.
- More could be done to disseminate information on return programmes, especially in transit countries. In contrast to destination countries, where most respondents knew about return programmes and from multiple sources, in transit countries almost half had not even heard of return programmes. Equally, it is important not to raise the expectations of migrants, many of whom may not be eligible for limited return assistance programmes.
- There is a fine line between facilitating return and encouraging it. Any policy intervention in this area should be designed to allow potential returnees to make their own decisions, rather than encouraging them towards any particular option.

9.2.2 Measuring sustainability

- Measuring sustainability depends on how it is defined. The definition proposed here is that 'The individual has reintegrated into the economic, social and cultural processes of the country of origin and feels that they are in an environment of safety and security upon return'.
- It is possible to develop an index for measuring reintegration. Our index distinguishes economic, socio-cultural, and political-security dimensions, and sets reintegration thresholds across each to gauge individual reintegration rates. The variables and the thresholds can be adjusted for future studies.
- To measure sustainability for individual returnees, it is important to set up an adequate sample frame at an early stage of a return programme. It was not possible in any of the origin countries to obtain a representative sample of returnees from which to gain a generalised view of the sustainability of return for individuals.
- A system to measure reintegration and the sustainability of return could be put in place as part of any future voluntary assisted return programme.
- Ongoing monitoring of sustainability is possible, but involves trade-offs in terms of costs. In particular the in-depth interviews that would be required to properly gauge sustainability take time, and are challenging from a logistical perspective.
- Remigration is not a valid proxy for measuring sustainability.

9.2.3 Promoting sustainable return and reintegration

- Many of the factors influencing the sustainability of return appear beyond the influence of direct policy intervention. These include pre-migration experiences such as level of education and social belonging, and individual characteristic such as sex.
- The use of a smuggler during migration did not significantly correlate to the extent of sustainable return and reintegration. The reason appears to be that smuggling has become a norm.

- Living conditions in the destination country are significantly correlated with sustainable return and reintegration. This was the particularly the case in this sample for returnees who had spent significant periods in asylum or detention centres, very few of whom were subsequently reintegrated.
- The ability to work in the country of destination does not clearly correlate with sustainable return or reintegration.
- The ability to return to the community in which respondents lived before migration promoted sustainable return and reintegration. This was particularly the case where the community was in an urban area.
- The reason for initial migration significantly correlates with reintegration. Individuals who migrated for political-security reasons were less likely to be reintegrated than those who migrated for economic reasons. This suggests that, although migration motivations are frequently mixed, the distinctions are still important when examining the reintegration process.
- The factors that influence return may also impact on its sustainability and reintegration, but sometimes in opposing directions. In particular, a negative decision on asylum was a strong determinant for return, but also a strong indicator for a lack of reintegration after return.

9.3 Conclusions

In concluding this report, it may be worth highlighting three findings that the researchers found surprising – which largely countered the consensus of existing research and also our own research experience. These may simply be anomalies arising from the circumstances of this research, but they deserve special enquiry in further research on return and reintegration.

First, and contrary to a widely-held policy assumption, there is no clear evidence that returnees take up assisted voluntary migration or other return assistance to avoid the indignity of deportation, with a possible exception being a small number of returnees to Afghanistan. Instead the research suggested that a greater concern for many respondents was to be viewed as law-abiding. Second, while a lack of reintegration and sustainable return clearly was one reason for prompting some returnees to consider re-migration, it was not the only factor. Understanding the causes of re-migration, and how policy can intervene, is a pressing research question. Third, the study found that agents were largely irrelevant in return decision-making processes. Most respondents paid agents to migrate, but this did not seem to impact their decision to return or experiences after return.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Al Jazeera (2014) 'Turkey's Afghan Refugees' http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/inpictures/2014/06/pictures-turkey-afghan-refugees-201464141139192497.html, accessed on: 6 October 2014.

Al-Ali, N, Black, R, Koser, K (2001) 'The limits to transnationalism: Bosnian and Eritrean Refugees in Europe as emerging transnational communities', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 24(4): 578–600.

Alkire, S & Foster, J (2011) 'Counting and Multidimensional Poverty Measurement', *Journal of Public Economics 95*: 476–497.

Alkire, S & Santos, ME (2010) 'Acute Multidimensional Poverty: A New Index for Developing Countries', Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative Working Paper No. 38. Oxford Department of International Development, University of Oxford: United Kingdom.

Bilgili, O & Siegel, M (2013) 'Migrants' Integration, Homeland Engagement and Intentions to Return', Working Paper, University of Maastricht.

Black, R, Collyer, M, Somerville, W (2011), 'Pay to go Schemes and other Non-coercive Return Programmes: Is Scale Possible?', Washington DC: Migration Policy Institute.

Black, R & Koser, K (1999) 'The End of the Refugee Cycle?' in R Black & K Koser (eds) *The End of the Refugee Cycle?* Oxford: Berghahn, 1–19

Black, R, Koser, K, Monk, K, Atfield, G, D'Onofrio, L, Tiemoko, R (2004) *Understanding Voluntary Return*, Home Office Report 50/04, London: Home Office.

Black, R & Gent, S (2006) 'Sustainable return in post-conflict contexts', *International Migration*, 44(3), 15–38.

Böcker, A (1994) 'Chain migration over legally closed borders: settled immigrants as bridgeheads and gatekeepers', *The Netherlands Journal of Social Science*, 30(2): 97–106.

Boyd, M (1989) 'Family and personal networks in international migration: recent developments and new agenda', *International Migration Review*, 23(3): 638–70.

Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement (2007) 'Addressing Internal Displacement in Peace Agreements, Peace Processes, and Peace-Building', Washington DC: Brookings Institution.

Carling, J & Pettersen, SV (2012) 'Immigrant integration, transnationalism, and return migration intentions', Conference paper presented at *Return migration and transnationalism: alternative or compliments?* September 2012, Oslo, Norway.

Cassarino, JP (2004) 'Theorising return migration: the conceptual approach to return migrants revisited', *International Journal on Multicultural Societies*, 6(2), 253–279.

Cassarino, JP (ed) (2008) *Return Migrants to the Maghreb, Reintegration and Development Challenges*, San Domenico di Fiesolo: European University Institute (EUI), Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies.

Cassarino, JP (ed) (2014) Reintegration and Development, San Domenico di Fiesolo: European University Institute (EUI), Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies.

Collyer, M, Wimalasena, P, Ansar, N, Khan, MA (2009) 'Return Migrant in Sri Lanka', Institute for Public Policy Research.

Constant, A & Massey, DS (2002) 'Return migration by German guestworkers: neoclassical versus new economic theories', *International Migration*, 40(4): 5–38.

De Jong, GF & Gardner, RW (eds) Migration Decision Making: *Multidisciplinary Approaches to Micro level Studies in Developed and Developing Countries*, New York: Pergamon.

Eastmond, M and Ojendal, J (1999) 'Revisiting a 'Repatriation Success': The Case of Cambodia' in R Black & K Koser (eds) *The End of the Refugee Cycle?* Oxford: Berghahn, 38–55.

Faist, T (1997) 'The crucial meso-level', in T Hammar, G Brochmannn, K Tamas, T Faist (eds) International Migration, *Immobility and Development*, Oxford: Berg, 187–217.

Fransen, S & Kuschminder, K (2012) 'Back to the land: the long-term challenges of refugee return and reintegration in Burundi', New Issues in Refugee Research, Research Paper No. 242, Geneva: UNHCR.

Hammond, L (1999) 'Examining the discourse of repatriation: towards a more proactive theory of return migration', in R Black & K Koser (eds) *The End of the Refugee Cycle? Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction*, Oxford: Berghahn, 227–244.

Haug, S (2008) 'Migration networks and migration decision-making', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 34(4): 585–605.

International Centre for Terrorism and Transnational Crime (UTSAM) (2013) 'Global Migration and Criminal Organizations: Illegal Migration and Migrant Smugglers in Turkey' *UTSAM Report Series: 26*.

International Organization of Migration (IOM) (2002) 'The Return and Reintegration of Migrants to the South Caucasus: An Exploratory Study' *Research Report*.

IOM (2004) 'Glossary on Migration', International Organization for Migration.

IOM (2009) 'Assessment of Brazilian Migration Patterns and Assisted Voluntary Return Programme from selected European Member States to Brazil,' *Research Report*.

IOM and EMN (2006) 'Return Migration in Austria' *Research Report*.

IOM (2013) 'Monitoring Report: October 2012–2013: Reintegration Assistance from Switzerland' IOM Bern: Switzerland.

Kibreab, G (2003), 'Citizenship Rights and Repatriation of Refugees,' International Migration Review 37 (1): 24–73.

Koser, K (1997) 'Social networks and the asylum cycle: the case of Iranians in the Netherlands', *International Migration Review*, 31(3): 591–610.

Koser, K (2013) 'Migrants and refugees', in P Crang, M Crang, M Goodwin (eds) *Introducing Human Geographies*, 3rd Edition, London: Routledge, pp.556–71.

Koser, K and McAuliffe, M (2013) 'Establishing an Evidence-Base for Future Policy Development on Irregular Migration to Australia' *Irregular Migration Research Programme Occasional Paper Series No. 01/2013*.

Kunz, E (1973) 'The refugee in flight: kinetic models and forms of displacement', *International Migration Review*, 7(2): 125–46.

Kunz, E (1981) 'Exile and resettlement: refugee theory', *International Migration Review*, 15 (1/2): 42–51.

Kuschminder, K (2014) 'Female Return Migration and Reintegration Strategies in Ethiopia', PhD Dissertation, Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, No. 42.

Leerkes, AS, Boersema, E, Van Os, RMV, Galloway, AM, London, M Van (2014) 'Rejected and departed from the Netherlands? A study into the backgrounds of the variation in assisted voluntary return among rejected asylum seekers', Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek- en Documentatiecentrum Cahiers 2014–03.

Majidi, N (2009) 'Understanding the Return and Reintegration Process of Afghan Returnees from the UK', Paris: Altai Consulting.

Massey, DS, Arango, J, Hugo, G, Kouaouci, A, Pellegrino, A, Taylor, JE (1993) 'Theories of international migration: a review and appraisal', *Population and Development Review*, 19(3): 431–66.

McAuliffe, M (2013) 'Seeking the views of irregular migrants: Decision making, drivers and migration journeys', *Irregular Migration Research Programme Occasional Paper Series 05/2013*.

McCormic, B & Wahba, J (2004) 'Return International Migration and Geographical Inequality: The Case of Egypt', UNU-WIDER Research Paper, 2004/07. UNU-WIDER: Helsinki.

McKenzie, D and Yang, D (forthcoming) 'Evidence on Policies to Increase the Development Impacts of International Migration', KNOMAD.

Omata, N (2013) 'The complexity of refugees' return decision-making in protracted exile: beyond the home-coming model and durable solutions', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 39(8): 1281–97

Paasche, E (2014) 'Why Assisted Return Programmes Must be Evaluated. Insights from the project 'Possibilities and Realities of Return Migration', Peace Research Institute Oslo Policy Brief nr 5, Peace Research Institute Oslo: Oslo.

Roelen, K & Gassman, F (2012) 'Child Well-being in Kazakhstan' UNICEF Kazakhstan, Atana.

Rogge, JR (1994) 'Repatriation of refugees: a not so simple 'optimum' solution', in T Allen and H Morsink (eds) *When Refugees Go Home*, Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

Ruben, R, van Houte, M & Davids, T (2009) 'What Determines the Embeddedness of Forced-Return Migrants? Rethinking the Role of Pre- and Post-Return Assistance', *International Migration Review*, 43(4): 908–937.

Salt, J and Stein, J (2002) 'Migration as a business: the case of trafficking', *International Migration*, 35(4), 467–94.

Schuster, L and Majidi, N (2013) 'What happens post-deportation? The experience of deported Afghans', *Migration Studies 1(2)*, 221–240.

Stark, O (1991) *The Migration of Labour*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Stefansson, A (2004), 'Sarajevo suffering: homecoming and the hierarchy of homeland hardship', in F Markowitz and A

Stefansson (eds) *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*, New York: Lexington Books.

Strand, A, Arghawan, A, Chaudhary, TW, Harpviken, KB, Sarwari, A, Suhrke, A (2008) 'Return in Dignity, Return to What? Review of the Voluntary Return Programme to Afghanistan', Oslo: CMI.

Todaro, MP (1976) *Internal Migration in Developing Countries: A Survey*, Geneva: ILO.

UNHCR (2004) *Handbook for Repatriation and Reintegration Activities*, Geneva: UNHCR.

Van Houte, M & de Koning, M (2008) 'Towards a better embeddedness? Monitoring assistance to involuntary returning migrants from Western countries', Nijmegen: Centre for International Development Issues.

Von Lersner, U, Elbert, T, Neuner, F (2008) 'Mental health of refugees following state-sponsored repatriation from Germany', *BMC Psychiatry*, 8:88.

Whyte, Z & Hirslund, DV (2013), 'Internationals Experiences with the Sustainable Assisted Return of Rejected Asylum Seekers' Copenhagen: Danish Institute of International Studies Report 2013:13.

Wong, M (2013) 'Navigating return: the gendered geographies of skilled return migration to Ghana' *Global Networks*.

Zolberg, A (1981) *Escape from Violence*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

ANNEXES

APPENDIX I

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION

This is a preliminary literature review intended to inform a comparative project evaluating the assisted voluntary return and reintegration of migrants, including irregular migrants and asylum seekers who have seen their claim rejected, or have withdrawn their application, and migrants who overstay their visa.

The project is a key research project conceived and commissioned as part of the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP)'s Irregular Migration Research Program , and was informed by the program's first occasional paper, which recognized the need to establish an evidence-base for policy deliberations on irregular migration to Australia (Koser and McAuliffe, 2013). The project is supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Maastricht University.

The project's primary sources of information will be data analysis and surveys conducted in eight origin countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Iraq, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Viet Nam), one transit country (Indonesia), and four destination countries (Australia, Netherlands, Switzerland and UK). And the project is explicitly policy-oriented, with the aim of building a stronger evidence base for policy, generating innovative policy recommendations, and providing the foundations for further policy research. A recent policy review completed for KNOMAD highlights the lack of evidence on assisted voluntary return and the need for further research (McKenzie and Yang, forthcoming).

At the same time there is significant value for the project in reviewing the existing academic literature on assisted voluntary return and reintegration. First, a review can help identify gaps in knowledge and evidence and guide the overall project. Second and more specifically, it can inform the development of survey tools and target data analysis. Third, it can be used as the basis for developing an analytical framework, which is an important output for this project in informing further systematic research in this area. Finally, a review of the literature is one way to expose assumptions underpinning policy on return and reintegration – for example where policies continue to be made on the basis of assumptions that are not supported by the existing evidence.

Initial observations are that the academic literature on return and reintegration is relatively thin, tends to focus on the repatriation of refugees, and also is quite dated. Equally, a series of evaluation reports on IOM return programmes have also been reviewed for this project, but on the whole these are more concerned with the achievement of project benchmarks and cost effectiveness, than explaining the return decision or process, or assessing the impact of policies.

The current review is structured around three main themes, responding to the main research objectives of the project: (1) analysis of the migrant return decision, including factors that motivate or impede irregular migrants from returning voluntarily; (2) development of a framework for defining and measuring sustainability; and (3) an assessment of what factors and policies determine sustainable return.

2. UNDERSTANDING THE MIGRANT RETURN DECISION

There is a well-established literature on migration decision-making, mainly in the fields of economics and sociology, but also from an interdisciplinary perspective (De Jong and Gardner, 1981). Early analyses focused on rational choice theory, regarding the decision to migrate as a rational choice intended to maximize an individual's net benefits (Todaro, 1976). While this approach has since been criticized, for assuming rational behaviour, and for under-estimating non-monetary determinants of migration, it has been found to help explain the selectivity of migration (Massey et *al.*, 1993). Research into the household economy expands the individual migrant's perspective to the household level, and views migration as a family strategy designed to maximize benefits and minimize risks (Stark, 1991). This is one way to explain temporary migration and the separation of families.

While both these approaches have value in explaining why migrants move, neither really answers the question how they choose their destinations. Other approaches focus on the role of social networks – that is the series of interpersonal relations in which migrants interact with their family or friends (Boyd, 1989). Migration research has established that

[3]Information on the Irregular Migration Research Program can be found at: http://www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research/

social networks are commonly an important determinant of migration plans as well as the choice of destination (Böcker, 1994; Boyd, 1989; Faist, 1997). An extension of social networks to also include agents such as migrant smugglers has also been found to help explain migration by asylum seekers and irregular migrants (Koser, 1997).

There is a continuing debate on the extent to which refugees exercise choice in their decision. The movement of refugees has traditionally been depicted as involuntary, and effectively outside the volition of the individuals involved (Kunz, 1973; 1981). Subsequent analyses have suggested, in contrast, that refugees exert some control over their decision to leave and their intended destination – moving, for example, is often a choice consciously taken over alternative options including risking staying at home or joining the conflict (Zolberg, 1989; Adhikari, 2013). The fact that a proportion of asylum seekers travelling long distances to destinations in the industrialized world, including Australia and Europe, are recognized as refugees is also testament to the idea that some refugees make decisions concerning their intended destination (Koser and McAuliffe, 2013; McAuliffe, 2013). In the Australian context, research has found that refugees' decisions to migrate to Australia took into account a range of complex, inter-related factors including protection, employment, education services, housing, health services, poverty, geography and family/community links, and that these factors, as well as the nature and extent of collective decision-making processes, varied among different groups of refugees (McAuliffe, 2013).

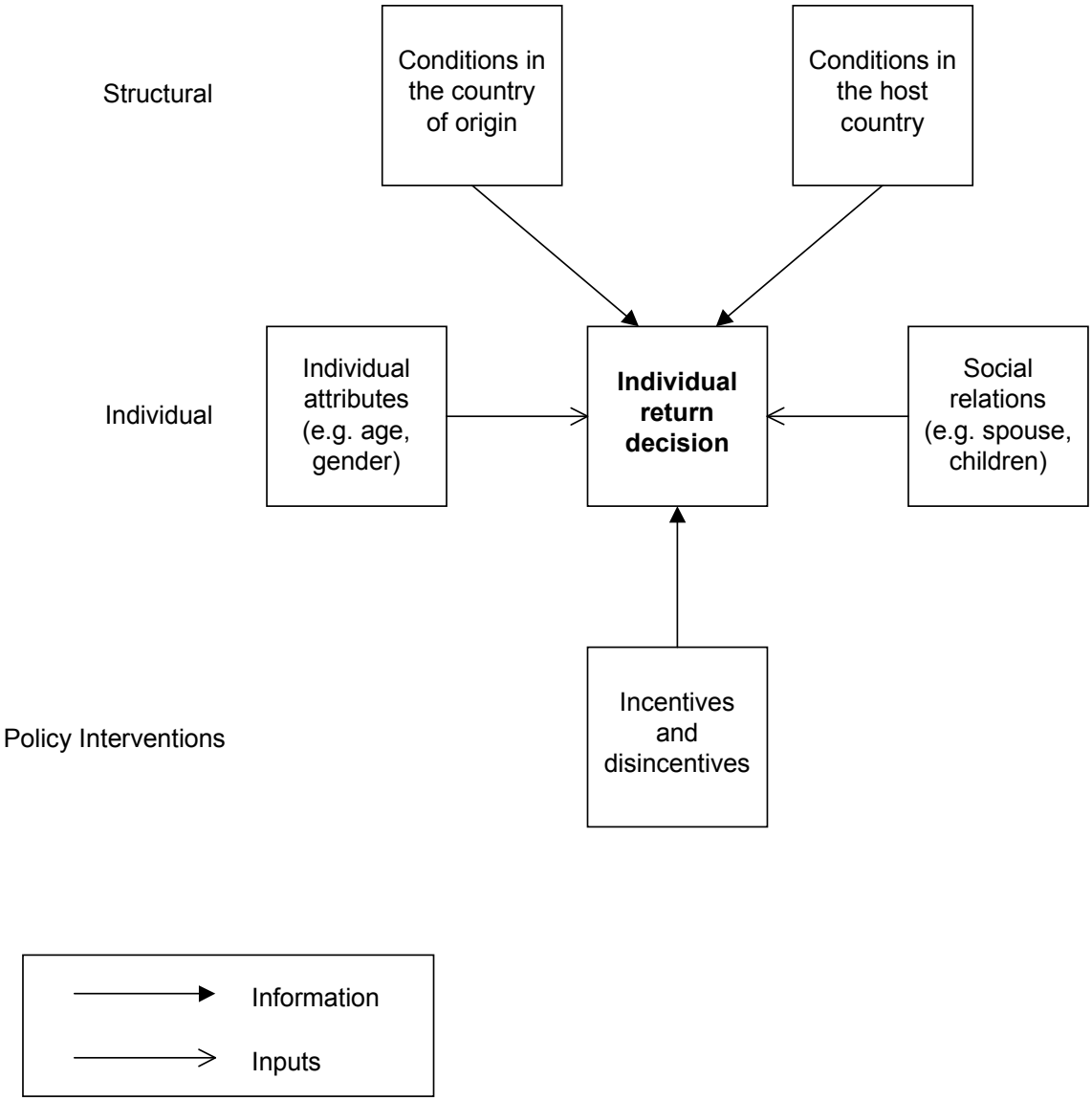
There has been far less research on the migrant return decision-making process; indeed return migration in general remains a neglected field (Koser, 2013). It is reasonable to assume that some of the factors that help explain the decision to migrate may also apply to the decision to return – for example that it is based on a comparison of opportunities at home and abroad, and that it is likely to be embedded in wider family strategies (Constant and Massey, 2002). But there are also some important differences (Haug, 2008). Agents are less likely to be involved directly in the return process, for example, and return usually does not involve a choice of destinations (at least at the national level).

The decision by refugees to return home has also been demonstrated to be more complex than is often assumed (Omata, 2013). Addressing the factors that caused them to flee in the first place is often necessary but not sufficient to encourage return, especially where they have spent considerable periods in exile or face particular vulnerabilities arising from their experience prior to and during flight. Many refugees return of their own accord (sometimes described as 'spontaneous' repatriation) even where assistance is available. Refugees may return temporarily to test the waters at home; adopt cross-border mobility strategies; and deliberately divide their families across borders during return: all of which speaks to refugee repatriation being a process rather than a discrete event (Black and Koser, 1999).

Most of the research that has generated these general observations on refugee return has tended to take place amongst refugees settled close to their country of origin. There is less academic research on the return decision by refugees in industrialized states, recognizing that in most cases such refugees have the right to settle permanently; and still less among rejected asylum seekers and irregular migrants, who clearly do not have the right to remain in the destination country.

One of the few substantive and comparative studies on the return decision by asylum seekers, including rejected asylum seekers, was conducted for the UK Home Office in 2002-03 (Black et *al.*, 2004), and clearly is now quite dated. The study developed a simple model of the factors determining the decision to return (see Figure 1.1), that views the decision fundamentally as a comparison between political, economic and social factors at home and abroad. The decision is also posited to be influenced by individual and family- or community-level factors, as well as by the policy framework. An essential part of the model is the extent to which decision-makers have information about conditions at home and about incentives and disincentives.

Figure 1.1: Factors determining the decision to return



The UK study, conducted amongst asylum seekers from eight nationalities in the UK (including of relevance for this project Afghans, and Sri Lankan Tamils), established the following broad conclusions:

1. Security was cited as the most important factor determining return motivations, although its meaning varied between respondents from overall security in the country of origin to individual security on return. Employment also figured as an important factor, and analysis suggested that unemployment in the country of destination might encourage people to consider return, but equally that employment does not deter them from considering return. The location of family members was the other principal factor cited, and there was a higher propensity to consider return among those without family in the UK and with family at home.

2. Younger respondents were more willing to consider return than older respondents, as were people without partners in the UK. People with children in the UK were less willing to consider return. There was no clear relationship between either sex or legal status and return motivations.

3. Assistance programmes were not a decisive factor in return motivations for any of the respondents, although most respondents welcomed assistance once they had decided to return, in particular with employment, training and money.

4. Almost half the respondents had never heard of assistance programmes. The majority of those who had, heard about them by word of mouth and many did not have an accurate impression of the programmes.

5. There was no information gap about conditions in the country of origin – those respondents in the UK who wanted to access information about their country of origin could do so.

6. The importance of security and employment in the country of origin for respondents in the UK suggested that sustainability issues may be a central factor in deciding whether or not to go home. However, some reported that they would not go home, even if the return were sustainable, whilst still others reported that they plan or expect to go home even if their return is not likely to be sustainable.

For the purposes of the current research, which is particularly concerned with how rejected asylum seekers and irregular migrants can be encouraged to return voluntarily, the finding in the 2004 study that legal status was not apparently correlated with intentions to return is worth highlighting. Across four citizenship groups that included rejected asylum seekers – Chinese, Kosovan, Turkish Kurds, and Somalis - no obvious relationship emerged. In some cases refugees with British citizenship had registered for assisted voluntary return; in other cases people whose asylum appeals had been turned down had not. The research suggested that of those still awaiting the outcome of an asylum application or appeal, some were pessimistic and thinking about returning and others optimistic and planning to stay. The research thus reinforced its model's assumption that legal status was only one of many other variables that influenced return motivations, and for many people not the paramount factor.

It is also worth noting that assistance programmes were not a primary decision factor in return motivations, which has also been found in other studies. In a study in Norway of return decision-making by rejected asylum seekers from Afghanistan, it was found that the primary reason for selecting return packages was because '...all other options were worse', in particular the threat of deportation (Strand et al., 2008). Similarly, Black et *al.* (2011) found that the threat of deportation is an essential component to uptake in return programmes and term this the 'stick and carrot' strategy of policy-making. There is thus evidence that the threat of removal is a critical component to the take-up of voluntary return programmes, and that the programmes in themselves do not generally motivate return.

In the same vein, Collyer et *al.* (2009) found in a study of returnees to Sri Lanka who had been living irregularly in the UK, that all of the returnees made the decision to return prior to being informed about return programmes. The anxiety of living irregularly 'wore people down' and impacted their return decisions (Collyer et *al.*, 2009: 27). Similarly a study of Brazilian migrants in the European Union (EU) by IOM found that the primarily motivation for return was a failed migration cycle and that individuals had already made the decision to return prior to being informed of programme options (IOM, 2009).

3. DEFINING SUSTAINABILITY

The concept 'sustainable return' gained popularity in post-conflict contexts in the 1990s, when it became recognized that in order for post-conflict countries to achieve lasting peace, refugees needed not just to be able to return, but also to reintegrate effectively (Black and Gent, 2004). This includes being able to participate in peace processes, political reform, and economic development (Brookings-Bern Project, 2007). At the same time ample research in the 1990s illustrated that return itself is often not always a straightforward home-coming; neither does it necessarily mark the 'end of the refugee cycle', instead exposing returnees to a range of new challenges (Hammond, 1999; Koser and Black, 1999; Rogge, 1994). The complexities of return elicited the need for new understandings of return, reintegration and what constitutes successful reintegration and sustainable return.

Surveying the literature, there have been five broad (and overlapping) approaches to defining sustainability, one distinguishing between individual and community-level impacts; a second focusing on comparisons with non-migrants and contemporaries after return; a third concerned with the re-establishment of networks; a fourth that gauges sustainability against the propensity to re-migrate; and finally acknowledgement that there may be a significant difference between returnees' perceptions and on the ground realities.

An early attempt to define sustainability for the purposes of measuring it distinguished 'individual' and 'community level' (or 'aggregate') sustainable return (Black et al, 2004). Individual sustainable return was defined as follows:

> 'Return migration is sustainable for individuals if returnees' socio-economic status and fear of violence or persecution is no worse, relative to the population in place of origin, one year after their return.' (p.39)

Aggregate sustainability was in turn identified where:

> 'Return migration is sustainable for the home country or region if socio-economic conditions and levels of violence and persecution are not significantly worsened by return, as measured one year after the process is complete' (p.39).

These contrasting definitions highlight that sustainable return has different meanings depending on how it is defined. Here is a good example of how a review of the literature can inform the current research project – the choice of one or other of these definitions of sustainability would significantly influence the data collection and analysis that is required, as well as survey design and choice of respondents (see Section 5 below). Perhaps most importantly from a policy perspective, an assessment of the extent to which return is sustainable also may vary according to the approach adopted. According to these definitions it is perfectly feasible that aggregate sustainability may be achieved even if certain individuals fail to reintegrate.

A different approach to sustainability has tended to be adopted in the specific context of refugee return, focusing on the rights of the individual. Thus the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defines reintegration as:

> '...equated with the achievement of a sustainable return – in other words the ability of returning refugees to secure the political, economic, [legal] and social conditions needed to maintain life, livelihood and dignity' (UNCHR, 2004: 6).

This is furthered by:

> 'Reintegration is a process that should result in the disappearance of differences in legal rights and duties between returnees and their compatriots and the equal access of returnees to services, productive assets and opportunities' (UNHCR, 2004: 7).

This definition implies a levelling of rights for returnees with the local population, which seems intuitive. At the same time, this may in fact imply a changing standard of quality of life for returnees compared with what they experienced either prior to migration, or in the country of asylum, or both (Rogge, 1994). An issue that arises – and is not addressed in the research – is the extent to which these factors are involved in re-migration decision-making. How important is a failure to achieve the same living standards as those prior to migration, those during the migration experience, or those enjoyed by comparable populations after return?

The literature on the reintegration of non-refugee populations raises similar tensions, but does not have a focus on access to basic needs and equal rights. Presumably, this is because it is assumed that non-refugee returnees are not in situations of vulnerability upon return and that non-refugees return with enough resources so that they can independently meet their needs (Kuschminder, forthcoming); both of which assumptions are questionable.
In the case of voluntary migrant return, reintegration has been defined as:

> '...the process through which a return migrant participates in the social, cultural, economic, and political life in the country of origin' (Cassarino, 2008, p.127).

Social aspects would include participation in organizations, relationships and acceptance with family and friends (such as respect within the household), access to information sources, and societal acceptance. There are echoes here of the social networks approach to migrant decision-making described above. Cultural aspects would include participating in religious or cultural events, and willing subscription to the norms and values of the society. Economic reintegration refers to the occupational and employment status of the returnee and their ability to afford a certain standard of living. It also includes the potential to undertake entrepreneurial activities and local investments. Political reintegration refers to participation in the political process of the country.

IOM utilizes a similar definition of reintegration as "Re-inclusion or re-incorporation of a person into a group or a process, e.g. of a migrant into the society of his country of origin" (IOM, 2004, p. 54). Further specifications are made for different types of reintegration including social, economic, and cultural reintegration (IOM, 2004).

It is worth observing that many people in poor – and even some middle-income and wealthier countries – can hardly be said to achieve these aspirations systematically or on a regular basis. Resolving the tension between universal aspirations and individual realities is important in defining sustainability.

Most recently, the concept sustainable return has been applied to the return of irregular migrants and rejected asylum seekers including both those who return voluntarily and those who are forcibly returned. In a study conducted by IOM on return from Austria the importance of sustainable return was highlighted for voluntary returnees:

> 'Sustainability of voluntary return is seen as the criteria for the success of a return project. But in spite of this great importance of sustainability, return activities in Austria are not evaluated at all, or if so, then only unsystematically. Moreover, it is not quite clear which definition of sustainability prevails in Austria' (IOM and EMN, 2006, p.46).

This highlights the need for further research and an exploration of new definitions for sustainable return. Ultimately, at this time, the success of such return programmes is gauged by the extent to which returnees re-migrate, and the extent to which their return dissuades others from migrating without authorization. This has been referred to as 'physical' reintegration. This approach need not be viewed cynically – ultimately the propensity to re-migrate irregularly is probably the best indicator for all the definitions of sustainable return reviewed so far in this section for this population. It is also a key issue of concern as one study of returned Afghan rejected asylum seekers found that 74 per cent of respondents wanted to migrate again irregularly, suggesting that their reintegration was unsuccessful (Majidi, 2009). The distinction may be between means and ends: is reintegration assistance intended to support meaningful re-engagement at home, or simply to anchor people in place?

A final approach to defining sustainability, which applies across all of the other approaches briefly reviewed here, is that the perception of reintegration may be just as important – if not more so – than the realities. If a returnee perceives his or her living standards to have decreased relative to others for example, or feels a sense of guilt or shame resulting from the migration experience, this may be a powerful incentive to re-migrate.

4. FACTORS DETERMINING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF RETURN

The sustainability of return has been found to be influenced by a combination of individual and structural factors in both the country of destination and the country of origin (Rogge, 1994; Black and Gent, 2006). An immediate and important policy implication is that the circumstances of migrants in the country of destination may influence their prospects for sustainable return. What is less clear from the existing literature, however, is to what extent policy interventions in the form of assistance also promote sustainable return.

While it seems intuitive that individual factors such as age, sex, and family ties may influence the sustainability of return, the evidence is by no means systematic. In the 2004 UK study cited above, for example, it was found that young single men who had returned to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo/UNSC 1244 had better chances in the job market at home, but were equally most likely to take the risk to re-migrate (Black et *al.*, 2004). Family ties may anchor a returnee in their country of origin, but dividing family members across international borders has become a common strategy among migrants and even refugees. In certain circumstances ethnicity and religion are also likely to be influential, especially for example where people are returned to countries or regions within a country where they form part of a minority. Similarly sexual orientation may hinder acceptance at home – especially where antagonism against personal preferences was one of the reasons for leaving in the first place.

The individual experience of the 'migration cycle' may also impact the sustainability of return. In a recent study, Cassarino (2014) found that migrants having an 'interrupted' migration cycle, which would include assisted voluntary returnees who were not able to achieve their migration goals, had strong difficulties reintegrating back home, such as being more likely to be unemployed. Other studies have illustrated this, such as in return to the Western Caucuses wherein returnees that viewed their migration as successful were more likely to be able to reintegrate upon return, as compared to those whose migration was not a success and were negative from the initial entry into the country, which led to several challenges in their reintegration (IOM, 2002). This is similar to other studies that have found that rejected asylum seekers and migrants unable to obtain residence permits in the country of migration faced additional challenges upon return such as: being unable to build sustainable livelihoods, and not feeling a sense of belonging in the return society (Ruben et *al.*, 2009).

Within the migration cycle, the initial circumstances of departure may be important – for example refugees fleeing conflict are usually unwilling to return until security has been re-established, whilst also noting the observation above that the removal of root causes is necessary but not always sufficient to promote return. Equally for some – certain refugees or victims of trafficking – the experience of leaving the country may have been so traumatic as to discount the possibility of return from a psychological perspective or make reintegration very challenging (von Lersner et al., 2008). A range of agents may also be involved in these early stages of the migration cycle, variously influencing departure, movement, and potentially entry and initial settlement too. These agents range from the legitimate – recruitment agents, travel agencies, employers – to the illicit end of the spectrum including clandestine agents, travel agencies and employers, migrant smugglers and traffickers (Salt and Stein, 2002). We have found no research on how the former may influence return motivations or reintegration prospects. But it is clear from several case studies that the involvement of smugglers at the start of the migration cycle may influence how it runs its course. Most significantly, migrants may be reluctant to return at all where they still are in debt to smugglers after their initial migration. The impact of debt on reintegration is unclear – certainly it heightens the need to find employment or alternative sources of income; it may expose returnees to direct threats from smugglers; and it may as a result of both these pressures exacerbate the propensity to re-migrate. Alternatively, it has been shown that migrants may stay in contact with smugglers after they have arrived in their destination countries, and that smugglers may provide alternatives to return – for example onward migration to another country (Koser, 1997).

There is also evidence that experiences after arrival in the destination country can influence both the propensity to return and its sustainability, and here the distinction between individual and structural factors in the destination country blurs. Again the evidence is not systematic. As a general observation – and countering a widely-held policy assumption – integration may encourage sustainable return (Al-Ali et al, 2001; Bilgili and Siegel, 2013; Carling and Pettersen, 2012; de Haas and Fokkema, 2011). On one hand regular employment should provide migrants the wherewithal to return and invest in their reintegration; but equally they may be unlikely to return unless they can secure a job at a commensurate level and salary in the origin country. Secure legal status enables migrants to return home on a regular basis and plan for return; on the other hand it provides an exit strategy after return which arguably may reduce the commitment to invest in reintegrating. More broadly it has been suggested that enabling transnationalism – basically economic and social relationships across borders – may facilitate sustainable return.

There are also structural factors in the origin country that influence individual propensities to reintegrate and remain. These include the policies of the country of return towards returnees including critical elements such as property restitution and citizenship rights, the attitudes of the local community and their families towards returnees, and the number of people returning at the same time (Kibreab, 2003; Rogge, 1994). Furthermore, safety and security in the country of origin is central in decision making factors in return. In a recent study examining returns from the Netherlands from 2001-2011, it is evident that AVR uptake is much lower to countries with low levels of safety and security (Leerkes et *al.*, 2014).

For instance, if the government of the country of return has a negative attitude towards reintegrating returnees or lacks the capacity for assisting returnees in reintegration efforts this can be expected to hinder the sustainability of return – Eritrea is currently a good example. Even in situations where the national government of the country of origin is positive towards returnees, local governments may not apply the same approach. In Cambodia, for example, international pressure was placed on the government to assist in the repatriation of refugees after the peace accords in 1991. However, the local authorities and provincial leaders were unwilling to provide land to returnees despite requests from the Prime Minister (Eastmond and Ojendal, 1999). Similarly, Steffanson (2004) found in Bosnia and Herzegovina that although the national policy discourse was broadly welcoming towards returnees, at a local level they reported discrimination by local authorities. A comparable situation was found in Burundi, where the Government of Burundi officially has a welcoming and open policy towards returnees, but at the local level they have reported specific difficulties in accessing justice in the judicial system (Fransen and Kuschminder, 2012). These examples suggest that greater attention is required on the implementation of national policies towards returnees at the local level, and on the interaction between returnees and local-level administrations.

The attitudes of the local population towards returnees can also be a critical factor determining sustainable return. In Afghanistan, for example, Schuster and Majidi (2013) found that deportees from Europe are treated as though they are 'contaminated'. Shame arising from a lack of acceptance from the local population for having a failed migration episode highly influenced the desires of deportees to remigrate. Social networks are thus essential for a sustainable return by promoting connections and acceptance within the local community (Cassarino, 2004; van Houte and de Koning, 2008). Other research has shown that the number of returnees arriving during the same period impacts the sustainability of return (Rogge, 1994). If the number returning is so large that they strain local resources, this will impact local livelihoods and most likely lead to either re-migration or conflict with local populations. This is however generally only a concern in large-scale refugee repatriations.

Finally, there is a suggestion that targeted programming can increase the sustainability of return (Whyte and Hirslund, 2013). Several efforts have and are currently being made to understand the role of different forms of reintegration assistance (such as cash support, psycho-social support, and different forms of in-kind support) in enabling sustainable return, to which the project will contribute. This is a key research gap where anecdotal evidence is only available on small-scale and individual programmes.

Table 1.1 below attempts to categorize and consolidate the main factors potentially impacting the sustainability of return, combining individual and structural factors. The first column lists those factors that have emerged from the literature review to date. The second column proposes additional factors, based on our own research experiences, and informal project discussions to date. Perhaps the most important category missing from the table is assistance, for example in the form of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programmes (AVRR). An important goal for this project is to integrate assistance into the analytical framework on return and reintegration, and make an initial assessment of whether and how it influences sustainable return.

Table 1.1: Key Variables that may influence the sustainability of return

	Variables from literature review	Additional Variables
Returnees' Characteristics	Age	Ethnicity
	Gender	Religion
		Rural/Urban
		Sexual orientation
Experiences before Exile	Pre-migration accommodation	Socio-economic status
	Pre-migration education	Number of dependents
	Pre-migration employment status	Sense of belonging
	Pre- migration job	
	Previous migration history	
	Remittances received pre-migration	
Decision Making Factors in Migration	Migrated via a smuggler or not	Individual or Collective Decision
		Reason for migration
		Cost of migration
		Goals of Migration
		Voluntary or rather forced migration (trafficking)
Experiences in Country of Destination	Migrated alone or with family	Maintained ties to country of origin
	Language learned	Sent remittances
	Children educated	Freedom of movement
	Income	Education
	Employment	Extent of social integration/friendships
	Discrimination	
	Feelings	
	Perceived value of experiences abroad	
Public Policy on Asylum	Legal status in country of destination	
	Accommodation status in country of destination	
Conditions of Return	Return to pre-migration community	Acceptance within community
	Return alone or with family	Remaining migration debt
	Ability to bring back assets and belongings	Employment
	Receipt of return assistance	Household Vulnerability
	Receipt of reconstruction assistance	Safety and Security
	Follow-up from return organisation	
	Assets regained	
The decision to return	Willingness to Return	Influences in the return decision
	Reasons for return	Threat of forced returns/forced removals
	Sources of information about return	

5. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

As indicated above (Section 1), the intended contribution of this preliminary literature review – which will be expanded for the final report – is at least fourfold. First, it can help identify gaps in knowledge and evidence, and several have become clear in the preceding analysis. Overall, there is simply not enough research and neither is the existing research recent enough to allow a confident answer to the central research questions for this project – how do migrants make the decision to return; what is sustainable return; and what determines it? While the current project clearly will not provide categorical answers to any of these questions, it is one of the largest-scale projects to have been undertaken on this topic, and has the added value of being genuinely comparative across a wide range of national settings. In addition the project is intended to inform, in practical terms, further research.

Certainly the project should help fill a specific gap regarding the return and reintegration experiences of irregular migrants and rejected asylum seekers. And it can target specific questions that remain largely unanswered by existing research, for example: How important is the availability of assistance in influencing the return decision? Does the type of assistance available influence either the decision to return or the sustainability of the return? What is the gap between returnees' perceptions of their situation post-return and the realities? What motivates re-migration by returnees?

A second contribution of the literature review is to help guide survey design and data analysis. A good example concerns which respondents to target in the country of origin. Black et *al.* (2004) propose that an assessment about the success or otherwise of return and reintegration should be measured at least one year after return; and this is reinforced by other research that stresses that reintegration is a long-term process (Fransen and Kuschminder, 2012). It can be difficult, however, to identify returnees one year or more after their return, and to expect them to recall critical decisions made during their return and reintegration.

Similarly, the extent of the focus on returnees' perceptions or on-the-ground realities, or individual or aggregate level indicators of sustainable return, clearly also influences survey design and the data that are required, as illustrated in Table 1.2 below.

Table 1.2: Measures of the sustainability of return

	Physical	**Socio-economic**	**Political-security**
Perception of returnee	(Lack of) desire to re-emigrate	Perceived socio-economic status	Perception of safety, security threats
Objective conditions of returnees	Proportion of returnees who (do not) re-emigrate	Actual socio-economic status of returnees	Actual persecution or violence against returnees
Aggregate conditions of origin countries	Trends in levels of emigration and asylum-seeking abroad	Trends in levels of poverty and well-being	Trends in levels of persecution, conflict and violence

Source: Black et *al.* (2004).

A third purpose of the literature review for this project is to help develop an analytical framework that can be used as the foundations for further research in this area. There are some models and frameworks in the existing literature – for example the model depicted above for understanding the decision to return (Figure 1) – and it is possible to compile a list of factors that may influence the sustainability of return as in Table 1 above. But this review has also highlighted key factors that remain to be integrated in a consolidated framework, for example how experiences in earlier stages of the migration cycle influence those in later stages; and what the role of policy interventions is in supporting sustainable return and reintegration.

Finally, as asserted above, a review of the literature can also be one way to expose specific policy assumptions. Most of the admittedly limited research on the return decision-making process, for example, indicates that the removal of root causes may not be sufficient to ensure sustainable return, and yet this assumption appears to prevail in some instances. There is equally a degree of consensus in the research that the availability of assistance is a non-consequential factor in

determining whether migrants – and even irregular migrants and rejected asylum seekers – will return voluntarily; and yet often policy debates concern what level of support to offer to incentivize return. Neither is there any clear evidence to date that reintegration assistance reduces the propensity to re-migrate. Providing a better evidence-base to inform policy deliberations is clearly an important objective for this project.

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Al-Ali, N., Black, R., Koser, K. (2001) 'The limits to transnationalism: Bosnian and Eritrean Refugees in Europe as emerging transnational communities', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 24(4): 578-600.

Bilgili, O and Siegel, M. (2013) 'Migrants' Integration, Homeland Engagement and Intentions to Return', Working Paper, University of Maastricht.

Black, R., Collyer, M., Somerville, W. (2011), Pay to go Schemes and other Non-coercive Return Programmes: Is Scale Possible? Washington DC: Migration Policy Institute.

Black, R. and Koser, K. (1999) 'The End of the Refugee Cycle?' in R. Black and K. Koser (eds) *The End of the Refugee Cycle?* Oxford: Berghahn, 1-19.

Black, R., Koser, K., Monk, K., Atfield, G., D'Onofrio, L., Tiemoko, R. (2004) *Understanding Voluntary Return, Home Office Report 50/04*, London: Home Office.

Black, R. and Gent, S. (2006) 'Sustainable return in post-conflict contexts', *International Migration, 44(3)*, 15-38

Böcker, A. (1994) 'Chain migration over legally closed borders: settled immigrants as bridgeheads and gatekeepers', *The Netherlands Journal of Social Science*, 30(2): 97-106.

Boyd, M. (1989) 'Family and personal networks in international migration: recent developments and new agenda', *International Migration Review*, 23(3): 638-70.

Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement (2007) 'Addressing Internal Displacement in Peace Agreements, Peace Processes, and Peace-Building', Washington DC: Brookings Institution.

Carling, J. and Pettersen, S. V. (2012) 'Immigrant integration, transnationalism, and return migration intentions', Conference paper presented at Return migration and transnationalism: alternative or compliments? September 2012, Oslo, Norway.

Cassarino, J.P. (2004) 'Theorising return migration: the conceptual approach to return migrants revisited, *International Journal on Multicultural Societies*, 6(2), 253-279.

Cassarino, J.P. (ed) (2008) *Return Migrants to the Maghreb, Reintegration and Development Challenges*, San Domenico di Fiesolo: European University Institute (EUI), Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies

Cassarino, J.P. (ed) (2014) *Reintegration and Development*, San Domenico di Fiesolo: European University Institute (EUI), Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies.

Collyer, M., Wimalasena, P., Ansar,N., Khan, M.A. (2009). 'Return Migrant in Sri Lanka', Institute for Public Policy Research.

Constant, A. and Massey, D.S. (2002) 'Return migration by German guestworkers: neoclassical versus new economic theories', *International Migration*, 40(4): 5-38.

De Jong. G.F. and Gardner, R.W. (eds) *Migration Decision Making: Multidisciplinary Approaches to Micro-level Studies in Developed and Developing Countries*, New York: Pergamon.

Eastmond, M. and Ojendal, J. (1999) 'Revisiting a 'Repatriation Success': The Case of Cambodia' in R. Black and K. Koser (eds) *The End of the Refugee Cycle?* Oxford: Berghahn, 38-55.

Faist, T. (1997) 'The crucial meso-level', in T. Hammar, G. Brochmannn, K. Tamas, T. Faist (eds) *International Migration*, Immobility and Development, Oxford: Berg, pp.187-217.

Fransen, S. and Kuschminder, K. (2012) 'Back to the land: the long-term challenges of refugee return and reintegration in Burundi', New Issues in Refugee Research, Research Paper No. 242, Geneva: UNHCR.

Hammond, L. (1999) 'Examining the discourse of repatriation: towards a more proactive theory of return migration', in R. Black and K. Koser (eds) *The End of the Refugee Cycle? Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction*, Oxford: Berghahn, 227-244.

Haug, S. (2008) 'Migration networks and migration decision-making', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 34(4): 585-605.

IOM (2002) 'The Return and Reintegration of Migrants to the South Caucasus: An Exploratory Study' *Research Report.*

IOM (2004) 'Glossary on Migration', International Organization for Migration.

IOM (2009) 'Assessment of Brazilian Migration Patterns and Assisted Voluntary Return Programme from selected European Member States to Brazil,' *Research Report.*

IOM and EMN (2006) 'Return Migration in Austria' *Research Report.*

Kibreab, G. (2003), 'Citizenship Rights and Repatriation of Refugees,' *International Migration Review 37* (1): 24-73.

Koser, K. (1997) 'Social networks and the asylum cycle: the case of Iranians in the Netherlands', *International Migration Review*, 31(3): 591-610

Koser, K. (2013) 'Migrants and refugees', in P.Crang, M. Crang, M. Goodwin (eds) *Introducing Human Geographies*, 3rd Edition, London: Routledge, pp.556-71.

Koser, K. and McAuliffe, M. (2013) 'Establishing an Evidence-Base for Future Policy Development on Irregular Migration to Australia' *Irregular Migration Research Programme Occasional Paper Series No. 01/2013*.

Kunz, E. (1973) 'The refugee in flight: kinetic models and forms of displacement', *International Migration Review,* 7(2): 125-46.

Kunz, E. (1981) 'Exile and resettlement: refugee theory', *International Migration Review,* 15 (1/2): 42-51

Kuschminder, K. (forthcoming) 'Female Return Migration and Reintegration Strategies in Ethiopia', PhD Dissertation, Maastricht: Maastricht University.

Leerkes, A.S., Boersema, E., Os, R.M.V. van, Galloway, A.M., London, M. Van (2014) 'Rejected and departed from the Netherlands? A study into the backgrounds of the variation in assisted voluntary return among rejected asylum seekers' Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek- en Documentatiecentrum Cahiers 2014-03.

Majidi, N. (2009) 'Understanding the Return and Reintegration Process of Afghan Returnees from the UK'. Paris: Altai Consulting.

Massey, D.S., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A., Taylor, J.E. (1993) 'Theories of international migration: a review and appraisal', *Population and Development Review*, 19(3): 431-66.

McAuliffe, M. (2013) 'Seeking the views of irregular migrants: Decision making, drivers and migration journeys' *Irregular Migration Research Programme Occasional Paper Series 05/2013*.

McKenzie, D. and Yang, D. (forthcoming) 'Evidence on Policies to Increase the Development Impacts of International Migration' KNOMAD.

Omata, N. (2013) 'The complexity of refugees' return decision-making in protracted exile: beyond the home-coming model and durable solutions', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 39(8): 1281-97.*

Rogge, J. R. (1994), 'Repatriation of refugees: a not so simple 'optimum' solution, in T. Allen and H. Morsink (eds) When Refugees Go Home, Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

Ruben, R., van Houte, M, and Davids, T. (2009) 'What Determines the Embeddedness of Forced-Return Migrants? Rethinking the Role of Pre- and Post-Return Assistance' *International Migration Review*, 43(4): 908-937.

Salt, J. and Stein, J. (2002) 'Migration as a business: the case of trafficking', *International Migration*, 35(4), 467-94.

Schuster, L. and Majidi, N. (2013) 'What happens post-deportation? The experience of deported Afghans', *Migration Studies 1(2)*, 221-240.

Stark, O. (1991) *The Migration of Labour*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Stefansson, A. (2004), 'Sarajevo suffering: homecoming and the hierarchy of homeland hardship', in F. Markowitz and A. Stefansson (eds) *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*, New York: Lexington Books.

Strand, A., Arghawan, A., Chaudhary, T.W., Harpviken, K.B., Sarwari, A., Suhrke, A. (2008). 'Return in Dignity, Return to What? Review of the Voluntary Return Programme to Afghanistan', Oslo: CMI.

Todaro, M.P. (1976) *Internal Migration in Developing Countries: A Survey*, Geneva: ILO.

UNHCR (2004) *Handbook for Repatriation and Reintegration Activities*, Geneva: UNHCR.

Van Houte, M. and de Koning, M. (2008) 'Towards a better embeddedness? Monitoring assistance to involuntary returning migrants from Western countries', Nijmegen: Centre for International Development Issues.

Von Lersner, U., Elbert, T., Neuner, F. (2008) 'Mental health of refugees following state-sponsored repatriation from Germany', *BMC Psychiatry*, 8:88.

Whyte, Z. and Hirslund, D.V. (2013), 'Internationals Experiences with the Sustainable Assisted Return of Rejected Asylum Seekers' Copenhagen: Danish Institute of International Studies Report 2013:13.

Zolberg, A. (1981) *Escape from Violence*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

APPENDIX 2

ORIGIN COUNTRY QUESTIONNAIRE:

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES (ALL COUNTRIES)

X. PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION

X.2 Country

Origin	Freq	%
Afghanistan	19	12.1
Bangladesh	25	15.92
Ethiopia	19	12.1
Iraq	22	14.01
Pakistan	20	12.74
Sri Lanka	20	12.74
Sudan	17	10.83
Viet Nam	15	9.55
Total	157	100

A. LIFE PRIOR TO MOST IMMEDIATE MIGRATION EPISODE

A.1 Before you migrated the last time, where were you living?

	Freq.	%
Same community (rural)	24	15.29
Same community (urban)	82	52.23
Different community (rural)	20	12.74
Different community (urban)	25	15.92
Missing	6	3.82
Total	157	100

A.2 With whom did you live at that time?

	Observations	Mean	Min	Max
Household size	157	4.45	0	19
Number of dependents	157	1.55	0	10

A.3 Did you have a spouse or other dependent children/family members not living with you?

*See A.2

A.4 Were you working prior to your migration?

	Freq.	%
No	43	27.39
Yes	111	70.70
Missing	3	1.91
Total	157	100

A.5 What was your job?

	Freq	%
Agricultural worker	7	6.36
Airport worker	2	1.82
Army	5	4.55
Athlete	1	0.91
Business man	4	3.64
Construction	3	2.73
Day Labourer	3	2.73
Doctor	1	0.91
Domestic worker	1	0.91
Driver	7	6.36
Florist	1	0.91
Highly skilled worker	4	3.64
Interpreter	1	0.91
Own shop	15	13.64
Police	1	0.91
Public servant	5	4.55
Religious worker	1	0.91
Shop worker	18	16.36
Taliban	2	1.82
Teacher	8	7.27
Tradesperson	18	16.36
Missing	2	1.82
Total	110	100

A.6 What was your net (after tax) monthly income, on average?

Euros

	n	Mean	Min	Max
Afghanistan	12	273	0	1480
Bangladesh	14	428	3	4000
Ethiopia	8	77	11	129
Iraq	10	279	0	1332
Pakistan	11	379	26	2984
Sri Lanka	15	126	17	310
Sudan	14	239	13	1110
Viet Nam	11	58	23	120
Total	95	239	0	4000

US Dollars

	n	Mean	Min	Max
Afghanistan	12	369	0	1998
Bangladesh	14	578	4	5400
Ethiopia	8	104	15	174
Iraq	10	377	1	1798
Pakistan	11	511	35	4028
Sri Lanka	15	170	23	419
Sudan	14	322	18	1499
Viet Nam	11	78	30	162
Total	95	323	0	5400

A.7 How would you describe your overall standard of living before you left?

	Freq.	%
Struggling	68	43.31
Coping	34	21.66
Comfortable	53	33.76
Refuse to answer	1	0.64
Missing	1	0.64
Total	157	100

A.8 Did you feel a sense of belonging to the community?

	Freq.	%
No	34	21.66
Yes	119	75.80
Missing	4	2.55
Total	157	100

A.9 In an average month, did you experience threats to your personal security?

	Freq	%
No	75	47.77
Yes	78	49.68
N/a	1	0.64
Missing	3	1.91
Total	157	100

A.10 Prior to your last migration and return, had you ever migrated internationally before?

	Freq	%
No	107	68.15
Yes	48	30.57
Missing	2	1.27
Total	157	100

B. MOST RECENT MIGRATION EPISODE

B.1 Why did you decide to migrate? What was your main reason to leave?

	Freq.	%
Security/ political situation	48	30.57
Employment	75	47.77
Education	4	2.55
Family formation/ reunification	5	3.18
Other	22	14.01
Refuse to answer	2	1.27
Missing	1	0.64
Total	157	100

Other: better lifestyle, avoid corruption, escape military service, parents disapproved of marriage

B.2 Who was involved in your decision to migrate?

	Freq	%
Parents	46	29.3
Partner/Spouse	32	20.38
Children	4	2.55
Siblings	15	9.55
Other family members	13	8.28
Friends	30	19.11
Employer/agency	2	1.27
No one else	43	27.39
Smuggler/broker	8	5.1
Other	11	7.81
Total	n/a	

Other: emigration police, embassy whole community

B.3 Did this (these) person(s) support you in your decision? Why or why not?

[Qualitative response]

B.4 Did you want to migrate?

	Freq.	%
No	28	17.83
Yes	123	78.34
Refuse to answer	1	0.64
Don't know	1	0.64
Missing	4	2.55
Total	157	100

B.5 Why or why not?

	Freq	%
Economic opportunities	39	24.84
Family decided	6	3.82
Family reunification/formation	3	1.91
Forced migration	1	0.64
Loved origin country	1	0.64
No choice	15	9.55
Origin country unsafe	17	10.83
Seeking a better life	28	17.83
Seeking more money	1	0.64
Refuse to answer	2	1.27
Missing	44	28.03
Total	157	100

B.6 In what month and year did you leave (country)?

	Freq	%
Less than 1 month	69	46.62
1 to 6 months	43	29.05
6 months to 2 years	18	12.16
More than 2 years	18	12.16
Total	148	100

B.7 Who arranged/facilitated your migration?

	Freq	%
Friend/ family member in origin	18	11.46
Friend/ famaily abroad	6	3.82
No one	21	13.38
Informal broker/ smuggler	100	63.69
Formal recruitment agency	1	0.64
Other	9	5.73
Missing	2	1.27
Total	157	100

Other: Embassy, travel agent, conference organizers, employer in destination country

B.8 Who made the arrangements with the smuggler?

	Freq.	%
Self	38	38
Family member	16	16
Friend	15	15
Other	14	14
Missing	17	17
Total	100	100

Other: Middleman, neighbor

B.9 How much did your migration cost in total?

Euros

	n	Mean	Min	Max
Afghanistan	15	12162	629	29600
Bangladesh	23	6256	650	12500
Ethiopia	12	2707	55.32	14752
Iraq	19	9093	1332	22200
Pakistan	17	4720	1492	10481.3
Sri Lanka	20	4168	197.4	16920
Sudan	13	2675	643	7400
Viet Nam	15	8249	378	18500
Total	134	6371	55.32	29600

US Dollars

	n	Mean	Min	Max
Afghanistan	15	16419	849	39960
Bangladesh	23	8446	878	16875
Ethiopia	12	3655	75	19915
Iraq	19	12276	1798	29970
Pakistan	17	6371	2014	14150
Sri Lanka	20	5626	266	22842
Sudan	13	3611	868	9990
Viet Nam	15	11136	510	24975
Total	134	8600	75	39960

B.10 Where did you acquire the money for your migration?

	Freq.	%
Savings	52	33.12
Informal loan from family/ friends	43	27.39
Gift from family/ friends	15	9.55
Employer paid	1	0.64
Scholarship	1	0.64
Sold assets	31	19.75
Other	4	2.55
Missing	10	6.37
Total	157	100

Other: Inheritance, working as they go, loan from smuggler

B.11 What were your expectations and goals of migration?

	Freq	%
Better economic opportunities	65	41.4
Better education opportunities	3	1.91
Better life	49	31.21
Citizenship	3	1.91
Escape origin country	7	4.46
Family reunification	7	4.46
No goals	4	2.55
Protection of human rights	4	2.55
Safety	8	5.1
Temporary migration	3	1.91
Missing	4	2.55
Total	157	100

B.12 What was your intended destination?

	Freq.	%
Anywhere else	12	7.64
Australia	5	3.18
Austria	1	0.64
Belgium	3	1.91
Canada	7	4.46
Denmark	1	0.64
England	1	0.64
Ethiopia	1	0.64
Europ	1	0.64
Europe	10	6.37
Finland	1	0.64
France	7	4.46
Germany	3	1.91
Greece	22	14.01
Israel	1	0.64
Italy	6	3.82
Jordan	1	0.64
Kuwait	1	0.64
Libya	2	1.27
Luxembourg	1	0.64
Netherlands	1	0.64
Norway	22	14.01
Oman	1	0.64
Poland	1	0.64
Sweden	5	3.18
Switzerland	3	1.91
Turkey	2	1.27
UK	28	17.83
USA	1	0.64
Missing	6	3.82
Total	157	100

B.13 Which countries did you pass though on your way to the destination country? How long did you spend there?

[Qualitative response]

B.14 Why and how did you come to be in (country of destination)?

[Qualitative response]

B.15 When did you arrive in (country of destination)?

B.16 What was your migration status in (destination country) when your arrived?

	Freq	%
No status	50	31.85
Asylum seeker	76	48.41
Labourer	7	4.46
Family formation/ reunification	2	1.27
Other	19	12.10
Missing	3	1.91
Total	157	100

Other: tourist

B.17 Did you at any point submit an asylum application (in the country of destination)?

	Freq.	%
No	41	26.11
Yes	53	33.76
Missing	63	40.13
Total	157	100

B.18 What happened with your asylum application?

	Freq.	%
Application rejected	34	64.15
Asylum granted	3	5.66
Granted temporary work permit	5	9.43
No decision made	5	9.43
Returned voluntarily before decision was made	2	3.77
Withdrew application	1	1.89
Missing	3	5.66
Total	53	100

B.19 Where were you living when you arrived (in destination country)?

	Freq.	%
Asylum/reception centre	63	40.13
Other asylum location	4	2.55
Detention centre	8	5.10
Family/ friend's house	41	26.11
Hotel/motel	1	0.64
Street/ park	1	0.64
Other	34	21.66
Missing	5	3.18
Total	157	100

Other: Work site, rented room, with smuggler, apartment, church, squatting

B.20 Were you able to move freely in the (destination country)?

	Freq.	%
No	27	17.20
Yes	124	78.98
Missing	6	3.82
Total	157	100

B.21 Did you receive any training or education in (destination country)?

	Freq.	%
No	76	48.41
Language course	71	45.22
Vocational certification	2	1.27
On-the-job training	4	2.55
Other	1	0.64
Missing	3	1.91
Total	157	100

B.22 While in (destination country) were you able to work?

	Freq.	%
No	48	30.57
Yes, informal sector/ black market	56	35.67
Yes, formal sector	32	20.38
3	1	0.64
Missing	20	12.74
Total	157	100

B.23 What was your net (after tax) monthly income, on average?

B.24 While in (destination country), did you have contact with (origin country)?

	Freq.	%
No	18	11.46
Yes	121	77.07
Missing	18	11.46
Total	157	100

B.25 With whom did you have contact? (check all that apply)

	Freq	%
Family	110	90.91
Friends	19	15.7
Professional contacts	1	0.83
NGOs/churches	0	0
Government officials	0	0
Other	2	1.66
Total	n/a	

Other: Employer, girlfriend

B.26 How often did you have contact with someone back home?

	Freq	%
Several times a month	83	68.6
Once a month	17	14.05
Once every 2-3 months	10	8.26
Several times a year	2	1.65
Once a year	4	3.31
Less often	3	2.48
Missing	2	1.65
Total	121	100

B.27 How did you have contact with them? (check all that apply)

	Freq	%
Phone	101	83.47
Skype	17	14.05
Facebook	5	4.13
Twitter	0	0
Email	3	2.48
Letter/ other mail	3	2.48
Other	1	0.83
Total	n/a	

Other: Viber

B.28 While you were in (destination country), did you send money to someone in (origin)?

	Freq.	%
No	81	51.59
Yes	74	47.13
Missing	2	1.27
Total	157	100

B.29 Did you try to bring anyone from the country of origin to the country of destination (once you were there already)?

	Freq.	%
No	114	72.61
Yes	18	11.46
Missing	25	15.92
Total	157	100

B.30 Were you successful?

	Freq.	%
No	9	50.00
Yes	9	50.00
Total	18	100

B.31 Who did you bring?

[Qualitative response]

C. MOST RECENT RETURN EXPERIENCE

C.1 Why did you decide to return?

	Chosen		First reason		Second reason	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Difficulty finding employment/ No right to work	44	28	13	14.13	9	15.52
Negative decision regarding asylum request	33	21	4	4.35	1	1.72
I felt I had no choice	25	16	7	7.61	2	3.45
Family (desire for reunification in origin country)	24	15	4	4.35	8	13.79
Other reason	24	15	15	16.3	8	13.79
Tired of living as undocumented	20	13	6	6.52	3	5.17
To benefit from voluntary return programmes offered by destination	19	12	6	6.52	3	5.17
Cannot support self/dependents financially	17	11	7	7.61	1	1.72
Was given period of time to wind up affairs and leave voluntarily (ie	15	10	6	6.52	2	3.45
Psychological problems (depression or frustration)	12	8			4	6.9
Changes in family circumstances	12	8	5	5.43	1	1.72
Lack of security, or being discriminated against	10	6	1	1.09		
Inability to meet migration aspirations including work or educational	10	6	3	3.26	3	5.17
In prison or detention	10	6				
Lack of access to social services/ healthcare	7	4	4	4.35	1	1.72
End of work/ study permit in host country	6	4	2	2.17	3	5.17
Fear of deportation	6	4				
Nostalgia about home country and way of life	5	3	1	1.09	2	3.45
Problems of integration in destination	5	3	1	1.09	2	3.45
Political change in destination country (eg crackdowns, more hostile)	5	3	1	1.09	1	1.72
Employment opportunity or job prospects in origin country	4	3	2	2.17	1	1.72
Migration goals accomplished	4	3				
Improvement in security situation of origin country or in conflict	3	2	2	2.17	1	1.72
Political change/ improvement of political or legal status in origin	2	1	1	1.09	1	1.72
Better living conditions in home country	2	1				
Destination country policies	2	1				
Dignity of return as normal passenger	1	1				
To benefit from voluntary return programmes offered by origin	1	1				
Felt political commitment or desire to help rebuild country of origin	0	0				
Desire to reclaim property in country of origin	0	0				
No specific reason		0	1	1.09	1	1.72
Total	157	100	92	100	58	100

Other: Bad living conditions; did not think smuggler would deliver them onward as agreed; need for traditional medicine; inability to travel; inability to visit family in origin; too cold; problem with employer; pregnancy; victim of severe beating; to protect family in origin.

C.2 Did you want to return?

	Freq	%
No	78	50.65
Yes	35	22.73
Had no choice	41	26.62
Total	154	100

C.3 Who was involved in your decision to return? (check all that apply)

	Freq	%
Family in destination	21	13
Family in origin	60	38
Friends in destination	32	20
Friends in origin	4	3
Government authorities in destination	16	10
Government authorities in origin	4	3
IOM in country of destination	28	18
IOM in country of origin	1	1
Employer in destination	1	1
Other (rejected) asylum seekers	2	1
No one else	41	26
Other	10	6

Other: Church leader; family in a country other than origin or destination; lawyer; other NGO; employer in origin or transit country

C.4 How were they involved?

C.5 Where did you receive information concerning return?

	Freq	%
From other asylum seekers	13	8.72
From native counsellor (IOM)	15	10.07
Friends/ family in country of destination	39	26.17
IOM (not native counsellor)	49	32.89
Other NGO/IO	7	4.7
From government authorities in host country	13	8.72
Other	13	8.72
Total	149	100

Other: Other migrants; advertisement; newspaper; embassy; employer; TV; internet

C.6 What information did you receive?

C.7 How important or useful was this information in your decision making process to leave?

	Freq	%
Not important/ useful	10	6.37
Made no difference	45	28.66
Important/ useful	75	47.77
Don't know/ refuse to answer	1	0.64
Missing	26	16.56
Total	157	100

C.8 Who assisted you in the return process (by giving money or other resources)?

	Freq	%
IOM	144	92.9
Other NGO/IO	4	2.58
Friends/ family in destination	3	1.94
Other	4	2.58
Total	155	100

Other: Government body in destination

C.9 Did you receive predeparture assistance from any organization?

	Freq	%
No	33	21.02
Yes	110	70.06
Missing	14	8.92
Total	157	100

C.10 What kind of assistance did you receive?

	Freq	%
Reintegration plan	29	20.57
Business planning	38	26.95
Travel stipends	58	41.13
Cultural awareness/ orientation	10	7.09
Other	6	4.26
Total	141	100

Other: Documentation; cash only; medical/ social/ humanitarian; telephone; information only

C.11 Were you able to take any resources with you when you returned (not including IOM cash-assistance)?

	Freq	%
No	109	73.15
Yes	40	26.85
Total	149	100

C.12 If you were able to return with money, how much (in what currency)?

[Only 38 returnees specified how much they returned with]

C.13 What were your expectations prior to return?

C.14 When did you return?

C.15 Did you return with anyone else?

	Freq	%
No	43	27.39
Yes	79	50.32
Missing	35	22.29
Total	157	100

Note: This question was not in the Afghanistan survey

C.16 For how long had you been abroad in total/in the country of final destination when you returned?

	n	Mean	Min	Max
Afghanistan	18	3	0.2	9.5
Bangladesh	23	7	0.3	24
Ethiopia	7	4	0.3	15
Iraq	13	6	0.6	15
Pakistan	18	6	1	14
Sri Lanka	20	2	0.25	6
Sudan	14	2	0.3	17
Viet Nam	14	6	2	12
Total	127	5	0.2	24

	Time in destination country	
Time in destination country	Freq	%
Less than 1 year		
1 to 5 years		
6 to 10 years		
More than 10 years		
Total		

To be filled in later

C.17 Where did you live when you first returned?

C.18 If different from place of origin, why did you return to this place?

C.19 What type of reintegration assistance did you receive? Are you still currently receiving it? For how long did you receive it? Did you think it assisted you in your reintegration?

C19		Currently receiving			Assisted in reintegration		
	Received (freq)	Yes	No	Missing	Yes	No	Missing
Assistance at arrival	22	1	4	17	2	1	19
Job placement	9	1	4	4	2	4	3
Business training	4		2	2	1	1	2
Access to housing	10	1	7	2	6	1	3
Language	2	1	1	0	1		1
Psychosocial	0						0
Vocational	5	1	1	3	1		4
Medical	3	1			2		1
Childcare	1		1	0	1		0
Education	0						0
Cash assistance	78	5	37	36	49	8	21
Business support*	86	8	61	17	54	9	23
Other	31				17	3	11

*This question was not asked in the Afghanistan questionnaire

C.19.11 Cash assistance, if yes, how much?

Euros

	n	Mean	Min	Max
Afghanistan	15	948	370	1332
Bangladesh	7	1510	200	2380
Ethiopia	8	2120	178.5	5355
Iraq	12	2174	700	4500
Pakistan	1	2500	2500	2500
Sri Lanka	12	272	28	733
Sudan	11	4317	630	14206
Viet Nam	3	2310	630	3780
Total	69	1855	28	14206

C.19.12 Business assistance

Euros

	n	Mean	Min	Max
Bangladesh	18	1642.956	592	3000
Ethiopia	0	.	.	.
Iraq	8	3348	1500	6660
Pakistan	19	2008.468	1000	3357
Sri Lanka	15	2012.491	169.2	9159.36
Sudan	0	.	.	.
Viet Nam	12	3412.5	1260	7560
Total	72	2300.77	169.2	9159.36

C.20 If job placement assistance was received, in what sector was a job assignment found?

[Qualitative response]

C.21 Are you still currently in this position?

	Freq	%
No	8	88.89
Missing	1	11.11
Total	9	100

C.22 If vocational training was received, in what sector was training offered?

	Freq	%
Sewing	2	40
Still in computer training	1	20
Accounting English	1	20
English language and computer skills	1	20
Total	5	100

C.23 If the vocational training programme is completed, has it assisted you in finding a job?

	Freq	%
No	3	60
Missing	2	40
Total	5	100

C.24 If business training was received, for what sector was the training offered?

C.25 What did the training entail?

C.26 If business training was received, did you start a business?

	Freq	%
No	4	4.49
Yes	26	29.21
No answer/ refuse to answer	2	2.25
Missing	57	64.04
Total	89	100

C.27 Is the business still operational?

	Freq	%
No	16	17.98
Yes	41	46.07
No answer/ refuse to answer	2	2.25
Missing	30	33.71
Total	89	100

C.28 Was the assistance one-off or phased-out?

	Freq	%
No	51	57.3
Yes	1	1.12
No answer/ refuse to answer	2	2.25
Missing	35	39.33
Total	89	100

C.29 Have you had any problems with the reintegration assistance?

	Freq	%
No	121	77.07
Yes	29	18.47
Missing	7	4.46
Total	157	100

C.30 If you experienced problems with the reintegration assistance, please describe them

C.31 Were you able to change your reintegration package if necessary?

	Freq	%
No	13	8.28
Yes	16	10.19
Not applicable (no need to change)	79	50.32
No answer/ refuse to answer	17	10.83
Missing	32	20.38
Total	157	100

C.32 If you were able to change the reintegration package, please tell me what kind of changes you requested.

C.33 If you were unable to change the reintegration package, why?

D. CURRENT SITUATION

D.1 Are you currently working?

	Freq	%
No	46	29.3
Yes	110	70.51
Total	156	100

D.2 What is your job?

D.3 How long have you been employed in this job?

D.4 Are you satisfied with your job?

	Freq	%
No	26	24.3
Yes	56	52.34
Missing	25	23.36
Total	107	100

D.5 If you are not currently employed, how would you describe your current daily activity?

All respondents

	Freq	%
In education	2	1.98
In vocational training	2	1.98
Unemployed and actively looking	16	15.84
Unemployed and not actively looking	14	13.86
Housewife	6	5.94
Retired	3	2.97
Self-employed	55	54.46
Other	3	2.97
Total	101	100

Only those who replied “no” to D4

	Freq	%
In education	1	2.27
In vocational training	2	4.55
Unemployed and actively looking	16	36.36
Unemployed and not actively looking	14	31.82
Housewife	4	9.09
Retired	3	6.82
Self-employed	1	2.27
Other	3	6.82
Total	44	100

Those who replied 'yes' to D4 but also selected 'self-employed' in D5

Of those currently working	Freq	%
Self-employed	52	49
Not self-employed	55	51
Total	107	100

D.6 In what sector is your business operating?

D.7 Is your business formal or informal (meaning of formal is a registered business)?

Including only those who answered yes to self-employed

	Freq	%
Informal	22	40
Formal	28	50.91
Missing	5	9.09
Total	55	100

D.8 How many months ago did you start this business?

D.9 Why did you start this business?

[Qualitative response]

D.10 Did you receive assistance in starting this business?

	Freq	%
No	9	16.36
Yes	43	78.18
Missing	3	5.45
Total	55	100

D.11 Do you still receive external support for this business?

D.12 Do you have any paid employees?

	Freq	%
No	23	41.82
Yes	28	50.91
Missing	4	7.27
Total	55	100

D.13 How would you describe the current state of your business?

	Freq	%
Struggling	13	23.64
Managing	17	30.91
Profitable	24	43.64
Missing	1	1.82
Managing	55	100

D.14 What do you think has contributed to the success of the business?

D.15 What are the current challenges you face with your business?

D.16 Per month, what is your average after-tax individual income?

	n	Mean	Min	Max
Afghanistan	13	91	0	629
Bangladesh	25	96	0	300
Ethiopia	14	75	0	553
Iraq	13	549	296	888
Pakistan	10	134	37	335.7
Sri Lanka	20	137	0	282
Sudan	13	797	39	5223
Viet Nam	15	176	0	465
Total	123	235	0	5223

D.17 Does your household have more than one source of income?

	Freq	%
No	100	63.69
Yes	54	34.39
Missing	3	1.91
Total	157	100

D.18 Per month, what is your average after-tax household income, including all sources of income (social assistance, wages, sale of agricultural products, etc)

	n	Mean	Min	Max
Afghanistan	13	91.36154	0	629
Bangladesh	25	96.144	0	300
Ethiopia	14	75.07714	0	553.2
Iraq	13	549.3077	296	888
Pakistan	10	133.534	37.3	335.7
Sri Lanka	20	136.5726	0	282
Sudan	13	796.963	39.174	5223.2
Viet Nam	15	176.4	0	465
Total	123	234.6072	0	5223.2

D.19 Does your household currently own land?

	Freq	%
No	80	50.96
Yes	53	33.76
Missing	24	15.29
Total	157	100

This question was not asked in Vietnam

D.20 Does your household own your home?

	Freq	%
Yes	77	49.04
No, dwelling is rented	64	40.76
No, dwelling is social/ subsidised	2	1.27
No, other	11	7.01
Missing	3	1.91
Total	157	100

D.21 How would you rate the current quality of your housing?

	Freq	%
Very bad	3	1.91
Bad	28	17.83
Neither good nor bad	46	29.3
Good	57	36.31
Very good	13	8.28
Missing	10	6.37
Total	157	100

D.22 Do you feel that the quality of your housing has changed since your migration and return?

D.23 Do you currently have any debt?

	Freq	%
No	89	56.69
Yes	66	42.04
Missing	2	1.27
Total	157	100

D.24 What was the original loan taken out for? (select all that apply)

	Freq	%
To fund own migration	30	45.45
Meeting daily needs	7	10.61
Business	16	24.24
Housing (building or repair)	4	6.06
Other	9	13.64
Total	66	100

Other: car; furniture; medical expenses; education; work permit; life insurance

D.25 What is the total current value of the debt?

D.26 If you needed $100, would you be able to get it within a week?

	Freq	%
No	52	33.12
Yes	94	59.87
Don't know	1	0.64
Missing	10	6.37
Total	157	100

D.27 How many people do you share this household with? Please also include those individuals currently living abroad who you consider to still be part of your home

	n	Mean	Min	Max
Afghanistan	16	3.19	0	7
Bangladesh	24	3.58	1	8
Ethiopia	17	3.41	0	7
Iraq	11	2.45	1	5
Pakistan	15	4.73	1	15
Sri Lanka	20	3.80	0	9
Sudan	15	5.00	0	10
Viet Nam	15	3.33	1	7
Total	133	3.71	0	15

D.28 How many financial dependents do you have?

	Freq	%
0	43	27.39
1	16	10.19
2	20	12.74
3	27	17.2
4	9	5.73
5	12	7.64
6	5	3.18
7	2	1.27
8	1	0.64
9	3	1.91
Missing	19	12.1
Total	157	100

D.29 Is anyone from your family living abroad?

	Freq	%
No	89	56.69
Yes	65	41.4
Missing	3	1.91
Total	157	100

D.30 Is anyone from your household planning to migrate?

	Freq	%
No	115	73.25
Yes	29	18.47
Not applicable	1	0.64
Missing	12	7.64
Total	157	100

D.31 Since your return, how do you feel you have been received by your family?

	Freq	%
Negative	33	21.02
Positive	107	68.15
Not applicable	1	0.64
Missing	16	10.19
Total	157	100

D.32 Since your return, how do you feel that you have been received by your community?

	Freq	%
Negative	51	32.48
Positive	79	50.32
Not applicable	7	4.46
Missing	20	12.74
Total	157	100

D.33 Do you feel that you have a strong network of family and friends that would provide you support should you need it?

	Freq	%
No	47	29.93
Yes	108	68.78
Missing	2	1.27
Total	157	100

D.34 Do you still have contact with family or friends in (country of last migration)?

	Freq	%
No	51	32.48
Yes	103	65.61
Not applicable	1	0.64
Missing	2	1.27
Total	157	100

D.35 How often do you access and use the internet?

	Freq	%
No access	67	42.68
Daily	44	28.03
Several times per week	11	7.01
Once per week	6	3.82
Several times per month	16	10.19
Less than once per month	7	4.46
Missing	6	3.82
Total	157	100

D.36 Do you participate in local evens (such as religious holidays, weddings, funerals)?

	Freq	%
No	33	21.01
Yes	121	77/07
Not applicable	1	0.64
Missing	2	1.27
Total	157	100

D.37 Could you please tell me about your participation in different kinds of organizations and activities? I would like to know if you have been an active member in the following: A) before your migration, B) since your return

	Before		After	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
None	71	45.22	79	50.32
Labour/ trade union	1	0.64	3	1.91
Political party	9	5.73	3	1.91
Religious association	10	6.37	16	10.19
Student/youth assocation	3	1.91	1	0.64
Micro-credit association	1	0.64	2	1.27
Funeral association	6	3.82	5	3.18
Other cooperative	9	5.73	8	5.1
Participate in political demo	0		0	
Vote in an election	16	10.19	25	15.92

D.38 Do you feel safe in your home?

	Freq	%
No	32	20.38
Yes	122	77.70
Missing	3	1.91
Total	157	100

D.39 Why do you feel unsafe in your home?

[Qualitative response]

D.40 Do you feel safe in your community?

	Freq	%
No	43	27.39
Yes	107	68.15
Missing	2	1.27
Total	157	100

D.41 Why do you feel unsafe in your community?

[Qualitative response]

D.42 Do you trust the government?

	Freq	%
No	73	46.5
Yes	47	29.93
Don't know/ refuse to answer	9	5.73
Missing	28	18.18
Total	157	100

D.43 Why or why not?

[Qualitative response]

D.44 Have you experienced any form of personal harassment since your return?

	Freq	%
No	121	77.07
Yes	33	21.02
Don't know/ refuse to answer	1	0.64
Missing	3	1.91
Total	157	100

D.45 Can you please describe the harassment you have experienced?

[Qualitative response]

D.46 If you were to be the victim of a crime or your rights were violated, do you feel that you could access the justice institutions in your community?

	Freq	%
No	60	38.22
Yes	93	59.24
Don't know/ refuse to answer	3	1.91
Missing	1	0.64
Total	157	100

D.47 Why do you or do you not feel you would have access to justice?

E. CURRENT CHALLENGES AND FEELINGS OF REINTEGRATION

E.1 What have been the greatest challenges for you in your return?

	Freq.	%
Adaption and reintegration	15	9.55
Economic and health problems	10	6.37
Economic problems	75	47.77
Family problems	7	4.46
Health problems	2	1.27
No challenges	22	14.01
Political problems	8	5.1
Safety and health problems	1	0.64
Security and economic problems	2	1.27
Security problems	10	6.37
Wish to return	1	0.64
Don't know	2	1.27
Missing	2	1.27
Total	157	100

E.2 How have you dealt with these challenges?

[Qualitative response]

E.3 Has anyone helped you face these challenges? If so, who and how?

[Qualitative response]

E.4 How would you rate your current economic situation?

	Freq.	%
Struggling	82	52.23
Coping	50	31.85
Comfortable	24	15.29
Missing	1	0.64
Total	157	100

E.5 On average, in the last month, how happy, satisfied, or pleased have you been with your personal life?

	Freq.	%
Very dissatisfied, unhappy most of the	22	14.01
Generally dissatisfied	41	26.11
Sometimes satisfied, sometimes unhappy	27	17.20
Generally satisfied	37	23.57
Very happy most of the time	20	12.74
Extremely happy, could not be more sati	7	4.46
Missing	3	1.91
Total	157	100

E.6 If unhappy, what factors most contribute to your feelings of unhappiness/dissatisfaction?

[Qualitative response]

E.7 Do you feel that being a returnee distinguishes you from other people in your community?

	Freq.	%
No	80	50.96
Yes	68	43.31
N/a	2	1.27
Missing	7	4.46
Total	157	100

E.8 Why or why not?

[Qualitative response]

E.9 Relative to other people in your community, how would you rate your current quality of life?

	Freq.	%
Lower than average	66	42.04
Average	69	43.95
Higher than average	18	11.46
Missing	4	2.55
Total	157	100

E.10 How would you rate your current quality of life compared to what it was life before you migrated?

	Freq	%
Worse	69	43.95
The same	23	14.65
Better	62	39.49
N/a	1	0.64
Missing	2	1.27
Total	157	100

E.11 What is your level of satisfaction with your migration experience?

	Freq.	%
Highly dissatisfied	18	11.46
Dissatisfied	30	19.11
Neutral	10	6.37
Satisfied	75	47.77
Highly satisfied	18	11.46
Missing	6	3.82
Total	157	100

E.12 Why do you perceive your migration experience in that way?

[Qualitative response]

E.13 What is your level of satisfaction with your return experience?

	Freq.	%
Highly dissatisfied	10	6.37
Dissatisfied	23	14.65
Neutral	15	9.55
Satisfied	52	33.12
Highly satisfied	15	9.55
Missing	42	26.75
Total	157	100

E.14 Why do you perceive your return experience in that way?

[Qualitative response]

E.15 What are your plans for the future?

[Qualitative response]

E.16 Do you wish to re-emigrate?

	Freq.	%
No	70	44.59
Yes	83	52.87
Missing	4	2.55
Total	157	100

E.17 Where do you want to go?

	Freq	%
Australia	2	2.41
Belgium	1	1.2
Canada	3	3.61
Democratic country	2	2.41
Denmark	1	1.2
Europe	8	9.64
Germany	1	1.2
Greece	2	2.41
Netherlands	1	1.2
No set destination	14	16.87
Norway	9	10.84
Saudi Arabia	2	2.41
Sweden	1	1.2
Switzerland	1	1.2
Turkey	1	1.2
UAE	2	2.41
UK	11	13.25
USA	2	2.41
Western country	5	6.02
Missing	14	16.87
Total	83	100

E.18 Do you have concrete plans to re-emigrate?

	Freq.	%
No	57	65.06
Yes	14	16.87
Missing	15	18.07
Total	83	100

E.19 When do you plan to go?

E.20 Do you plan to migrate irregularly or through legal channels?

	Freq.	%
Through irregular channels	1	7.14
Legally	10	71.43
Missing	3	21.43
Total	14	100

E.21 Why do you want to re-emigrate?

[Qualitative response]

E.22 Is anyone currently involved in or influencing your emigration decision or plans?

[Qualitative response]

E.23 Is anyone planning to migrate with you?

	Freq.	%
Children	1	1.2
Family	4	4.82
Friends	1	1.2
No	9	10.84
Spouse	3	3.61
Refuse to answer	2	2.41
Missing	63	75.9
Total	83	100

E.24 Will you/ are you receiving any assistance with this migration?

	Freq.	%
No	11	13.25
Yes	3	3.61
777	1	1.2
888	1	1.2
Missing	67	80.72
Total	83	100

E.25 Would you encourage others to migrate?

	Freq.	%
No	74	47.13
Yes	48	30.57
2	1	0.64
Don't know	1	0.64
N/a	2	1.27
Missing	31	19.75
Total	157	100.00

E.26 Why or why not?

[Qualitative response]

F. RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

F.1 Age

	n	Mean	Min	Max
Afghanistan	16	29	17	48
Bangladesh	25	36.8	23	60
Ethiopia	18	40.3	25	88
Iraq	22	35.5	23	60
Pakistan	20	32.9	17	56
Sri Lanka	20	42	23	68
Sudan	17	37.8	22	53
Viet Nam	15	45.3	32	61
Total	153	37.3	17	88

F.2 Sex

	Male	Female	Total
Afghanistan	18	1	19
Bangladesh	23	2	25
Ethiopia	12	6	18
Iraq	19	3	22
Pakistan	20	0	20
Sri Lanka	14	6	20
Sudan	14	3	17
Vietnam	9	6	15
Total	129	27	156

Percentages

	Male	Female	Total
Afghanistan	95	5	100
Bangladesh	92	8	100
Ethiopia	67	33	100
Iraq	86	14	100
Pakistan	100	0	100
Sri Lanka	70	30	100
Sudan	82	18	100
Viet Nam	60	40	100
Total	83	17	100

F.3 Country of birth

F.4 Nationality

F.5 Ethnicity

F.6 Highest level of completed education

F.7 Type of returnee

	Freq	%
Individual	119	80.95
Couple	6	4.08
(Nuclear) family	9	6.12
Single-parent family	9	6.12
Other	4	2.72
Total	147	100

Other: Group/ mass return

F.8 Status prior to return

APPENDIX 3

TRANSIT COUNTRY QUESTIONNAIRE:

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

X. PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION

X.2 Country of transit

	Freq.	%
Greece	30	42.86
Indonesia	15	21.43
Turkey	25	35.71
Total	70	100

X.8 Type of assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR) eligible participant

	Freq.	%
Asylum seeker	6	8.57
Rejected asylum seeker	2	2.86
No status (irregular)	33	47.14
Other	6	8.57
Missing	23	32.86
Total	70	100

X.9 AVRR selected

	Freq.	%
No	13	18.57
Yes, decided to participate but not yet	15	21.43
Yes, application being processed	11	15.71
Yes, application approved	8	11.43
Undecided	3	4.29
Not informed of AVRR	2	2.86
Missing	18	25.71
Total	70	100

X.10 Country of origin

	Freq.	%
Afghanistan	19	27.14
Bangladesh	6	8.57
Congo	2	2.86
Egypt	1	1.43
Ethiopia	2	2.86
Islamic Republic of Iran	6	8.57
Kenya	1	1.43
Republic of Moldova	1	1.43
Myanmar	1	1.43
Nigeria	1	1.43
Nigerian origin Sierra Leone	1	1.43
Pakistan	20	28.57
Senegal	3	4.29
Somalia	1	1.43
South Africa	1	1.43
Sri Lanka	3	4.29
Uganda	1	1.43
Total	70	100

A. LIFE PRIOR TO MOST IMMEDIATE MIGRATION EPISODE

A.1a With whom were you living before you migrated? (Spouse/partner)

	Freq.	%
No	44	62.86
Living as married	5	7.14
Married	18	25.71
Divorced	3	4.29
Total	70	100

A.1b With whom were you living before you migrated? (Children under 18)

Observations	Mean	Min.	Max.
70	0.9571429	0	6

A.1c With whom were you living before you migrated? (Other dependants)

Observations	Mean	Min.	Max.
69	1.028.986	0	18

A.1d With whom were you living before you migrated? (Other non-dependants)

Observations	Mean	Min.	Max.
69	1.710.145	0	12

A.2 Did you have a spouse or other dependent children/family members not living with you?

Observations	Mean	Min.	Max.
69	0.1594203	0	4

Number of dependents	Freq.	%
0	65	94.20
1	1	1.45
2	1	1.45
4	2	2.90
Total	69	100.00

A.3 Before you migrated, where were you living?

	Freq.	%
Rural	29	41.43
Urban	39	55.71
Missing	2	2.86
Total	70	100

A.4 Were you working prior to your migration?

	Freq.	%
No	21	30
Yes	47	67.14
Missing	2	2.86
Total	70	100

A.5 What was your job?

	Freq.	%
Athlete	1	2.13
Barber	1	2.13
Black market	1	2.13
Car workshop	1	2.13
Construction worker	1	2.13
Customs official	1	2.13
Day labourer	3	6.38
Doorman	1	2.13
Driver	3	6.38
Engineer	1	2.13
Factory worker	3	6.38
Farmer	9	19.15
Interpreter	1	2.13
Market seller	1	2.13
Painter	1	2.13
Plumbing, sewing	1	2.13
Public transport	1	2.13
Serving	1	2.13
Shop keeper	9	19.15
Tailor	3	6.38
Welder	2	4.26
Missing	1	2.13
Total	47	100

A.6 If you were not working, why not?

	Freq.	%
Could not find a job	3	14.29
In education	9	42.86
Pregnant/childcare	3	14.29
Other	2	9.52
Missing	4	19.05
Total	21	100

A.7 How would you describe your overall standard of living before you left?

	Freq.	%
Struggling	34	48.57
Coping	15	21.43
Comfortable	17	24.29
Missing	4	5.71
Total	70	100

A.8 Were you involved in local events in the community (e.g. weddings, church)?

	Freq.	%
No	14	20
Yes	49	70
Missing	7	10
Total	70	100

A.9 Did you feel a sense of belonging to the community?

	Freq.	%
No	20	28.57
Yes	45	64.29
Missing	5	7.14
Total	70	100

A.10 In an average month, did you experience threats to your personal security?

	Freq.	%
No	36	51.43
Yes	32	45.71
Missing	2	2.86
Total	70	100

A.11 Prior to this migration episode, had you ever migrated internationally before?

	Freq.	%
No	44	62.86
Yes	24	34.29
Missing	2	2.86
Total	70	100

B. MOST RECENT MIGRATION EPISODE

B.1 Why did you decide to migrate? What was your main reason to leave?

	Freq.	%
Security/political situation	22	31.43
Employment	37	52.86
Education	2	2.86
Health reasons	2	2.86
Other	7	10
Total	70	100

Other: Religion, tourism, recruitment

B.2 Who was involved in your decision to migrate?

	Freq.	%
Parents	36	51.43
Partner/spouse	12	17.14
Children	4	5.71
Siblings	9	12.86
Other family members	8	11.43
Friends	12	17.14
Employer/agency	0	0.0
No one else	7	10.00
Smuggler/broker	10	14.29
Other	2	2.86
Total	n/a	n/a

Other: Non-government organisation (NGO) workers, neighbors

B.3 Did this (these) person(s) support you in your decision? Why or why not?

[Qualitative response]

B.4 Did you want to migrate?

	Freq.	%
No	15	21.43
Yes	51	72.86
Missing	4	5.71
Total	70	100

B.5 Why or why not?

	Freq.	%
Economic opportunities	11	15.71
Educational opportunities	1	1.43
Had no other choice	4	5.71
Medical treatment	1	1.43
Origin country unsafe	6	8.57
Political situation in origin country	1	1,43
Seeking a better life	18	25.71
Missing	28	40.00
Total	70	100.00

B.6 In what month and year did you migrate?

[Qualitative response]

B.7 Who arranged/facilitated your migration?

	Freq.	%
Friend/family member in origin	14	20
Friend/family abroad	6	8.57
No one	8	11.43
Informal broker/smuggler	36	51.43
Other	3	4.29
Missing	3	4.29
Total	70	100

Other: Doctors, embassy

B.7a Did you travel with a smuggler for any part of your journey?

	Freq.	%
No	26	37.14
Yes	38	54.29
Missing	6	8.57
Total	70	100

B.8 Who made the arrangements with the smuggler?

	Freq.	%
Self	25	65.79
Family member	7	18.42
Friend	5	13.16
Missing	1	2.63
Total	38	100

B.9 How much did your migration cost in total?

US Dollars

	n	Mean	Min.	Max.
Greece	24	6831	850	12 486
Indonesia	11	4068	45	10 000
Turkey	20	1993	0	6350
Total	55	4519	0	12 486

Euros

	n	Mean	Min.	Max.
Greece	24	5452	678	9967
Indonesia	11	3247	35	7982
Turkey	20	1570	0	5069
Total	55	3599	0	9967

B.10 Where did you acquire the money for your migration?

	Freq.	%
Savings	31	47.69
Formal (contract) loan	0	0.0
Informal loan from family/friends	18	28.13
Gift from family/friends	15	23.44
Employer paid	0	0.0
Scholarship	0	0.0
Migrated as dependent	0	0.0
Sold assets	12	18.75
Other	6	9.68
Total	n/a	n/a

Other: Went into debt with smuggler, NGO assistance, working along the way

B.11 What was your intended final destination?

	Freq.	%
Australia	13	18.6
Europe in general	11	15.7
France	2	2.9
Germany	5	7.1
Greece	18	25.7
Indonesia	2	2.9
Italy	1	1.4
Turkey	10	14.3
UK	1	1.4
Total	70	100

B.12 What information did you have on this country before you left?

[Qualitative response]

B.12.1 Where did you get this information?

[Qualitative response]

B.13 (If final destination is not current country) Do you still intend to travel to (destination)? Why or why not?

[Qualitative response]

B.15 What information have you gotten on this country since you arrived in transit country?

[Qualitative response]

B.16 Since you have arrived in transit country, have you been in contact with friends/family in your country of origin about their migration options? If so, what are you advising them?

[Qualitative response]

C. ARRIVAL IN TRANSIT COUNTRY

C.1 With whom [if anyone] did you migrate? (migrants who made their journey with other family members or friends)

	Freq.	%
No	67	95.71
Yes	2	2.86
Missing	1	1.43
Total	70	100

C.4 When did you arrive in the transit country?

Time in transit country	Freq.	%
Less than 1 year	15	21.43
1 to 5 years	45	64.29
6 to 10 years	6	8.57
More than 10 years	4	5.71
Total	70	100.0

C.5 What was your migration status in transit country when you arrived?

	Freq.	%
No status	33	47.14
Asylum seeker	26	37.14
Student	3	4.29
Other	3	4.29
Tourist visa	5	7.14
Total	70	100

C.6 Where were you living when you arrived in transit country?

	Freq.	%
Asylum/reception centre	3	4.29
Detention centre	6	8.57
Family/friend's house	24	34.29
Hotel/motel	2	2.86
Street/park	5	7.14
Other	15	21.43
Apartment	14	20
Missing	1	1.43
Total	70	100

C.7 Are you currently living in the same place?

	Freq.	%
No	55	78.57
Yes	11	15.71
Missing	4	5.71
Total	70	100

C.8 If not, what is your current living situation?

	Freq.	%
Detention centre	17	30.91
Family/ friend's house	11	20
Street/park	5	9.09
Other	22	40
Total	55	100

C.9 Why did you move?

[Qualitative response]

D. CURRENT SITUATION

D.1 What is your current legal situation in transit country?

	Freq.	%
No legal status—currently unlawful	42	60
Temporary legal status to remain	26	37.14
Permanent legal status to remain	1	1.43
Asylum seeker	1	1.43
Total	70	100

D.2 What is your current migration status in the transit country?

	Freq.	%
Refugee	15	21.43
Non-refugee visa holder	3	4.29
Awaiting finalisation of asylum app.	11	15.71
Failed asylum application	2	2.86
No migration status—currently unlawful	39	55.71
Total	70	100

D.3 Are you able to move freely in transit country?

	Freq.	%
No	42	60
Yes	27	38.57
Missing	1	1.43
Total	70	100

D.4 Are you able to work? Do you have the right to work?

	Freq.	%
No	53	75.71
Yes	17	24.29
Total	70	100

D.5 Do you engage in any income-generating activities?

	Freq.	%
No	28	40
Yes	39	55.71
Missing	3	4.29
Total	70	100

D.6 What are they?

Agricultural work	6	15.38
Bank receptionist	1	2.56
Construction	2	5.13
Day Labourer	4	10.26
Electric company	1	2.56
Factory work	7	17.95
Garbage collection	1	2.56
Painter	1	2.56
Seller of small goods	6	15.38
Selling plastics	3	7.69
Tailor	2	5.13
Tailoring	1	2.56
Tile work	1	2.56
Translator	1	2.56
Waiter	1	2.56
Welding	1	2.56
Total	39	100

D.7 How much do you make for these activities?

Euros per day

	n	Mean	Min.	Max.
Total	20	30.3	7	72

D.8 Since arriving in Greece have you sent money to someone in the origin country?

	Freq.	%
No	36	51.43
Yes	27	38.57
Missing	7	10
Total	70	100

D.13a How often are there co-ethnics in your residence? (if living in shared/provided accommodation)

	Freq.	%
Never	1	2.7
Infrequently	4	10.81
Often	6	16.22
Very often/every day	26	70.27
Total	37	100

D.13b How often are there people of difference ethnicities (non-locals) in your residence (if living in shared/provided accommodation)?

	Freq.	%
Never	11	29.73
Infrequently	6	16.22
Often	10	27.03
Very often/every day	10	27.03
Total	37	100

D.13c How often are there locals in your residence (if living in shared/provided accommodation)?

	Freq.	%
Never	20	58.82
Infrequently	3	8.82
Often	6	17.65
Very often/every day	5	14.71
Total	34	100

D.13d How often are there co-ethnics in your residence (if living in private accommodation)?

	Freq.	%
Infrequently	6	20.69
Often	3	10.34
Very often/ every day	20	68.97
Total	29	100

D.13e How often are there people of difference ethnicities (non-locals) in your residence? (if living in private accommodation)

	Freq.	%
Never	14	48.28
Infrequently	4	13.79
Often	8	27.59
Very often/ every day	3	10.34
Total	29	100

D.13f How often are there locals in your residence (if living in private accommodation)?

	Freq.	%
Never	9	30
Infrequently	5	16.67
Often	9	30
Very often/ every day	7	23.33
Total	30	100

D.13g How often do you have relatives/ friends (in intended destination country)?

	Freq.	%
Never	12	42.86
Infrequently	6	21.43
Often	4	14.29
Very often/ every day	6	21.43
Total	28	100

D.13h How often do you have relatives/friends in transit country?

	Freq.	%
Never	9	24.32
Infrequently	2	5.41
Often	6	16.22
Very often/ every day	20	54.05
Total	37	100

D.13i How often do you have relatives/friends in origin country?

	Freq.	%
Never	6	9.23
Infrequently	23	35.38
Often	15	23.08
Very often/ every day	21	32.31
Total	65	100

D.14 Do you have access to healthcare services?

	Freq.	%
No	31	44.29
Yes	35	50
Missing	4	5.71
Total	70	100

D.15 Describe the healthcare that you can access

[Qualitative Response]

D.16 Do you have access to formal education or training services?

	Freq.	%
No	48	68.57
Yes	21	30
Missing	1	1.43
Total	70	100

D.17 Describe the education and/or training that you can access

[Qualitative Response]

D II. CURRENT CHALLENGES

D.18 At this time, what are the greatest challenges for you?

Detention	6	8.57
Everything	1	1.43
Financial difficulties	32	45.71
Health difficulties	4	5.71
Insecurity in origin country	1	1.43
Irregular status	4	5.71
Lack of opportunities	16	22.86
Loneliness	2	2.86
None	1	1.43
Personal insecurity	1	1.43
Missing	2	2.86
Total	70	100

D.19 How have you dealt with these challenges?

[Qualitative response]

D.20 Has anyone helped you face these challenges? If so, who and how?

[Qualitative response]

D.21 How would you rate your current quality of life compared to what it was like before you migrated?

	Freq.	%
Worse	40	57.14
The same	10	14.29
Better	15	21.43
Missing	5	7.14
Total	70	100

D.22 How satisfied are you with your migration experience?

	Freq.	%
Highly dissatisfied	18	25.71
Dissatisfied	12	17.14
Neutral	9	12.86
Satisfied	19	27.14
Highly satisfied	7	10
Missing	5	7.14
Total	70	100

D.23 Why do you perceive your migration experience in that way?

[Qualitative response]

E. RETURN

E.1 What is your current position on retuning to your country of origin?

	Freq.	%
I have decided to return	39	55.71
I am likely to return	2	2.86
I am unlikely to return	2	2.86
I have decided not to return	26	37.14
Missing	1	1.43
Total	70	100

E.2 What factors are affecting your decision making/ considerations?

	Chosen		First reason		Second reason	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Difficulty finding employment/ No right to work	19	31.15			7	31.82
Negative decision regarding asylum request	0	0.0				
I felt I had no choice	3	4.92			1	4.55
Family (desire for reunification in origin country)	14	22.95	1	2.86	6	27.27
Other reason	15	24.59				
Tired of living as undocumented	5	8.20	3	8.57		
To benefit from voluntary return programmes offered by transit	1	1.64	1	2.86		
Cannot support self/dependents financially	8	13.11	2	5.71	2	9.09
Was given period of time to wind up affairs and leave voluntarily	3	4.92	3	8.57		
Psychological problems (depression or frustration)	1	1.64			1	4.55
Changes in family circumstances	8	13.11	4	11.43	1	4.55
Lack of security, or being discriminated against	3	4.92			1	4.55
Inability to meet migration aspirations including work or educational	5	8.20	2	5.71		
Shame of return	1	1.64				
Lack of access to social services/ healthcare	0	0.0				
End of work/study permit in host country	0	0.0				
Nostalgia about home country and way of life	2	3.28				
Political change in transit country (e.g. crackdowns, more hostile)	0	0.0				
Political change in intended destination	0	0.0			1	4.55
Employment opportunity or job prospects in origin country	1	1.64				
Improvement in security situation of origin country or in conflict	0	0.0				
Political change/improvement of political or legal status in origin	0	0.0				
Better living conditions in home country	1	1.64	1	2.86		
Transit country policies	1	1.67				
Dignity of return as normal passenger	1	1.64				
To benefit from voluntary return programmes offered by origin	1	1.64	1	2.86		
Felt political commitment or desire to help	0	0.0				
rebuild country of origin						
Total	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Other: Could not afford ticket, to finish education, health problems, unsafe in origin country

E.3 Who has been (or is) involved in your decision making process about return?

	Freq.	%
Family in country of destination	1	2.17
Family in transit country	0	0.0
Family in country of origin	33	71.74
Friends in country of destination	2	4.35
Friends in transit country	2	4.35
Friends in country of origin	3	6.52
Government/authorities in transit country	6	13.04
Government/authorities in country of origin	1	2.17
IOM in transit country	2	4.35
IOM in country of origin	0	0.0
Employer in transit country	0	0.0
Other asylum seekers in reception centre	0	0.0
Other	1	2.17
Total	n/a	n/a

E.4 How were/are they involved?

[Qualitative response]

E.5 Do they support you current position on return?

	Freq.	%
No	1	1.43
Yes	32	45.71
Missing	37	52.86
Total	33	100

E.6 Why have you not considered returning?

[Qualitative response]

E II. KNOWEDLGE ABOU RETUN PROGRAMMES

E.7 Have you ever heard of any assistance for return offered by the government or another agency?

	Freq.	%
No	15	21.43
Yes	45	64.29
Missing	10	14.29
Total	70	100

E.8a What does this programme offer?

	Freq.	%
General financial assistance/ cash grant	16	40.0
Return ticket	27	75.0
Shelter support	0	0.0
Rent subsidy	0	0.0
Help with finding a job	0	0.0
Business training	0	0.0
Capital for starting a business	0	0.0
Other training	0	0.0
Opportunity to go and visit your home town	0	0.0
Health support	0	0.0
Education/ language support for children	0	0.0
Total	n/a	n/a

E.8b Who/which organizations provides this assistance?

[Only 25 participants answered this question]

E.8c How did you find out about this programme?

	Freq.	%
Government authorities/caseworker	5	11.11
IOM (other than native counsellor)	8	17.78
Other NGO/IO	4	8.89
Others in asylum centre	1	2.22
Friends/family in country of destination	2	4.44
Friends/family in Indonesia	9	20.0
Friends/family in country of origin	1	2.22
Other	3	6.67
Missing	12	26.67
Total	45	100

E.8d Have you received written information on this programme?

	Freq.	%
No	27	60.0
Yes	6	13.33
Missing	12	26.67
Total	45	100

E.8e What do you think of this programme?

[Qualitative response]

E.8f Will you take part in this programme?

	Freq.	%
No	12	26.66
Undecided	1	2.22
Yes	20	44.44
Missing	12	26.67
Total	33	100

E.9a What does this programme offer?

	Freq.	%
General financial assistance/cash grant	12	31.58
Return ticket	13	34.21
Shelter support	0	0.0
Rent subsidy	0	0.0
Help with finding a job	0	0.0
Business training	1	2.63
Capital for starting a business	3	7.89
Other training	0	0.0
Opportunity to go and visit your home town	0	0.0
Health support	0	0.0
Education/language support for children	0	0.0
Total	n/a	n/a

E.9b Who/which organizations provides this assistance?

[Only 12 participants answered this question]

E.9c How did you find out about this programme?

	Freq.	Percent
Government authorities/caseworker	1	7.69
Other NGO/IO	1	7.69
Friends/family in Indonesia	5	38.46
Friends/family in country of origin	5	38.46
Other	1	7.69
Total	13	100

E.9d Have you received written information on this programme?

	Freq.	%
No	4	30.77
Yes	9	69.23
Total	13	100

E.9e What do you think of this programme?

[Qualitative response]

E.9f Will you take part in this programme?

	Freq.	%
No	12	92.31
Undecided	1	7.69
Total	13	100

E.12 [If respondent has not heard of any AVR programme, give brief description of AVR package] Would this motivate you to return?

	Freq.	%
No	8	57.14
Yes	6	42.86
Total	14	100

E.13 Why or why not?

[Qualitative response]

E III. OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING RETURN

E.14 What would make a difference in helping you return?

	Freq.	%
More money	4	11.11
More help with transport	3	8.57
A new house	0	0.0
Assistance with paying rent	0	0.0
A firm job offer	0	0.0
More training	0	0.0
Opportunity to go and visit before returning	0	0.0
Other	9	25.71
Total	n/a	n/a

Other: Better infrastructure in origin country, documents, nothing; do not want to return, more security

E.15a Is returning discussed amongst your family?

	Freq.	%
No	16	22.86
Yes	38	54.29
Missing	16	22.86
Total	70	100

E.15b Why/why not?

[Qualitative response]

E.16a Is retuning discussed amongst your friends/community?

	Freq.	%
No	12	17.14
Yes	36	51.43
Missing	22	31.43
Total	70	100

E.16b Why/why not?

[Qualitative response]

E.17a Do you feel that return is encouraged/ approved of in your community in your origin country?

	Freq.	%
No	10	14.29
Yes	32	45.71
Missing	28	40
Total	70	100

E.17a_1 In what ways is it discouraged?

[Qualitative response]

E.18 Do you feel that you have enough information on return programmes?

	Freq.	%
No	9	12.86
Yes	22	31.43
Missing	39	55.71
Total	70	100

E.19 What is the most important type of information for you in making a decision to return?

[Qualitative response]

E.20 If the government of transit country could do one thing to help people who wanted to return, what would it be?

[Qualitative response]

E IV. ASSISTANCE BEING RECEIVED

E. 21 Have you received any pre-departure assistance from any organizations?

	Freq.	%
No	11	52.38
Yes	10	47.62
Total	21	100

E.22 What kind of assistance are you receiving/going to receive?

	Freq.	%
Business planning	6	28.57
Travel stipends	20	95.24
Cultural awareness/orientation	0	0.0
Other	21	100.0

Other: General assistance, reintegration assistance

E.23 Who is assisting you in the return process?

	Freq.	%
IOM	19	100
Total	19	100

E.24 Will you take any resources when you return?

	Freq.	%
No	12	57.14
Yes	9	42.86
Total	21	100

F. RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

F.1 Age

	n	Mean	Min.	Max.
Greece	30	34	22	60
Indonesia	14	29	18	43
Turkey	25	26	18	46
Total	69	30	18	60

F.2 Sex

	Freq.	%
Male	56	80
Female	13	18.57
Missing	1	1.43
Total	70	100

F.3 Country of birth

	Freq.	%
Afghanistan	18	25.71
Bangladesh	6	8.57
Congo	2	2.86
Egypt	1	1.43
Ethiopia	2	2.86
Islamic Republic of Iran	6	8.57
Kenya	1	1.43
Republic of Moldova	1	1.43
Myanmar	1	1.43
Nigeria	2	2.86
Pakistan	20	28.57
Senegal	3	4.29
Somalia	1	1.43
South Africa	1	1.43
Sri Lanka	2	2.86
Uganda	1	1.43
Missing	2	2.86
Total	70	100

F.4 Nationality

	Freq.	%
Afghanistan	4	5.72
Bangladesh	5	7.14
Congo	1	1.43
Egypt	1	1.43
Ethiopia	1	1.43
Islamic Republic of Iran	3	4.29
Kenya	1	1.43
Nigerian	2	2.86
None	1	1.43
Pakistan	13	18.57
Senegal	2	2.86
Somalia	1	1.43
Missing	35	50
Total	70	100

F.5 Ethnicity

	Freq.	%
Amhara	1	1.43
Arab	1	1.43
Hazara	7	10
None	3	4.29
Pashtun	11	15.71
Persian	1	1.43
Punjabi	4	5.71
Rohinga	1	1.43
Sayed	1	1.43
Shigim	1	1.43
Tajik	2	2.86
Tamil	1	1.43
Uzbec	1	1.43
Missing	35	50
Total	70	100

F.6 Highest level of completed education

	Freq.	%
No formal education	10	14.29
Primary	17	24.29
Lower secondary	11	15.71
Upper secondary	17	24.29
Technical/ vocational post-secondary	4	5.71
Bachelor	9	12.86
Master or higher	1	1.43
Missing	1	1.43
Total	70	100

F.7 Type of returnee

	Freq.	%
Individual	52	74.29
Couple	2	2.86
(Nuclear) family	6	8.57
Single-parent family	1	1.43
Missing	9	12.86
Total	70	100

APPENDIX 4

DESTINATION COUNTRY QUESTIONNAIRE:

ANSWERS (ALL COUNTRIES)

X. PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION

X.2 Country

Destination	Freq	%
Australia	7	12.73
Netherlands	15	27.27
Switzerland	18	32.73
UK	15	27.27
Total	55	100

X.9 AVRR selected

AVRR selected	Freq	%
No	18	34.62
Yes	25	48.08
Undecided	9	17.31
Total	52	100

X.10 Country of Origin

Origin	Freq	%
Eritrea	5	9.09
Ghana	4	7.27
Islamic Republic of Iran	4	7.27
China	3	5.45
Nigeria	3	5.45
Pakistan	3	5.45
Afghanistan	2	3.64
Albania	2	3.64
Bangladesh	2	3.64
Iraq	2	3.64
Republic of Macedonia	2	3.64
Mongolia	2	3.64
Morocco	2	3.64
Algeria	1	1.82
Armenia	1	1.82
Benin	1	1.82
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	1.82
Cote d'Ivoire	1	1.82
Egypt	1	1.82
Guinea	1	1.82
India	1	1.82
Indonesia	1	1.82
Malawi	1	1.82
Malaysia	1	1.82
Mali	1	1.82
Philippines	1	1.82
Sudan	1	1.82
Tunesia	1	1.82
Turkey	1	1.82
Uganda	1	1.82
Viet Nam	1	1.82
Zimbabwe	1	1.82
Total	55	100

Region of nationality/ country of origin	Freq	%
Central Asia	12	22
East and South Asia	12	22
East and Southern Africa	12	22
West Africa	8	15
Europe	6	11
North Africa	5	9
Total	55	100

A. PROFILE AND BACKGROUND

A.1 With whom were you living before you migrated?

	Obs	Mean	Min	Max
Household size	55	4.56	1	12
Number of dependants	55	1.75	0	9

A.3 Before you migrated, where were you living?

Living context before migration	Freq	%
Rural	12	22.64
Urban	41	77.36
Total	53	100

A.4 Were you working prior to migration?

Working prior to migration	Freq	%
No	19	34.55
Yes	36	65.45
Total	55	100

A.6 If you were not working, why not?

Why not working	Freq	%
Could not find a job	2	12.5
In education	10	62.5
Pregnant/ childcare	1	6.25
Other	3	18.75
Total	16	100

Other: Retired military; hiding to evade national service; subsistence farmer

A.7 How would you describe your overall standard of living before you left?

Standard of living	Freq	%
Struggling	17	32.08
Coping	14	26.42
Comfortable	22	41.51
Total	53	100

A.8 Were you involved in local events in the community (i.e., weddings, church)?

Involved in local events	Freq	%
No	18	41.86
Yes	25	58.14
Total	43	100

A.9 Did you feel a sense of belonging to the community?

Belonging to the community	Freq	%
No	17	32.69
Yes	35	67.31
Total	52	100

A.10 In an average month, did you experiences threats to your personal security?

Threats to personal security	Freq	%
No	19	37.25
Yes	32	62.75
Total	51	100

A.11 Prior to this migration episode had you ever migrated internationally before?

Migrated internationally before	Freq	%
No	37	69.81
Yes	16	30.19
Total	53	100

B. MIGRATION EPISODE

B.1 Why did you decide to migrate?

Reason for migrating	Freq	%
Security/ political situation	27	50
Employment	12	22.22
Education	5	9.26
Health reasons	4	7.41
Other	6	11.11
Total	54	100

Other: as a dependent; for a better life; escaping labour exploitation; attend funeral; participate in sporting event

B.2 Who was involved in your decision to migrate?

Involved in decision to migrate	Freq	%
Partner/ spouse	19	34.55
Parents	16	29.09
Other family members	9	16.36
No one else	8	14.55
Friends	6	10.91
Child(ren)	4	7.27
Sibling(s)	3	5.45
Smuggler/ broker	1	1.82
Other	5	9.09
Total	n/a	

Other: Church; political party; colleagues; doctor.

B.3 Did this (these) person(s) support you in your decision? Why or why not?

[Qualitative response]

B.4 Did you want to migrate?

Did you want to migrate	Freq	%
No	6	10.91
Yes	44	80
Rather not say	1	1.82
Don't know	2	3.64
Missing	2	3.64
Total	55	100

B.5 Why or why not?

[Qualitative response]

B.6 In what month & year did you leave [country of origin]?

Length of journey to destination	Freq	%
Less than 1 month	23	43.4
1 to 6 months	15	28.3
6 months to 2 years	6	11.32
More than 2 years	9	16.98
Total	53	100

B.7 Who arranged/facilitated your migration?

Who arranged your migration?	Freq	%
Informal broker/ smuggler	25	48.08
No one	8	15.38
Friend/ family member in origin	7	13.46
Friend/ family abroad	6	11.54
Other	5	9.62
Formal recruitment agency	1	1.92
Total	52	100

Other: Travel agency; agency for studying abroad; embassy; sports promoter.

B.8 Who made the arrangements with the smuggler?

Who made arrangements with smuggler	Freq	%
Self	16	53.33
Family member	6	20
Friend	5	16.67
Other	3	10
Total	30	100

B.9 How much did your migration cost in total?

Cost of migration in USD	
Range	366 - 45927
Mean	8626
Total observations	26

B.10 Where did you acquire the money for your migration?

Where acquired money for migration	Freq	%
Savings	29	52.73
Gift from family/ friends	14	25.45
Sold assets	11	20
Informal loan	7	12.73
Employer paid	1	1.82
Other	3	5.45

Other: Donations; stole the money; don't know.

B.11 What was your intended destination? Why?

[Qualitative response]

B.12 What information did you have on [the current destination country] before you left?

[Qualitative response]

C. ARRIVAL IN CURRENT DESTINATION

C.1 With whom [if anyone] did you migrate?

Migrated with any other family members	Freq	%
No	42	76.36
Yes	13	23.64
Total	55	100

C.2 Currently living in destination country

c.3 Currently living in origin country

Number of relatives currently in origin	Freq	%
0	23	41.82
1	4	7.27
2	8	14.55
3	4	7.27
4	5	9.09
5	5	9.09
6	2	3.64
7	2	3.64
9	1	1.82
11	1	1.82
Total	55	100

C.4 When did you arrive in [country of destination]?

Time in destination country	Freq	%
Less than 1 year	15	28.3
1 to 5 years	24	45.28
6 to 10 years	5	9.43
More than 10 years	9	16.98
Total	53	100

C.5 What was your migration status in [destination country] when you arrived?

Migration status on arrival	Freq	%
No status	14	25.45
Tourist	5	9.09
Asylum seeker	25	45.45
Student	5	9.09
Family formation/reunification	1	1.82
Other	5	9.09
Total	55	100

Other: Ancestral visa, medical visa, sports visa, temporary protection, refugee

C.6 Where were you living when you arrived in [destination country]?

Where living on arrival	Freq	%
Asylum/reception centre	31	56.36
Detention centre	2	3.64
Family/ friend's house	11	20
Hotel/motel	2	3.64
Street/ park	2	3.64
Other	7	12.73
Total	55	100

Other: hospital, rented room, university accommodation, held captive

C.7 Are you currently living in the same place?

Living in same place	Freq	%
No	43	78.18
Yes	12	21.82
Total	55	100

C.8 If not, what is your current living situation?

Current living situation	Freq	%
Asylum/reception centre	10	22.7
Other asylum location	13	29.5
Detention centre	4	9.1
Family/ friend's house	7	15.9
Street/ park	1	2.3
Rented room/ house	6	13.6
Other	3	6.8
Total	44	100.0

Other: hospital, public housing, unknown.

C.9 Why did you move?

[Qualitative response]

D. CURRENT SITUATION

D.1 What is your current legal status in [destination country]?

Current legal status	Freq	%
No legal status - currently unlawful	23	41.8
Temporary legal status to remain	10	18.2
Temporary legal status prior to departure	7	12.7
Asylum seeker	6	10.9
Rejected asylum seeker	5	9.1
Rejected other	3	5.5
Other	1	1.8

D.2 What is your current migration status in [destination country]?

Current migration status	Freq	%
Refugee	1	1.82
Awaiting finalization of asylum applicant	13	23.64
Awaiting finalization of non-asylum app	4	7.27
Failed asylum application	18	32.73
Failed non-asylum application	3	5.45
No migration status - currently unlawful	13	23.64
Withdrew asylum application to claim AVR	3	5.45
Total	55	100

D.3 Are you able to move freely in [the destination country]?

Able to move freely	Freq	%
No	11	20
Yes	44*	80
Total	55	100

*Yes was frequently applied to individuals in asylum reception centres that were allowed to sign out of the centre for a short period of time.

D.4 Are you able to work? [Do you have the right to work?]

Able to work	Freq	%
No	45	84.91
Yes	8	15.09
Total	53	100

D.5 Do you engage in any income-generating activities?

Engage in any income-generating activities	Freq	%
No	37	71.15
Yes	15	28.85
Total	52	100

D.7 How much do you make from these activities?

Monthly earnings		
Range	476.28	3542.4
Mean	1427.171	
Total observations	11	

D.8 Since arriving in [destination country] have you sent money to someone in [origin]?

Sent remittances	Freq	%
No	42	77.78
Yes	12	22.22
Total	54	100

D.9 To whom have you sent money?

Sent remittances to whom	Freq	%
Spouse	5	41.7
Children	7	58.3
Other family	5	41.7
Total	n/a	

D.10 How often do you send money?

Frequency of remittances	Freq	%
Several times a month	2	16.67
Once a month	3	25
Once every 2-3 months	2	16.67
Once a year	1	8.33
Irregularly (when needed)	4	33.33
Total	12	100

D.11 What is the average value of each transfer?

Value of remittances transfer in USD	
Range	110 - 3402
Mean	938.385
Total observations	10

D.12 What is the most important use of the money you send back?

Most important use of remittances	Freq	%
Daily needs	5	50
Education	3	30
Other	2	20
Total	10	100

D.13 How often do you have contact with the following groups of people?

If living in shared/ provided accommodation:

	Same ethnicity		Other ethnicities	
Frequency of contact	Freq	%	Freq	%
Never	11	29.73	13	38.24
Infrequently	5	13.51	5	14.71
Often	10	27.03	7	20.59
Very often/ every day	10	27.03	7	20.59
Don't know	1	2.7	2	5.88
Total	37	100	34	100

If living in private accommodation:

	Same ethnicity		Other ethnicities	
Frequency of contact	Freq	%	Freq	%
Never			3	21.43
Often	4	28.57	5	35.71
Very often/ every day	10	71.43	6	42.86
Total	14	100	14	100

D.13.F Relatives / friends in [origin country]

Frequency of contact with people in origin	Freq	%
Never	13	25.49
Infrequently	13	25.49
Often	14	27.45
Very often/ every day	11	21.57
Total	51	100

D.14 Do you have access to formal healthcare?

Access to formal healthcare	Freq	%
No	7	12.96
Yes	46	85.19
Don't know	1	1.85
Total	54	100

D.16 Do you have access to formal education or training services?

Access to education or training	Freq	%
No	43	79.63
Yes	11	20.37
Total	54	100

D.18 At this time, what are the greatest challenges for you?

[Qualitative response]

D.19 How have you dealt with these challenges?

[Qualitative response]

D.20 Has anyone helped you face these challenges? If so, who and how?

[Qualitative response]

D.21 How would you rate your current quality of life compared to what it was like before you migrated?

Quality of life now compared to before	Freq	%
Worse	19	34.55
The same	1	1.82
Better	29	52.73
Don't know	6	10.91
Total	55	100

D.22 How satisfied are you with you migration experience?

Satisfaction with migration experience	Freq	%
Highly dissatisfied	3	5.56
Dissatisfied	6	11.11
Neutral	6	11.11
Satisfied	28	51.85
Highly satisfied	8	14.81
Don't know	3	5.56
Total	54	100

D.23 Why do you perceive your migration experience in that way?

[Qualitative response]

E. RETURN

E.1 What is your current position on returning to your country of origin?

Current position on returning	Freq	%
I have decided to return	32	60.38
I am likely to return	2	3.77
I am unlikely to return	1	1.89
I have decided not to return	11	20.75
I don't know	7	13.21
Total	53	100

E.2 What factors are affecting your decision making / considerations?

Decision-making factor (multiple responses possible)	**Freq**	**%**
Other reason	21	38
Family (desire for reunification in origin country)	19	35
Difficulty finding employment/ No right to work	17	31
Security situation of origin country (improved or still a threat)	10	18
Cannot support self/dependents financially	10	18
Tired of living as undocumented	10	18
Negative decision regarding asylum request	7	13
Inability to meet migration aspirations including work or educational	7	13
Changes in family circumstances	6	11
To benefit from voluntary return programmes offered by destination	6	11
Psychological problems (depression or frustration)	5	9
I felt I had no choice	5	9
Health (of migrant or family member)	5	9
End of work/ study permit in host country	4	7
Nostalgia about home country and way of life	4	7
Political change in destination country (e.g. crackdowns, more hostile)	4	7
Was given period of time to wind up affairs and leave voluntarily	4	7
Employment opportunity or job prospects in origin country	1	2
Political change/ legal status in origin (improved or no change)	1	2
Better living conditions in home country	1	2
Desire to reclaim property in country of origin	1	2
Lack of security, or being discriminated against	1	2
Dignity of return as normal passenger	1	2
Destination country policies	1	2
Shame of return	1	2
Total	n/a	

First most important decision-making factor	**Freq**	**%**
Nostalgia about home country and way of life	9	18
Security situation of origin country (improved or still a threat)	7	14
Other reason	6	12
Tired of living as undocumented	4	8
Was given period of time to wind up affairs and leave voluntarily	4	8
Family (desire for reunification in origin country)	3	6
Difficulty finding employment/ No right to work	3	6
Negative decision regarding asylum request	3	6
Cannot support self/dependents financially	2	4
Shame of return	2	4
Inability to meet migration aspirations including work or educational	1	2
Psychological problems (depression or frustration)	1	2
I felt I had no choice	1	2
End of work/ study permit in host country	1	2
Political change/ legal status in origin (improved or no change)	1	2
Dignity of return as normal passenger	1	2
Destination country policies	1	2
Total	50	100

Second most important decision-making factor	**Freq**	**%**
Difficulty finding employment/ No right to work	4	12.12
Other reason	3	9.09
Tired of living as undocumented	3	9.09
Family (desire for reunification in origin country)	3	9.09
Cannot support self/dependents financially	3	9.09
Changes in family circumstances	3	9.09
To benefit from voluntary return programmes offered by destination	3	9.09
End of work/ study permit in host country	2	6.06
Destination country policies	2	6.06
Nostalgia about home country and way of life	1	3.03
Security situation of origin country (improved or still a threat)	1	3.03
Negative decision regarding asylum request	1	3.03
Shame of return	1	3.03
Psychological problems (depression or frustration)	1	3.03
I felt I had no choice	1	3.03
Employment opportunity or job prospects in origin country	1	3.03
Total	33	100

E.3 Who has been (or is) involved in your decision making process about return?

Involved in decision-making process about return	Freq	%
Family in origin	18	33
Government/ authorities in destination	12	22
Family in destination	9	16
IOM or other AVR implementer in destination	9	16
Friends in destination	8	15
No one else	3	5
Other	3	5
Other (rejected) asylum seekers in reception center	1	2
Total	n/a	

Other: consulate; friend in other country; lawyer

E.4 How were/are they involved?

[Qualitative response]

E.5 Do they support your current position on return?

Support current position on return	Freq	%
No	1	2.7
Yes	27	72.97
Don't know/ not possible to say	9	24.3
Total	37	100

E.6 Why have you not considered returning?

[Qualitative response]

E.7 Have you ever heard of any assistance for return offered by the government or a voluntary agency?

Heard of AVR assistance	Freq	%
No	7	12.96
Yes	47	87.04
Total	54	100

E.8.A What does this programme offer?

What does AVR programme offer?	Freq	%
Cash/ financial assistance	31	66
Return ticket	33	70
Shelter support	0	0
Rent subsidy	1	2
Help with finding a job	0	0
Business training	2	4
Capital for starting a business	9	19
Other training	1	2
Opportunity to visit home town	0	0
Health support	4	9
Education/ language support for children	2	4

E.8.C How did you find out about this programme?

How found out about programme	Freq	%
Government authorities/ caseworker	23	54.76
IOM (other than native counsellor)	6	14.29
Other NGO/IO	3	7.14
Others in asylum centre	1	2.38
Friends/ family in country of destination	5	11.9
Friends/ family in country of origin	1	2.38
Other	3	7.14
Total	42	100

E.8.E What do you think of this programme?

[Qualitative response]

E.8.F Will you take part in this programme?

Will take part in AVR programme?	Freq	%
No	11	23.4
Undecided	9	19.15
Yes	27	57.45
Total	47	100

E.10 [If respondent has not heard of any AVR programme, give brief description of AVR package] Would this motivate you to return?

Would AVR programme motivate you to return?	Freq	%
No	5	83.33
Yes	1	16.67
Total	6	100

E.11 Why or why not?

[Qualitative response]

E.12 What (else) would make a difference in helping you to return?

What (else) would make a difference in helping you to return?	Freq	%
More money	12	22
A new house	3	5
Assistance with paying rent	3	5
A firm job offer	1	2
More training	2	4
Opportunity to visit	1	2
Other	24	44
Nothing	13	24
Security guarantee	4	7
Medical assistance	3	5

E.13 Is returning discussed in your family? Why/ why not?

Return discussed in family	Freq	%
No	18	39.13
Yes	28	60.87
Total	46	100

E.14 Is returning discussed amongst your friends/ community Why/ why not?

[Qualitative response]

E.15 Do you feel that return is encouraged/ approved of in your community?

Community in origin country

Return discussed in origin community	Freq	%
No	8	20.51
Yes	21	53.85
Not applicable	5	12.82
Don't know	5	12.82
Total	39	100

Community in asylum centre/ destination country

Return discussed in destination community	Freq	%
No	3	12
Yes	18	72
Not applicable	2	8
Don't know	2	8
Total	25	100

E.16 Do you feel you have enough information on return programmes?

Enough information on return programmes	Freq	%
No	10	24.39
Yes	28	68.29
Don't know	3	7.32
Total	41	100

E.17 If the government of the [destination country] could do one thing to help people who wanted to return, what would it be?

[Qualitative response]

E.18 Have you received any pre-departure assistance from any organisation?

Received/ receiving any pre-departure assistance	Freq	%
No	36	73.47
Yes	13	26.53
Total	49	100

E.19 What kind of assistance are you receiving/ going to receive?

Type of assistance being received	Freq	%
Business planning	3	23
Travel stipends	11	85
Just information	6	46
Accommodation	2	15
Help finding a school	1	8

E.20 Who is assisting you in the return process (by giving money or other resources)?

Who is assisting in return process?	Freq	%
IOM	8	36.36
Other NGO	11	50
Other	3	13.64
Total	22	100

E.21 Will you take any resources with you when you return?

Will take resources upon return	Freq	%
No	18	85.71
Yes	3	14.29
Total	21	100

E.22 If you are able to return with money, how much will you take (in what currency)?

[Only two answers given]

F. RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

F.1 Age

	Age			
Destination	n	Mean	Min	Max
Australia	7	34	27	46
Netherlands	15	32	18	51
Switzerland	18	34	20	60
UK	15	44	26	74
Total	55	36	18	74

F.2 Sex

	Sex		
Destination	Male	Female	Total
Australia	4	3	7
Netherlands	12	3	15
Switzerland	17	1	18
UK	11	4	15
Total	44	11	55

F.3 Country of birth

F.4 Nationality

F.5 Ethnicity

F.6 Highest level of completed education

Highest education level	Freq	%
No formal education	6	11.11
Primary	6	11.11
Lower secondary	8	14.81
Upper secondary	22	40.74
Technical/ vocational post-secondary	4	7.41
Bachelor	8	14.81
Total	54	100

F.7 [If planning to return] Type of returnee

Type of returnee	Freq	%
Individual	33	70.21
Couple	1	2.13
(Nuclear) family	8	17.02
Single-parent family	4	8.51
Other	1	2.13
Total	47	100

Other: Nuclear family but partner will go back on earlier flight

G. CLOSING COMMENTS

G.1 Is there anything else you would like to share with me?

[Qualitative response]

G.2 Is there anything else that you think is important for me to know about your migration and return experience?

[Qualitative response]

APPENDIX 5

AFGHANISTAN

COUNTRY REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

This report examines migrant decision-making in relation to return, and the sustainability of assisted voluntary return, to Afghanistan. This country report is part of a comparative research project on the assisted voluntary return and reintegration of migrants. The project examines findings from 15 origin, transit and destination countries and relies on a mixed methodology involving quantitative and qualitative analysis. Afghanistan is one of the origin countries.

The project has been conceived and commissioned as part of the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Irregular Migration Research Programme.[1] It was informed by the programme's first occasional paper, which recognized the need to establish an evidence-base for policy deliberations on irregular migration to Australia (Koser & McAuliffe, 2013). The project is supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Maastricht University.

This country report provides a brief, descriptive overview of the economic, political and security contexts as they relate to migration, and an overview of migration trends to and from Afghanistan. This background information provides further country context for the comparative analysis in the research project's *Final report*. It also describes participants interviewed for the study and key results of the interviews conducted in Afghanistan.

2. Country context

Afghanistan in global measures	
Human Development Index as at 2012. See UNDP (2013).	**Low human development** 175th out of 187 countries
Peace Index as at 2014. See Institute for Economics and Peace (2014).	**Very low level of peace** Second-lowest ranking out of 162 countries
Human Rights Risk Index as at 2013-14. See Maplecroft (2013).	**Extreme risk of abuse**
Corruption Perceptions Index as at 2013. See Transparency International (2013).	**Extremely corrupt** Lowest ranking out of 177 countries
Freedom Index as at 2014. See Freedom House (2014).	**Not free**
Visa Restrictions Index as at 2013. See Henley and Partners (2014).	**Very low passport mobility** Lowest ranking out of 173 countries

After decades of invasion, civil war, insurgency and massive cycles of internal and external displacement, Afghanistan is reaching a political, security and economic juncture in 2014.

The challenges ahead for Afghanistan are multi-faceted. Recent elections were held amid claims of electoral fraud.[2] Once the transition of security to the Afghan authorities is completed at the end of 2014, the ongoing Taliban insurgency in regional areas will need to be dealt with.[3] There has also been a dramatic slide in economic growth in the past year.[4] As a consequences of these and other factors, Afghanistan's prospects remain uncertain.

Coming from a very low baseline, there has been some political, social, economic and security progress since the ousting of the Taliban regime in 2001 and there is a degree of internal optimism in Kabul. However, if Afghanistan destabilizes the implications for internal and external migration are profound for the region and beyond.

[1] Information on the Irregular Migration Research Programme is at: www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research.
[2] Ahmed (2014).
[3] Ahmed & Shah (2014).
[4] International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2014).

Notwithstanding the many challenges, there is a sense of determination within Afghanistan about its future. In addition, countries in the region are keen to ensure that Afghanistan does not descend into further conflict and instability.

2.1 Economy

Afghanistan has been at the intersection of trade routes between central, south and west Asia for over 3000 years. To a large extent, as a consequence of decades of war, Afghanistan remains one of poorest, least developed countries in the world.[5] Since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, Afghanistan has made progress in reconstruction, largely due to extensive international development assistance and investment. There has been an improvement in education, with a significant increase in school enrolments, especially among girls. Basic health services in some areas have improved, however, outside major centres the majority of Afghans have very limited access to health services, electricity, clean water and sanitation.[6] In 2012, Afghanistan recorded a relatively strong 14.4 per cent economic growth, but there was a sharp decline in economic growth in 2013 to an estimated 3.6 per cent.[7]

Afghanistan is mostly mountainous desert with limited arable land for subsistence farming, which is based mainly on wheat production and livestock.[8] The agricultural sector has limited access to adequate water supplies, and is prone to severe droughts that have been exacerbated by environmental damage caused by decades of conflict.[9]

While there are substantial natural resources, the country's mining sector remains stalled by ongoing instability in many areas and inadequate infrastructure to support mining and distribution.[10] The production of opium is a significant aspect of the economy. In 2008, the opiate economy was equivalent to one-third of the total legal economy,[11] and in 2013 opium reached the highest levels ever recorded.[12] The 'black market' has become a powerful economic force in Afghanistan with substantial operations engaged in smuggling, especially to Pakistan.[13]

2.2 Political context

A process of 'political reform' began in 2001 following the defeat of the Taliban. This included a new constitution, a presidential election in 2004, and National Assembly elections in 2005. Hamid Karzai was re-elected president in 2009 for a second term.[14] Despite claims of fraud and an increase in Taliban violence during the recent presidential elections in April 2014, voter turnout was strong, especially among women who represented 34 per cent of the vote.[15]

The legitimacy of the central government in Kabul is undermined by wide-spread corruption and accusations of serious human rights abuses. Ethnic tensions between various groups remain a serious issue, resulting in conflict and killing. The Hazara continue to be singled out for societal discrimination and, given the historical origins of persecution against Hazara, they are likely to remain a particular target for the Taliban and other ethnic groups.[16]

The central government struggles to exert control outside urban areas. The population is very dispersed, with around 75 per cent of Afghans living in remote rural regions.[17] There is also a complex and diverse mix of ethnicity, language and regional allegiances in Afghanistan that present significant challenges to political cohesion.[18]

Given the presence of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) since 2001, and the ongoing insurgency by the Taliban, the political stability of the Afghanistan Government has been inextricably linked to the country's security landscape. There is a prevailing pessimism that once the transition of power is completed at the end of 2014, the central government in Kabul will fail to resist the insurgency effectively, fail to unify the country politically and fail to establish the kind of robust democratic institutions that would provide stability.[19]

---

[5] World Bank (2014).
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] IMF (2014).
[8] Marsden & Samaan (2003).
[9] United States Library of Congress (2008).
[10] Risen (2010).
[11] Denis (2014), p.8.
[12] UNODC (2013), p.72.
[13] United States Library of Congress (2008).
[14] *Ibid.*
[15] Samad (2014)
[16] United States State Department (2013).
[17] Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (2014).
[18] The Pashtuns are the major ethnic group in the south and east, the Tajiks in the north-east, while the predominant groups in north central Afghanistan are the Hazaras, Tajiks and Uzbeks. Dari and Pashtu are the official languages, with 28 other languages spoken.
[19] United States Library of Congress (2008); Koser & Marsden (2013).

2.3 Security context

Until a coup d'état in 1973, Afghanistan was ruled by a centralized monarchy that largely relied on traditional local authorities to govern, and between 1933 and 1974 Afghanistan enjoyed relative stability and peace.[20] A communist led counter-coup in 1978, buttressed by military intervention by the Soviet Union in 1979, led to decade-long war against western-backed mujahedeen until the Soviet withdrawal in 1989. A series of civil wars followed that ended with a Taliban victory in 1996. The Taliban's refusal to hand over the perpetrators of the 11 September 2001 attacks led to US, Allied and Afghan Northern Alliance forces combining to drive the Taliban from power.[21]

The Taliban began an insurgency against the ISAF that strengthened in 2007.[22] The Taliban has established bases in Pakistan and controls significant regional areas of Afghanistan, particularly in the south-east. The Taliban and other insurgents continue to kill civilians and security force personnel. Anti-government elements also target foreigners, medical and non government organization (NGO) workers.[23]

At the heart of security issues in Afghanistan is the transition of responsibility for security from the ISAF to the Afghan National Security Forces, due to be completed at the end 2014.[24] The international community has made strong pledges to continue to provide development support, including ongoing assistance with security, but the will and capability to do so will depend to a large extent on the Afghanistan Government's capacity to prevail over the significant challenges ahead.

3. MIGRATION AND RETURN FLOWS

Afghanistan is considered one of the largest emigrant-producing countries in the world, with an estimated eight per cent of the Afghan-born population residing outside Afghanistan.[25] The vast majority of Afghan emigrants are displaced refugees or seasonal workers who have travelled to neighbouring countries, or asylum seekers who have migrated irregularly to industrialized countries.

3.1. Migration between Afghanistan and its near neighbours

The largest flows of refugees and migrants from Afghanistan are to its neighbours: Pakistan and Islamic Republic of Iran. In 2013, Islamic Republic of Iran hosted more than 800 000 registered Afghan refugees, while Pakistan hosted more than 1.6 million. Together, these Afghans constitute the largest group of registered displaced persons globally (see Table A1).[26] In addition, at various times there have been an additional estimated 1.5 million Afghans in Islamic Republic of Iran,[27] and 2.2 million in Pakistan,[28] living as undocumented irregular migrants.

It is important to note that current Afghan refugee flows are interlinked with, and frequently indistinguishable from, deeply-rooted circular and seasonal migration flows between Afghanistan and its near neighbours. Temporary irregular migration to Pakistan and Islamic Republic of Iran has been well-documented as an important household livelihood strategy in both wartime and peace, particularly among Afghanistan's ethnic Hazaras.[29] The economic importance of migration to Afghan households is significant, with research suggesting that around 4.5 million Afghans may rely on remittances.[30]

In addition to the significant outflows, Afghanistan continues to experience significant internal displacement, with some 900 000 Afghans either internally displaced within Afghanistan, or 'of concern' to the United Nations Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

---

[20] Byrd (2012).
[21] Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) (2014).
[22] United States Senate Democrats (2008).
[23] United States State Department (2013).
[24] North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (2010).
[25] World Bank (2011), p. 53.
[26] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (June 2014), p. 3.
[27] United States State Department (2010). Estimate as at end 2008/early 2009.
[28] Basic Education for Awareness, Reforms and Empowerment / Basic Education for Afghan Refugees (BEFARe) (2009), p. 41. This estimate is based on Pakistan government records, as at 2008.
[29] Cf. Monsutti (2005).
[30] Kronenfeld (2011), p. 12.

Table 5.1: Key Afghan registered refugee and displaced person populations

Location	Population as at end 2013
Islamic Republic of Iran	814 015
Pakistan	1 615 876
Total	**2 429 891**
Internally displaced within Afghanistan	631 286
Others of concern within Afghanistan	275 486
Total	**906 772**

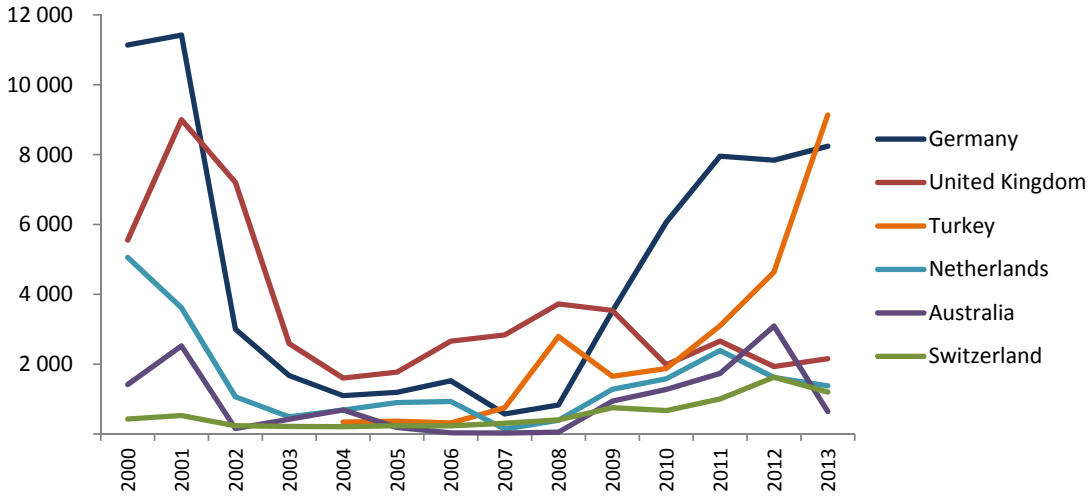
Source: UNHCR Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org/, extracted on 1 July 2014.

3.2. Afghan asylum flows to industrialized countries

Beyond its near neighbours, Afghanistan has consistently been one of the largest source countries of asylum flows to industrialized countries since the turn of the century.[31]

As shown in Figure 5.1, the early 2000s saw large flows of Afghan asylum seekers to key industrialized destinations including to Germany, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. Between 2002 and 2007, asylum flows decreased significantly, coinciding with large-scale voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees from Pakistani and Islamic Republic of Iran, following the fall of the Taliban.[32]

Figure 5.1: Afghan asylum flows to selected industrialized countries, 2000 to 2013



Source: UNHCR Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org/, extracted on 30 June 2014.
Note: Australia's asylum figures do not include illegal maritime arrivals (IMAs) who have been transferred to third countries or who had not been able to lodge a protection visa application. As such, asylum application flows to Australia are not necessarily reflective of IMA flows to Australia.

Since 2007, Afghan asylum flows have increased significantly, reflecting a deteriorating political and security situation in Afghanistan. The number of Afghan asylum claims lodged in industrialized countries more than tripled between 2007 and 2012. In 2013, Afghans were the third largest asylum seeker citizenship group, with more than 38 600 asylum claims lodged among 44 industrialized countries.[33] They remain at historically high levels, greater than those experienced in 2000 to 2001, before the fall of the Taliban.[34]

It is important to note that, like the Afghan population itself, Afghan asylum flows are not ethnically homogenous. While the vast majority of Afghan asylum flows to Australia are ethnic Hazaras, other destination countries may receive different proportions of Pashtuns, Hazaras, Tajiks and others.[35]

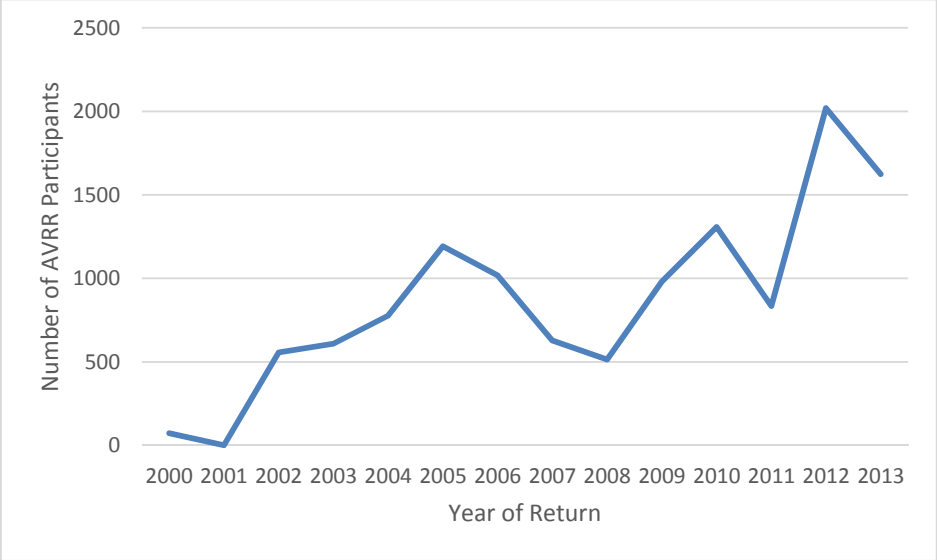
[31] UNHCR (2014, March), p. 20.
[32] More information on voluntary repatriation to Afghanistan is provided in the next section.
[33] UNHCR (2014, March), p. 25. This represented a decrease on 2012 levels, when Afghanistan ranked first among all source countries, and more than 47 500 Afghans lodged asylum claims in industrialised countries.
[34] There were 32 700 Afghan asylum applications to the UNHCR-defined 44 industrialised countries in 2001. The calculation is based on UNHCR's Population Statistics, http://popstats.unhcr.org, as at 30 June 2014.
[35] Koser & Marsden (2013), p. 19.

3.3 Afghan return migration

In addition to large refugee outflows, Afghanistan has also experienced significant periods of voluntary repatriation. As many as four million refugees were estimated to have repatriated to Afghanistan from Pakistan and Islamic Republic of Iran between 2002 and 2005, during a time of increased optimism following the fall of the Taliban. However, the added complexity of circular migration patterns means that many of these recorded return movements were by repeat-returnees and undocumented migrants not part of the UNHCR-registered refugee population.[36]

The number of assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR) participants to Afghanistan has steadily risen within the past decade, peaking in 2012. Overall numbers of AVRR participants remains extremely large relative to other origin countries within this study.

Figure 5.2: Number of AVRR participants returned to Afghanistan



Source: International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2014.

The objectives of the research in Afghanistan were to provide insight into decision-making factors in return and to assess the sustainability of return. Afghanistan was one of eight different origin countries examined in the overall study.

To assess decision-making factors in return, this study follows the approach developed by Black et *al*. (2004).[37] The model is explained in Chapter 2 of the *Final report* and briefly summarized here. In essence, the model posits that decision-making on return is based on a combination of factors across five key areas. First, the political, economic and social conditions in the country of origin and second, the political, economic, and social conditions in the country of destination are considered (referred to in this report as the 'conditions in origin/destination country'). Third, individual factors such as age, gender, and personal attributes are considered. Fourth, social factors, such as familial reasons and the role of networks are considered in the decision to return. The final element included in the model is policy incentives and disincentives, such as assisted voluntary return policies or deportation campaigns.. This is examined in the Afghani context in Section 6 below.

The research in Afghanistan also sought to assess sustainable return, which is achieved in this study through a return and reintegration index (explained in Chapter 6 of the *Final report*). The return and reintegration index is based on three dimensions: economic reintegration, where an individual is able to sustain a livelihood and is not in a situation of economic vulnerability; social and cultural reintegration where the returnee is actively incorporated into the receiving society, for example at the level of the local community; and safety and security reintegration where the returnee feels they have access to safety and justice on return. Each of these dimensions is assessed through five variables, which are included in Table A4 below. From these three dimensions an overall level of reintegration is determined through the index. This approach highlights the multi-dimensional nature of reintegration and sustainable return.

[36] Kronenfeld (2008), p. 48–54.
[37] Black et *al*. (2004)

5. METHODOLOGY AND PARTICIPANTS OVERVIEW

In Afghanistan, 19 participants were interviewed using a semi-structured interview guide. Participants had to meet three requirements to be eligible for an interview. First, they must have returned a minimum of 12 months before the interview; second, they had to have returned from an industrialised state (that is, Europe, North America or Australia); and third, they had to have participated in an assisted voluntary return. In Afghanistan, the first requirement was reduced to nine months to identify a sufficient number of respondents. A total of 27 people were called for an interview in Afghanistan, one person declined and seven people did not show up to the scheduled interview. It is important to note that this sample is not representative of returnees to Afghanistan, nor is it reflective of the conditions of return in Afghanistan as a whole.

Table 5.2 provides an overview of participants and shows that within the Afghani sample, ages varied from 17 to 48 years, with an average age of 29. This is relatively young compared with the other origin countries. The sample was 95 per cent male with only one female participant. Education levels varied, with most participants having completed some level of secondary education (10 participants). One participant had no formal education, one had finished primary school, and another held a Bachelor's degree. The sample was predominately made up of individual returnees but included one single parent family. A total of 53 per cent of the participants were returned from Norway, while 21 per cent returned form the United Kingdom, 11 per cent from Austria, five per cent from Belgium, five per cent from Denmark, and five per cent from the Netherlands.

Table 5.2: Overview of participants

	Freq.	%
Age (in years)		
Range	17–48	
Average	29	
Sex		
Male	18	95
Female	1	5
Total	19	100
Country of birth		
Afghanistan	19	100
Total	19	100
Nationality		
Afghan	19	100
Total	19	100
Ethnicity		
Unspecified	18	95
Tajik	1	5
Total	19	100
Highest level of education		
No formal education	1	8
Primary	1	8
Lower secondary	3	23
Upper secondary	7	54
Bachelor	1	8
Total†	13	100
Type of returnee		
Individual	16	94
Single-parent family	1	6
Total†	17	100
Country of migration		
Norway	10	53
United Kingdom	4	21
Austria	2	11
Belgium	1	5
Denmark	1	5
Netherlands	1	5
Total	19	100

† Total does not equal 19 due to missing responses.

Most participants indicated that they had migrated for security or political reasons (79 per cent). Employment was also cited as a reason for migration by two participants. All of the respondents indicated that they had filed an application for asylum within their destination countries at some point during their stay.

Table 5.3 provides an overview of the key decision-making factors of returnees based on the model summarized in Section 4 above. It is important to note that many respondents reported multiple factors.

Table 5.3: Number of individuals with at least one decision-making factor, by category

Category	Freq.	%	Sample size
Conditions in origin country	0	0.0	19
Conditions in destination country	18	94.7	19
Individual factors	2	10.5	19
Social factors	3	15.8	19
Incentives/disincentives (policy interventions)	1	5.3	19

Reasons for return were heavily concentrated on the conditions in destination country category. A total of 95 per cent of participants indicated that these types of factors influenced their decision to return. Specifically, 17 participants stated that a negative decision on their asylum request had influenced their decision to return. One respondent stated:

> I decided to return because they would not provide me permission to stay. They said they would deport me. So I decided to return voluntarily. I appealed two times, they asked me 200 questions. I got the answer in one day! It is not fair you know. When I appealed they made a decision in two hours. Because of this unfair situation I decided that I do not want to appeal again.'
>
> Male, age 28

Furthermore, two participants stated that they had difficulty finding work or had no right to work, and one participant cited a lack of access to social services and healthcare within the destination country as a reason for return.

> 'That's when I got tired, because I was not allowed. And I was just given at the beginning 3000 NOK [Norwegian Krone]. But later on it decreased to 700 NOK. But it was not enough even for the small expenses. IOM was coming repeatedly and I got tired because there was no more money"
>
> Male, age 26

Beyond conditions in the destination country, social and individual factors were also somewhat influential. Overall, 15.8 per cent of respondents cited social factors as a reason for return, specifically including a desire for family reunification in Afghanistan or a change in family circumstances. Individual factors were also indicated by two participants. Both of these participants cited being tired of living as undocumented as a reason for return.

> 'They paid me a very less amount therefore I was not able to manage anything. The other problem was with food; they were just giving food at 5 o'clock and then they locked the door. All night, even when I would be hungry, there was no food for us. So I thought it would be better to return. And when we wanted to go to the mosque, for evening prayer; they locked the door at 5 o'clock, so when we returned we could not come back in."
>
> Male, age 17

Although not frequently cited as an influential decision-making factor in return, several participants discussed issues regarding the 'shame' of return and not 'wanting to return in handcuffs'. One participant stated:

> 'It was very hard for me when I returned, they said; Oh you did not get the visa? Why didn't you stay in the UK? They thought that I did something criminal over there, that that was the reason why they wanted to deport me. It was a very big shame for me.''
>
> Male, age 28

One of the least influential return factors was the policy interventions category, which only one person indicated as being influential in their decision to return. This participant said he wanted to benefit from a voluntary return programme offered in the destination country. It is interesting to note that no respondents cited conditions in the origin country as a reason to return. For no respondents to have indicated that employment opportunities, policy changes, security improvements or better living conditions had drawn them back illustrates that conditions in Afghanistan are viewed as improved from the migrants' perspectives.

7. EXTENT OF REINTEGRATION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF RETURN

Table 5.4 shows the return and reintegration index used in this study to examine reintegration and sustainable return. Overall, 26.3 per cent per cent of returnees in Afghanistan were considered reintegrated according to this index, which is significantly less than the average (36.8 per cent) across all of the countries in the study, and the second lowest in all origin countries after Iraq.

In Afghanistan, reintegration levels in all three dimensions were relatively similar. Along the economic dimension, 52.6 per cent of participants had been reintegrated, with only 42 per cent being employed. Of the 11 who were not currently employed, one individual was in vocational training, three were actively looking for work, five were not actively looking for work, and one was self-employed. The five who were not looking for work had indicated threats to their personal security as the biggest challenge they faced on return, indicating that perhaps the unstable security environment in Afghanistan was prohibiting the search for employment.

Five participants had started a business on return. The businesses included telephone services, grocery services, wholesale importing and supplying car parts. According to the returnees perceptions, one of the businesses was considered profitable, with the other four struggling economically.

Only 37 per cent of participants owned either land or a house, but half indicated they were not struggling economically and a high percentage (79 per cent) had no debt. Of the four participants who did have debt, two had taken out the initial loan to fund their own migrations while two had done so to meet their daily needs. The amounts ranged widely in value, from USD 450 to USD 17,000.

Table 5.2: Overview of participants

Variable	**Threshold**	**Individual reintegration rates**	**n**
Economic dimension:			
Employment	Individual is employed	42.1	19
Income sources	Individual's household has more than one source of income (more of a vulnerability indicator than reintegration)	47.4	19
Perceived economic situation	Individual does not consider themselves to be struggling	52.6	19
Debt	Individual has no debt	79.0	19
Land/ Housing	Individual owns land or house	36.8	19
Percentage of participants reintegrated in at least half of the economic variables		**52.6**	19
Socio-cultural dimension:			
Networks	Individual identifies themselves as having a network that they can rely upon for support	57.9	19
Transnational networks	Individual maintains a transnational network	79.0	19
Participate in local events upon return	Individual participates in local events	84.2	19
Self-Perception of personal life	Individual is not generally dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their personal life on average in the last month	47.4	19
Membership in organizations upon return	Individual participates in one or more organizations	0.0	19
Percentage of participants reintegrated in at least half of the social/cultural variables		**57.9**	19
Safety and security dimension:			
Perceived safety in home	Individual identifies feeling safe in their home	57.9	19
Perceived safety in the community	Individual identifies feeling safe in their community	21.1	19
Trust in the government	Individual identifies that they trust the government	15.8	19
Access to justice	Individual feels that they could access justice if their rights were violated in their country of return	79.0	19
Experienced personal harassment since return	Individual has not experienced personal harassment since return	73.7	19
Percentage of participants reintegrated in at least half of the safety and security variables		**47.4**	19
Percentage of participants that are effectively reintegrated across all three dimensions		**26.3**	19

Reintegration in the socio-cultural dimension was 57.9 per cent. A total of 84 per cent participated in local events on return, 79 per cent maintained transnational networks and 57.9 per cent stated that they had a strong network that they could rely on if needed. Due to sensitivities regarding ethnic and religious organizations in Afghanistan, the question regarding participation in organizations was not asked. The final indicator in this dimension was the lowest, with 47.4 per cent of participants expressing dissatisfaction with their life in the past month. One stated his reasons for this as:

> 'I like to be with my father, but being here feels like a waste of time. Because I cannot make a future here. I want to make my future, and hope people will help me.'
>
> Male, age 26

Other reasons that were most frequently cited included safety and security issues, economic issues, and health of family. This clearly relates to the other dimensions of the reintegration index.

A total of 47 per cent of participants were reintegrated in the safety and security dimension. While 57.9 per cent felt safe within their homes, only 21.1 per cent felt safe within their communities. This clearly reflects the current conditions of insecurity in Afghanistan, and in particular in Kabul, where the majority of respondents lived. A total of 74 per cent of participants stated that they had not experienced any form of harassment since their return. Finally, 15.8 per cent indicated that they felt they could trust the government, and 79 per cent felt they could access justice if their rights were violated within Afghanistan. As shown in the country context table at the beginning of this report, Afghanistan is the most corrupt country on the Corruption Perceptions Index. It is important to note that participants' sense of justice may have been because of network ties and relations versus the overall justice system. Participants hinted at the need to bribe officials to achieve justice:

> 'I know places where I could go, where you can complain about something. But you should give money, then they will hear your complain. You should pay to let them arrest someone.'
>
> Male, age 21

It is important to state that although over half the participants stated that their current quality of life is better than before migration, more than 42 per cent of the participants stated that they definitely planned to migrate again in the future, while 77 per cent stated that they wished to leave Afghanistan again. This emphasizes the lack of sustainable return in Afghanistan. Participants who did not want to migrate again stated they want to take care of their family or find a good job or education.

8. CONCLUSION

The Afghani case is clearly marked by decades of war, extremely limited economic stability and a high number of refugees and internally displaced people. Regarding the decision to return, conditions in the destination country were the most frequently cited in this study and specifically, a negative asylum decision. Individual factors, social factors and policy incentives or disincentives were much less frequently referenced.

Overall, only 23 per cent of the Afghani sample was effectively reintegrated across all three dimensions. The safety and security dimension featured the lowest rate of reintegration, followed by economic and then socio-cultural reintegration. Given the conditions in Afghanistan, these findings are not surprising. In addition, the majority of the respondents did wish to re-emigrate if given the chance, as this was sometimes seen as the only possible exit strategy or chance to encounter greater opportunities.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ahmed, A. (2014) 'Amid Claims of Fraud, Afghan Presidential Candidate Vows More Deadlock', *The New York Times*, 29 June 2014, www.nytimes.com/2014/06/30/world/asia/afghanistan-elections.html.

Ahmed, A. & Shah, T. (2014) 'Taliban mount major assault in Afghanistan', *New York Times*, 27 June 2014, www.nytimes.com/2014/06/28/world/asia/taliban-mount-major-assault-in-afghanistan.html.

Aljazeera (2014) 'Taliban hold territory after Afghan offensive', 30 June 2014, www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/06/taliban-hold-territory-after-afghan-offensive-201463013484993988 6.html.

BEFARe (Basic Education for Awareness Reforms and Empowerment) (2009) 'Baseline study on illegal migration, human smuggling and trafficking in Pakistan', www.befare.org/Baseline%20Survey.pdf.

Byrd, W. (2012) 'Lessons from Afghanistan's History for the Current Transition & Beyond', Special Report 314, United States Institute for Peace, www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR314.pdf.

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (2014) 'Afghanistan', *The CIA World Factbook*, www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/countrytemplate_af.html.

Denis B. T. (2014) 'Afghan Opium and the EU: Fighting the War Economy through Development Cooperation,' EU Diplomacy Paper 4/2014, Department of EU International relations and Diplomacy Studies, College de Europe, www.coleurope.eu/news/eu-diplomacy-paper-4/2014-afghan-opium-and-eu-fighting-war-economy-through-development.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) (2014) 'Afghanistan country brief,' www.dfat.gov.au/geo/afghanistan/afghanistan_country_brief.html.

Freedom House (2014) 'Freedom in the World 2014', www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world-2014/release-booklet.

Henley and Partners (2014) 'Visa Restrictions Index 2013', www.henleyglobal.com/visa-restrictions/.

Institute for Economics and Peace (2014) 'Global Peace Index 2014: measuring the state of global peace', www.visionofhumanity.org/#/page/indexes/global-peace-index.

IMF (International Monetary Fund) (2014) 'Islamic Republic of Afghanistan,' IMF Country Report No. 14/128, www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2014/cr14128.pdf.

Koser, K. & Marsden, M. (2013) 'Migration and displacement impacts of Afghan transitions in 2014: implications for Australia', Irregular Migration Research Program Occasional Paper no. 3, www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research/.

Kronenfeld, D. (2008) 'Afghan refugees in Pakistan: not all refugees, not always in Pakistan, not necessarily Afghan?', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 21(1), pp. 43–63.

Kronenfeld, D. (2011) 'Can Afghanistan cope with returnees? Can returnees cope in Afghanistan? A look at some new data', Middle East Institute, www.refugeecooperation.org/publications/Afghanistan/02_kronenfeld.php.

Maplecroft (2013) 'Human Rights Risk Index 2014', http://maplecroft.com/themes/hr/.

Marsden, P. and Samman, E. (2003) 'Afghanistan: the economic and social impact of conflict', Francis Stewart, Valpy Fitzgerald et al., *War & Underdevelopment*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Monsutti, A. (2005) *War and Migration: Social Networks and Economic Strategies of the Hazaras of Afghanistan*, London: Routledge.

Risen, J. (2010) 'US identifies vast mineral riches in Afghanistan', New York Times, 13 June 2010, www.nytimes.com/2010/06/14/world/asia/14minerals.html?pagewanted=all.

Samad, K. (2014) 'Afghanistan Elections: The irreversible journey of Afghan women,' 9 April 2014, *Foreign Policy*, http://southasia.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2014/04/09/afghanistan_elections_the _irreversible_journey_of_afghan_women.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (2010) 'Declaration by the Heads of State and Government of the Nations contributing to the UN-mandated, NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan', 20 November 2010, www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_68722.htm?selectedLocale=en.

Transparency International (2013) 'Corruption Perceptions Index 2013', www.transparency.org/cpi.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2013) 'Human Development Report 2013: The Rise of the South', http://hdr.undp.org/en.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2014, March) 'UNHCR Asylum Levels and Trends in Industrialized Countries 2013', www.unhcr.org/5329b15a9.html.

UNHCR (2014, June) 'UNHCR Global Trends 2013: War's Human Cost', www.unhcr.org/5399a14f9.html.

UNHCR (2014) UNHCR Population Statistics, online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2013) 'Afghan Opium Survey 2013: Summary findings,' www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan/Afghan_report_ Summary_Findings_2013.pdf.

United States Library of Congress (2008) 'Country Profile, Afghanistan', Federal Research Division, accessed June 2014, http://memory.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Afghanistan.pdf.

United States Senate Democrats (2008) 'Iraq War has Extracted a High Cost on America's National Security', http://democrats.senate.gov/2008/03/04/iraq-war-has-exacted-a-high-cost-on-americas-national-security/.

United States State Department (2010) '2009 Human Rights Report: Iran', www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/nea/136068.htm.

United States State Department (2013) 'Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Afghanistan', www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper.

World Bank (2011) 'Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011,' Second edition, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLAC/Resources/Factbook2011-Ebook.pdf?bcsi_scan_14cf79d043f374a1=0&bcsi_scan_filename=Factbook2011-Ebook.pdf.

World Bank (2014) 'Afghanistan Overview', www.worldbank.org/en/country/afghanistan/overview.

APPENDIX 6

BANGLADESH

COUNTRY REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

This report examines migrant decision-making in relation to return, and the sustainability of assisted voluntary return, to Bangladesh. This country report is part of a comparative research project on the assisted voluntary return and reintegration of migrants. The project examines findings from 15 origin, transit and destination countries. and relies on a mixed methodology involving quantitative and qualitative analysis. Bangladesh is one of the origin countries.

The project has been conceived and commissioned as part of the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Irregular Migration Research Programme.[1] It was informed by the programme's first occasional paper, which recognized the need to establish an evidence-base for policy deliberations on irregular migration to Australia (Koser & McAuliffe, 2013). The project is supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Maastricht University.

This country report provides a brief, descriptive overview of the economic, political and security contexts as they relate to migration, and an overview of migration trends to and from Bangladesh. This background information provides further country context for the comparative analysis in the research project's *Final report* by providing country context. It also describes participants interviewed for the study and key results of the interviews conducted in Bangladesh.

2. Country context

Bangladesh in global measures	
Human Development Index as at 2012. See UNDP (2013).	**Low human development** 146th out of 187 (tied with Pakistan)
Peace Index as at 2014. See Institute for Economics and Peace (2014).	**Medium level of peace** 98th out of 162
Hunger Index as at 2013. See International Food Policy Research Institute (2013).	**Serious level of hunger**
Human Rights Risk Index as at 2013-14. See Maplecroft (2013).	**Extreme risk of abuse**
Corruption Perceptions Index as at 2013. See Transparency International (2013).	**Very corrupt** 136th out of 177
Freedom Index as at 2014. See Freedom House (2014).	**Partly free**
Visa Restrictions Index as at 2013. See Henley and Partners (2014).	**Low passport mobility** 85th out of 173 (tied with Ethiopia)

Bangladesh is one of the highest migrant producing nations in the world, both internally and externally. The reasons for movement are primarily to seek work in urban areas and overseas labour markets, but also because of developmental, environmental and climate pressures that force rural dwellers to move to other rural or urban areas.

Although Bangladesh has improved on some economic and social indicators in recent years, it remains one of the least developed countries in the world, with high levels of poverty and poor infrastructure. It also suffers from high levels of corruption and low levels of social services and education.

2.1 Economy

The economy of Bangladesh has grown by around six per cent every year over the past decade.[2] Based on 2009 figures, agriculture accounted for 65 per cent of the workforce and 20 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

[1] Information on the Irregular Migration Research Programme is at: www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research
[2] World Bank (2014, July).

Manufacturing is a fast growing sector in the economy.[3] There is a large informal sector with high levels of under-employment, especially among women. Based on 2010 figures, a large proportion (63 per cent) of the workforce were self-employed or family members working for little or no income.[4]

Remittances from migrant workers provide vital income for the government,[5] accounting for around 10.5 per cent of GDP in 2012.[6] Public spending on health was only one per cent of GDP in 2010 and, based on 2009 figures, 2.2 per cent was spent on education,[7] with adult literacy at around 59 per cent in 2011.[8] Creating more employment opportunities in the formal domestic market, with the tax revenue that will provide, is a major challenge for Bangladesh.

In 2010, around 43 per cent of the population lived on less than USD 1.25 per day.[9] Poverty rates have steadily fallen over the past decade, although more than one-third of the population continues to live below the poverty line.[10] Bangladesh has made some progress in reducing hunger, which affected 37 million in 1990 down to 25 million in 2012.[11]

There are serious structural problems that may impede economic development in the future. For example, population density in Bangladesh is among the highest in the world,[12] only around 58 per cent of land is suitable for agriculture,[13] and arable land is steadily decreasing due to population growth, development, land erosion, water logging and soil degradation from salination.[14] Bangladesh is vulnerable to frequent cyclones, droughts and tornados, and around 14 per cent of the country is constantly underwater as a consequence of frequent flooding, especially during the summer monsoon season. This increased to 68 per cent inundation during recent catastrophic flooding. More than two million people were severely affected by natural disasters in 2012 alone.[15]

2.2 Political context

The People's Republic of Bangladesh (formerly the eastern region of Pakistan) came into existence in 1971 following a civil war with West Pakistan (now the Islamic Republic of Pakistan),[16] during which it is estimated between eight to 10 million people fled to India.[17]

Political turmoil has been a feature of Bangladesh's 40 year history.[18] Following secession from Pakistan, Bangladesh was ruled by military backed regimes. In 1991, democratic elections were introduced. Bangladesh now has a parliamentary system of government with a secular legal system, independent judiciary and an active and relatively unfettered media sector.[19]

Elections have been prone to unrest, general strikes and boycotts,[20] but the elections in January 2014 were especially violent. The Bangladesh National Party (BNP) boycotted the poll and only 22 per cent of the electorate cast ballots. There have been ongoing tensions since the election with general strikes threatened by the BNP later this year.[21]

2.3 Security context

Bangladesh's border with India is vast (3909 kilometres) and movement across the border in both directions provokes tension between the two countries, with periodic conflict between border forces. India has recently completed a border fence in an attempt to stop irregular migrants from Bangladesh.[22] Another point of tension with India is the

---

[3] National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Programme (NFPCSP) (2012), p. 8.
[4] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2012), p. 28.
[5] Farid et *al*. (2009), p. 390. From 1976 to 2008, around 6.5 million migrant workers sought work overseas.
[6] UNDP (2012), p. 27.
[7] Commonwealth Yearbook (2013).
[8] UNDP (2012), p. 38.
[9] World Bank (2010).
[10] World Bank (2014, July).
[11] UNDP (2012).
[12] World Bank (2014, July).
[13] Commonwealth Network (2013); UNDP (2012).
[14] NFPCSP (2012), p.4
[15] DMM (2014).
[16] Approximately 1600 kilometres of Indian territory separated West and East Pakistan.
[17] United States Library of Congress (1989).
[18] Siddiqui (2003).
[19] Commonwealth Network (2013).
[20] Commonwealth Yearbook (2013).
[21] Barry (2014).
[22] Adams (2011).

161 enclaves of Indian territory that lie within Bangladesh, populated by Hindus trapped since the end of the war with Pakistan. The fate of these enclaves is a source of continuing disagreement between the two countries, which contest the hastily drawn border that demarcated the territory of Bangladesh in 1971.[23]

Bangladesh is regarded as highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change due to already rising sea levels compounded by high levels of poverty. The consequences of climate change are regarded by some as a potential security issue for countries such as Bangladesh, if it forces more of the population to abandon their land. Some researchers predict that, as scarce resources come under increased pressure, further large-scale rural to urban migration will eventually spill across borders and may even result in conflict over scarce resources.[24]

3. MIGRATION AND RETURN FLOWS

In 2010, an estimated 5.4 million Bangladesh citizens were residing outside Bangladesh, making it the world's sixth-largest emigrant-producing country.[25] Contemporary Bangladeshi migration flows mostly comprise contract labour migrants to Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states and Southeast Asia, and undocumented migration to neighbouring India. There are also significant rural to urban migration flows within Bangladesh, and relatively small but growing flows of asylum seekers to industrialised countries.

These flows are closely inter-related, and the product of a multitude of complex, overlapping factors, including pervasive low human development, high unemployment, fast population growth, household dependence on remittances, environmental change leading to landlessness and resource scarcity, inter-ethnic and religious violence and discrimination, geographic and social proximity to labour markets in neighbouring India, and demand for expatriate labour in the GCC states.[26] Adding to this migration context, as many as half a million undocumented Rohingya from neighboring Myanmar are hosted in Bangladesh.[27]

3.1. Bangladeshi migration to India

While large permanent migrations from Bangladesh to India occurred following the partition of British India in 1947, and again after separation from Pakistan in 1971, Bangladeshis continue to migrate to India for employment opportunities today. According to the World Bank, migration from Bangladesh to India is currently one of the largest migration corridors in the world.[28] Although it is not possible to know exactly how many Bangladeshi citizens reside in India, the perceived presence of large numbers of Bangladeshi 'illegals' in the Indian state of West Bengal is a highly contentious issue in Indian politics and media.[29]

The 2001 Indian census[30] recorded over three million Bangladesh-born people in India, although it noted that this is likely to include people who migrated following the major displacements of 1947 and 1971.[31] The economic importance of migration to India appears significant, with at least one source claiming that India was Bangladesh's largest source of remittance income in 2012.[32]

Geographic proximity, enduring and extensive family and community links with West Bengal (whose population is also predominantly ethnic Bengali), porousness of land borders, and the low cost of travel all facilitate migration between Bangladesh and India.[33]

---

[23] Cons (2014).
[24] United Nations Security Council (2007).
[25] World Bank (2011), p. 3.
[26] Cf. Asia Foundation (2013); Farid et al (2009); Shariat Ullah (2012); Asfar (2003); Siddiqui (2003).
[27] According to UNHCR (2014) , as at January 2014, there were over 31,000 stateless Rohingya registered as refugees in Bangladesh. The Bangladesh government has also recently acknowledged that there are an additional 200,000 to 500,000 Rohingya in Bangladesh who are not registered refugees (IRIN, 2013).
[28] World Bank (2011), p. 5. In 2010, the 'Bangladesh to India' corridor was the fourth largest in the world, after the 'Mexico to United States,' 'Russia to Ukraine,' and 'Ukraine to Russia' corridors.
[29] Cf. Adams (2011), Bhattacharjee (2014), Ghosh (2012), Khan & Abbasi (2014).
[30] Migration data is currently not publicly available from the more recent 2011 Indian census.
[31] Census of India (2001), p. 4.
[32] Madhok (2014).
[33] Cf. Bhattacharjee (2014), Ghosh (2012), Madhok (2014).

3.2. Bangladeshi migration to the GCC and Southeast Asia

The Arab Gulf and Southeast Asia are also major destinations for Bangladeshi migrant workers. Although data is not systematically published, the following provides an indication of the scale and importance of the phenomenon:

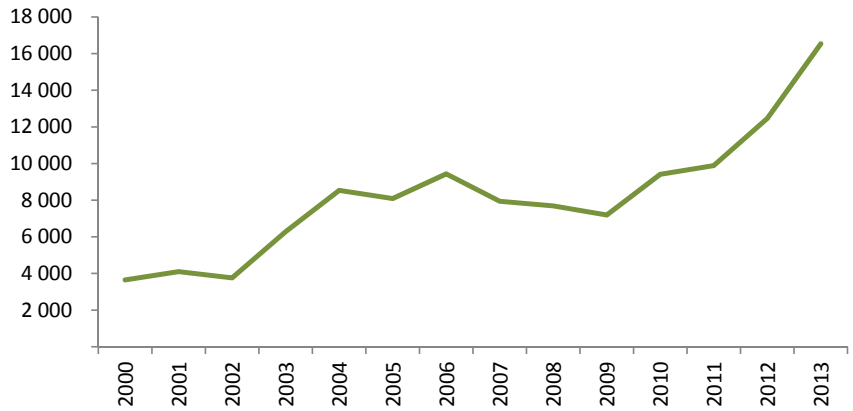
- Saudi Arabia hosted an estimated 1.5 million Bangladeshi migrant workers, as at the end of 2013.[34]
- The United Arab Emirates (UAE) hosted an estimated one million Bangladeshi migrant workers, as at mid-2013.[35]
- Malaysia hosted some 400 000 Bangladeshi migrant workers in 2009, according to the High Commission of Bangladesh in Malaysia.[36]
- Singapore hosted an estimated 50 000 Bangladeshi migrant workers, in 2005.[37]

In recent years there has been a hardening of immigration policies in the GCC states and Southeast Asia with direct implications for Bangladeshi migrant workers. In 2009, Malaysia revoked visas for more than 55 000 Bangladeshi workers, in the context of creating job opportunities for Malaysian citizens.[38] In 2012, the UAE suspended issuing visas to Bangladeshis, citing identity fraud and security concerns,[39] while in 2013, at least 30 000 Bangladeshis either departed voluntarily or were deported from Saudi Arabia following a wide-ranging 'clean up' exercise aimed at undocumented migrants.[40] The World Bank recently reported a decline in remittances from the GCC states to Bangladesh, citing fewer migrants finding jobs in the GCC countries, and more migrants returning from GCC countries due to departures and deportations.[41]

3.3. Bangladeshi asylum flows to industrialised countries

Bangladeshi asylum seeker flows to industrialised countries represent a relatively modest, but growing, proportion of Bangladeshi emigrant flows globally. Interestingly, the contraction in labour markets for Bangladeshis in Southeast Asia and the GCC states has coincided with significant increases in Bangladeshis seeking asylum in industrialised countries[42] since 2010, as shown in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1: Bangladeshi asylum seekers to industrialised countries*



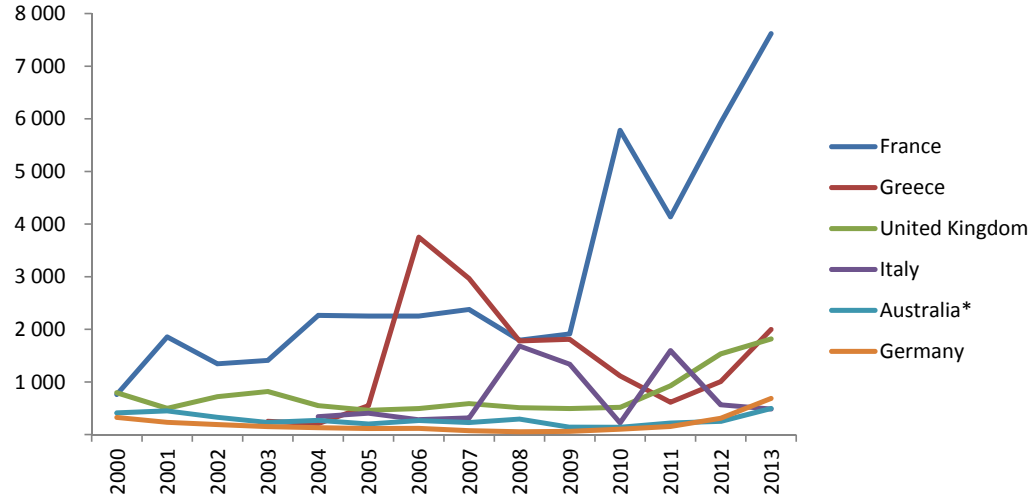
Source: UNHCR Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org/, extracted on 14 July 2014.
*44 industrialised countries as defined by UNHCR.

Figure 6.2 shows Bangladeshi asylum flows to selected industrialised destinations. France is currently the most significant destination, and received more than 7 600 Bangladeshi asylum applications in 2013, up from 5 900 in 2012. Greece, United Kingdom, Australia and Germany have also experienced increases in Bangladeshi asylum claims in recent years.

---

[34] De Bel-Air (2014), p. 7.
[35] Malit Jr & Al Youha (2013).
[36] The Jakarta Post (2009).
[37] Piper (n.d.), p. 4.
[38] The Jakarta Post (2009).
[39] The Jakarta Post (2012).
[40] Biplob (2013).
[41] World Bank (2014, April).
[42] Refers to the 44 industrialised countries defined as such by UNHCR. Note: excludes Malaysia and the GCC states.

Figure 6.2: Bangladeshi asylum seekers to industrialised countries^

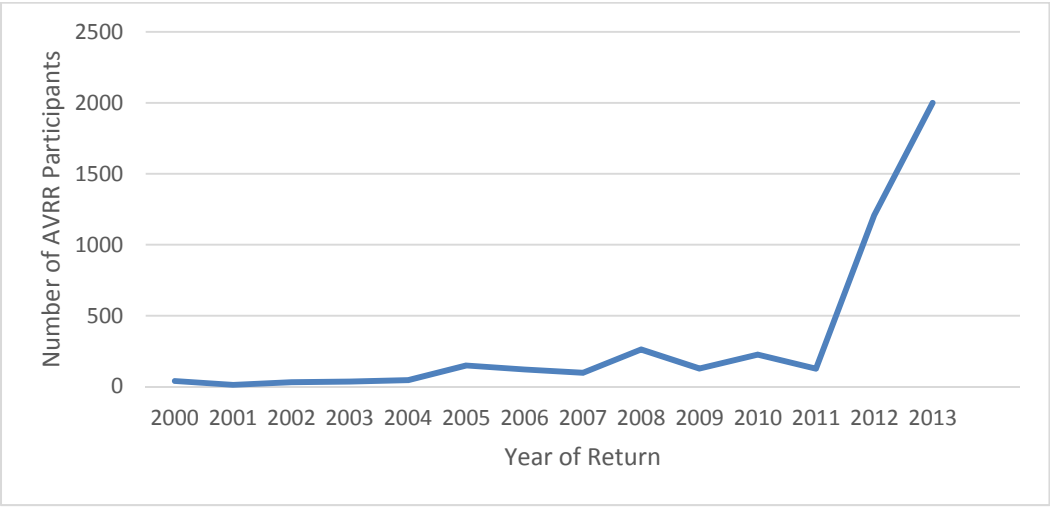


Source: UNHCR Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org/, extracted on 14 July 2014.
^44 industrialised countries as defined by UNHCR.
*Note: Australia's asylum figures do not include illegal maritime arrivals (IMAs) who have been transferred to third countries or who had not been able to lodge a protection visa application. As such, asylum application flows to Australia are not necessarily reflective of IMA flows to Australia.

3.4. Bangladeshi return migration

Figure 6.3 shows the number of assisted voluntary return and reintegration participants to Bangladesh from 2000–2013. Rates of assisted voluntary return to Bangladesh have significant increased since 2011, from 226 participants in 2010 to 2000 participants in 2013. Presumably, this is due to the introduction of AVR from Greece in 2010 and the large number of returnees from Greece. This could also in part be due to the increase in asylum seekers to industrialized countries in recent years, as seen in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.3: Number of assisted voluntary return and reintegration participants returned to Bangladesh



Source: IOM, 2014.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research in Bangladesh were to provide insight into decision-making factors in return by those who had already returned, and to assess the sustainability of return. Bangladesh was one of eight origin countries examined in the overall study.

To assess decision-making factors in return, this study follows the approach developed by Black et al. (2004).[43] The model is explained in Chapter 2 of the *Final report* and briefly summarised here. In essence, the model posits that decision-making on return is based on a combination of factors across five key areas. First, the political, economic and social conditions in the country of origin and second, the political, economic, and social conditions in the country of destination are considered, (referred to in this report as the 'conditions in origin/ destination country'). Third, individual factors such as age, gender, and personal attributes are considered. Fourth, social factors, such as familial reasons and the role of networks are considered in the decision to return. The final element included in the model is policy incentives and disincentives, such as assisted voluntary return policies or deportation campaigns. This is examined in the Bangladeshi context in Section 6 below.

The research in Bangladesh also sought to assess sustainable return, which is achieved in this study through a return and reintegration index (explained in Chapter 6 of the *Final report*). The return and reintegration index is based on three dimensions: economic reintegration where an individual is able to sustain a livelihood and is not in a situation of economic vulnerability; social and cultural reintegration where the returnee is actively incorporated into the receiving society, for example at the level of the local community; and safety and security reintegration where the returnee feels that they have access to safety and justice on return. Each of these dimensions is assessed through five variables, which are included in Table B4 below. From these three dimensions an overall level of reintegration is determined through the index. This approach highlights the multi-dimensional nature of reintegration and sustainable return.

5. METHODOLOGY AND PARTICIPANTS OVERVIEW

In Bangladesh, 25 participants were interviewed using a semi-structured interview guide. Participants had to meet three requirements to be eligible for an interview. First, they must have returned a minimum of 12 months before the interview; second, they had to have returned from an industrialised state, that is, Europe, North America or Australia; and third, they had to have participated in an assisted voluntary return. In Bangladesh, an exception was made for two participants who had returned from Libya. Recruitment of participants in Bangladesh, compared with other origin countries, was relatively straightforward. Fifty people were originally called and, of those, 35 were actually spoken to. One declined to participate and there were everyone who agreed to participate showed up to the scheduled interview (there were no 'no-shows'). It is important to note that this sample is not representative of all returnees to Bangladesh, nor is it reflective of the conditions of return in Bangladesh as a whole.

Table 6.1: Overview of participants

	Freq.	%
Age (in years)		
Range	23– 60	
Average	37	
Sex		
Male	23	92
Female	2	8
Total	25	100
Ethnicity		
Bengali	25	100
Total	25	100
Highest level of education		
No formal education		
Primary	3	12
Lower secondary	5	20
Upper secondary	13	52
Technical/vocational		
Bachelor	2	8
Master or higher	2	8
Total	25	100

Type of returnee		
Individual	23	92
Nuclear family	1	4
Single-parent family	1	4
Total	25	100
Country of migration		
Greece	8	32
Italy	5	20
Belgium	4	16
Norway	3	12
Poland	2	8
Libya	2	8
UK	1	4
Total	25	100

[43] Black et *al.* (2004).

Table 6.1 provides an overview of participants in Bangladesh. The ages of the Bangladeshi participants ranged from 23 to 60, with an average age of 37. The sample was predominately male (92 per cent) and all respondents self-identified as being part of the Bengali ethnicity group. The sample was fairly well educated overall, with 72 per cent having completed some level of secondary education and 16 per cent having completed a Bachelor's or Master's program. Returnees were predominately individuals, with one nuclear family and one single parent family included in the sample. Destination countries varied, but popular destinations included Greece (32 per cent), Italy (20 per cent), and Belgium (16 per cent). Other destinations included Norway, Poland, Libya and the United Kingdom.

Reasons for migration centered on economic opportunities, as 68 per cent stated that employment was their main reason for leaving the country. Beyond that, three left for education purposes, two due to the security/political situation in Bangladesh, one due to a desire for family formation/reunification, one migrated as a dependant, and one was generally seeking a new lifestyle. Given these reasons for migration, it is somewhat surprising that 11 applied for asylum in their destination country. Destination countries of these asylum seekers included Belgium, Greece, Italy, Norway and Poland. This left only the United Kingdom and Libya as destination countries where participants did not seek asylum.

6. UNDERSTANDING THE DECISION TO RETURN

Table 6.2 provides an overview of the key decision-making factors of returnees, based on the model summarised in Section 4 above. It is important to note that many respondents reported multiple factors.

Table 6.2: Number of individuals with at least one decision-making factor, by category

Category	Freq	%	Sample size
Conditions in origin country	5	20.0	25
Conditions in destination country	21	84.0	25
Individual factors	11	44.0	25
Social factors	4	16.0	25
Incentives/disincentives (policy interventions)	12	48.0	25

A large percentage of participants (20 per cent) indicated that conditions in Bangladesh had influenced their decision to return. This is much higher than the seven per cent combined average of all origin countries. Specifically, two participants cited a political change in Bangladesh as a reason for return. Both had felt persecuted or targeted by the ruling political party when they left Bangladesh, but elections had since brought in new political leaders and they felt safe enough to return. Furthermore, two respondents cited that living conditions in Bangladesh were better than the living conditions in the destination country. These two migrants had returned from Greece and Poland, where the economic situation is different to comparative destination countries such as Belgium or Norway.

Bangladeshi participants, however, aligned with the wider sample in that conditions in the destination country were cited by the majority of participants as being influential in their decision to return. There were several commonly cited return factors within this category. Twelve participants could not support themselves financially in the destination country. Eleven of these were working (nine informally and two formally), indicating that jobs for these migrants paid very little. Thirteen participants indicated that they had difficulty finding employment or did not have a right to work. These 13 participants had migrated to a broad range of destination countries—Belgium, Greece, Italy, Norway and Poland—indicating that difficulty in finding employment or not having the right to work did not seem to gravitate around just one or two prominent destination countries. Seven participants stated that they had experienced a lack of security or discrimination in the destination country. This was experienced by migrants in Greece, Libya, Norway and Poland, but not in the United Kingdom, Italy or Belgium. One participant stated:

> 'I had a lot of problems. Not salary, culture. I talked to the owner; I like to do the prayer. I had to work 9 hours, it's okay, but I need to do the prayer (this is two times during the day), sometimes also three times (during working hours). This was conflicting with the Greece people.'
>
> Male, age 37

Along with conditions in the destination country, individual factors were also mentioned by a large percentage of participants (44 per cent). Being tired of living as an undocumented migrant, and psychological problems such as depression or frustration, were the main reasons for return given within this category. Interestingly, the seven participants who indicated one or both of these reasons had migrated to either Belgium, Greece, Italy or Poland.

Several participants had wanted to study in their destination country to gain access to more meaningful or fulfilling employment but were unable to do so. This resulted in frustration at not being able to advance beyond low-paying jobs or repetitive, uninteresting work. Migrants also cited an inability to meet migration aspirations and the desire to have the dignity of returning as a normal passenger.

Social factors were only cited by four migrants as influencing their decision to return. This included changes in family circumstances, problems of integration within the destination country and a desire for family reunification in Bangladesh. One participant noted that:

> 'It is important for families to stay together. The alienation is [a] painful thing.'
>
> Male, age 60

Lastly, policy interventions were influential for 48 per cent of participants. Nine respondents indicated that they wished to benefit from voluntary return programmes offered by the destination country. Returnees from Greece and Norway were more likely to cite that they were heavily influenced by the potential of AVRR assistance in making their return decision. Furthermore, seven participants cited the desire to leave voluntarily and comply with the law (of which, five had also indicated that they wished to benefit from voluntary return programmes). Political change in the destination country was also cited by three participants as a reason for return.

7. EXTENT OF REINTEGRATION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF RETURN

Table 6.3 shows the return and reintegration index used in this study to examine reintegration and sustainable return. Overall, 39.2 per cent of returnees in Bangladesh were considered reintegrated according to this index, which is comparable to the average across all of the countries (36.8 per cent).

Table 6.3: Reintegration and return index

Variable	Threshold	Individual reintegration rates	n
Economic dimension:			
Employment	Individual is employed	84.0	25
Income sources	Individual's household has more than one source of income (more of a vulnerability indicator than reintegration)	28.0	25
Perceived economic Situation	Individual does not consider themselves to be struggling	40.0	25
Debt	Individual has no debt	36.0	25
Land/ Housing	Individual owns land or house	80.0	25
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the economic variables		**56.0**	**25**
Socio-cultural dimension:			
Networks	Individual identifies themselves as having a network that they can rely upon for support	95.8	24
Transnational networks	Individual maintains a transnational network	68.0	25
Participate in local events upon return	Individual participates in local events	72.0	25
Self-Perception of personal life	Individual is not generally dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their personal life on average in the last month	70.8	24
Membership in organizations upon return	Individual participates in one or more organizations	16.0	25
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the social/cultural variables		**65.2**	**23**
Safety and Security Dimension:			
Perceived safety in home	Individual identifies feeling safe in their home	88.0	25
Perceived safety in the community	Individual identifies feeling safe in their community	80.0	25
Trust in the government	Individual identifies that they trust the government	52.0	25
Access to justice	Individual feels that they could access justice if their rights were violated in their country of return	52.0	25
Experienced personal harassment since return	Individual has not experienced personal harassment since return	84.0	25
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the safety and security variables		**84.0**	**25**
Percentage of participants that are effectively reintegrated across all three dimensions		**39.2**	**23**

The lowest rate of reintegration within the Bangladeshi sample was in the economic dimension with 56 per cent. This number is also equal to the percentage of participants economically reintegrated across all origin countries. A total of 84 per cent of the sample (21 participants) were employed. Of these 21 participants, 18 had a business at some point. Businesses were operating in a wide range of sectors, including agriculture, textiles, furniture and household wares, mechanic services and travel services. Of the 18 businesses, seven were considered to be struggling, six were managing and five were considered profitable. The majority of the businesses (83 per cent) started with business assistance. Of the four participants who were not employed, none were actively looking for work. Instead, one was in education, one worked as a housewife and two were unemployed by not actively looking for a job.

Furthermore, 80 per cent of the participants owned either land or a house, yet 60 per cent considered themselves to be struggling financially, and 64 per cent were in debt. The initial loan that led to being indebted was mostly taken out either to fund a migration or for business purposes, and ranged in value from 1,000 to 12,000 euros. One participant stated:

> 'I am happy but I need some money to develop my business. Because only 400 euros is so few for me, it is very difficult for me to start up my life at this moment, with this money. Educational costs, transports.'
>
> Male, age 26

Yet some participants had benefited from their migration experiences. One noted that:

> 'If not for migration, I might not have been able to pay for the house.'
>
> Male, age 43

Reintegration rates were slightly higher (65.2 per cent) in the socio-cultural dimension, which was again approximately the same as the overall sample average of 64.2 per cent. Here, 95.8 per cent (24 participants) indicated that they had a network of family and friends to rely on, and 72 per cent participated in local events. The majority (74 per cent) reported being positively received by their family. Of those who reported being negatively received, almost all cited anger on their family's part that they (the returned migrant) had not financially succeeded in their migration and that they were now a burden on the family. Many stated that their families did not understand the harsh economic realities in the destination countries and some even indicated their families felt they were hiding money from them.

However, 68 per cent of participants maintained a transnational network and 70.8 per cent were not dissatisfied with their personal lives. Of those who were dissatisfied with their personal lives, financial concerns or failure to accept or keep up with changes within Bangladesh were often cited as causes. For migrants who were abroad for an extended period of time, reintegrating was sometimes difficult.

> 'The situation is so changed now, since 20 years (ago). Back then there was an empathetic/sympathetic relationship between human beings here in BD but now that situation has gone. Now life is harder, people have no feelings, people will not do anything for another guy—in this situation I am not happy.'
>
> Male, age 40

The safety and security dimension showed the highest levels of reintegration among Bangladesh participants, with 84 per cent reintegrated in this area. This is much higher than the overall average for all origin countries (71.3 per cent). A total of 88 per cent felt safe within their home and 88 per cent identified feeling safe within their own community. A further 84 per cent had not been harassed since their return. However, only 52 per cent indicated that they trusted the government or felt they could access justice in Bangladesh if their rights were violated.

It is somewhat logical that the safety and security dimension would have the highest effective return rate in the Bangladesh case, as only eight per cent of the sample gave safety or security concerns as their reason for migration in the first place. Likewise, economic concerns were by far the most prominent reason for migration, somewhat explaining the relatively low rate of economic reintegration within the country. Overall, only 39.2 per cent of participants were effectively reintegrated in all three dimensions.

Most of the Bangladeshi participants (75 per cent) did not plan to re-emigrate. Of the four who did plan to re-emigrate in the future, only two had concrete plans to go. Both planned to migrate through legal channels and one wanted to migrate because he had been to his planned destination before while the other wanted to migrate because people thought he was guilty of a crime in Bangladesh.

Of those who planned to remain in Bangladesh, most planned to work on making their businesses more successful and search for more capital for business investments. Other plans included starting a family and pursuing education. Some participants stated that they would not migrate again unless conditions worsened for them in Bangladesh or they had a legal means of migrating or there was a job waiting for them in their intended destination.

8. CONCLUSION

The Bangladeshi case is unique in that during the past two years, numbers of assisted voluntary returns have increased substantially. Within this increased flow, conditions in the destination country were cited by the majority of participants as being influential in their decision to return. Bangladesh was unique compared with the other origin countries as policy incentives and disincentives and individual factors were also very prominent factors in the decision to return.

Overall, 39.2 per cent were reintegrated across all three dimensions. It is important to note that in Bangladesh the reintegration packages offered to returnees vary greatly by country of migration. Within the individual dimensions, safety and security reintegration recorded the highest rate of reintegration, followed by socio-cultural reintegration and then economic reintegration with the lowest rate. This reflects the reasons given for migration and perhaps suggests that greater economic assistance is needed on return within the Bangladeshi context.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adams, B. (2011) 'India's shoot-to-kill policy on the Bangladesh border', *The Guardian*, 23 January 2011, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/libertycentral/2011/jan/23/india-bangladesh-border-shoot-to-kill-policy.

Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) (2014) 'Labor migration, skills and student mobility in Asia', www.oecd.org/migration/Labour-migration-skills-student-mobility-in-Asia.pdf.

Aljazzera (2014) 'Tension along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border', Central & South Asia (3 June 2014), www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/06/tension-along-bangladesh-myanmar-border-201463735423134.html.

Asfar, R. (2003) 'Internal migration and the development nexus: the case of Bangladesh', United Kingdom Department of International Development, http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/pdf/outputs/migrationglobpov/wp-cp2.pdf.

Asia Foundation (2013) 'Labour migration trends and patterns: Bangladesh, India, and Nepal 2013', http://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/LabourMigrationTrendsandPatternsBangladeshIndiaandNepal2013.pdf.

Barry, E. (2014) 'Low turnout in Bangladesh elections amid boycott and violence', *The New York Times*, 5 January 2014, www.nytimes.com/2014/01/05/world/asia/bangladesh-election.html?_r=0.

Bhattarcharjee, J. (2014) 'India: resolving the Bangladesh immigration issue', *The Diplomat*, 27 May 2014, http://thediplomat.com/2014/05/india-resolving-the-bangladesh-immigration-issue/.

Biplob, B. H. (2013) '30,000 workers return home from Saudi Arabia', *The Daily Star*, 8 December 2013, www.thedailystar.net/30-000-workers-return-home-from-saudi-arabia-1652.

Census of India (2001) 'Data Highlights: Migration Tables', www.censusindia.gov.in/Data_Products/Data_Highlights/Data_Highlights_link/data_highlights_D1D2D3.pdf.

Commonwealth Network (2013) 'The Commonwealth Yearbook 2013: Bangladesh', www.commonwealthofnations.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/bangladesh_country_profile.pdf.

Cons, J. (2014) 'A view from the India-Bangladesh Border', East Asia Forum (8 April, 2014), www.eastasiaforum.org/2014/04/08/a-view-from-the-india-bangladesh-border/.

De Bel-Air, F. (2014) 'Demography, migration and labour market in Saudi Arabia', Gulf Labour Markets and Migration Programme Explanatory note no. 1/2014, http://gulfmigration.eu/media/pubs/exno/GLMM_EN_2014_01.pdf.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) (2013) 'Bangladesh Country Brief', www.dfat.gov.au/geo/bangladesh/bangladesh_country_brief.html.

Department of Disaster Management (DMM) (2014) 'Annual Report 2012: Disaster Response and Recovery', Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, People's Republic of Bangladesh, www.ddm.gov.bd/pdf/annualreport2014.pdf.

Farid, K. S., Mozumdar, L., Kabir, M. S., & Hossain, K. B. (2009) 'Trends in international migration and remittance flows: case of Bangladesh', *Journal of Bangladesh Agricultural University*, 7(2), p. 387–394.

Freedom House (2014) 'Freedom in the World 2014', www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world-2014/release-booklet.

Ghosh, P. (2012) 'India's 'Mexican' problem: illegal immigration from Bangladesh', *International Business Times*, 6 February 2012, www.ibtimes.com/indias-mexican-problem-illegal-immigration-bangladesh-213993.

Gowen, G. (2014) 'Bangladesh's political unrest threatens economic gains, democracy', The Washington Post, 22 March 2014, www.washingtonpost.com/world/bangladeshs-political-unrest-threatens-economic-gains-democracy/2014/03/22/baf1807c-a369-11e3-84d4-e59b1709222c_story.html.

Henley and Partners (2014) 'Visa Restrictions Index 2013', www.henleyglobal.com/visa-restrictions/.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2014) 'Bangladesh', IMF Country Report No. 14/149, www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2014/cr14149.pdf.

Institute for Economics and Peace (2014) 'Global Peace Index 2014: measuring peace and assessing country risks', www.visionofhumanity.org/#/page/indexes/global-peace-index.

International Food Policy Research Institute (2013) '2013 Global Hunger Index', Issue Brief 79, www.ifpri.org/publication/2013-global-hunger-index-0.

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) (2013) 'Bangladesh's 'Rohingya strategy' stokes concern,' 26 November 2013, www.irinnews.org/report/99207/bangladesh-s-rohingya-strategy-stokes-concern.

IRIN (2014) 'Bangladesh-Myanmar border tensions pinch desperate Rohingya,' United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (19 June, 2014), www.irinnews.org/report/100232/bangladesh-myanmar-border-tensions-pinch-desperate-rohingya.

Khan, S. E. and Abbasi, P. K. (2014) 'Modi-fying Bangladesh-India relations', *Dhaka Tribune*, 1 April 2014, www.dhakatribune.com/long-form/2014/apr/01/modi-fying-bangladesh-india-relations.

Koser, K. and McAuliffe, M. (2013) 'Establishing an evidence-base for future policy development on irregular migration to Australia', Irregular Migration Research Programme Occasional Paper no. 1, www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research/.

Madhok, D. (2014) 'Bangladeshis in India sent back $6.6 billion last year—6% of their homeland's GDP', Quartz India, 15 June 2014, http://qz.com/221317.

Malit Jr, F. T. & Al Youha, A. (2013) 'Labor migration in the United Arab Emirates: challenges and responses', Migration Policy Institute, www.migrationpolicy.org/article/labor-migration-united-arab-emirates-challenges-and-responses.

Maplecroft (2013) 'Human Rights Risk Index 2014', www.maplecroft.com/themes/hr/.

National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Programme (NFPCSP) (2012) 'Workshop on Research to Inform Food and Nutrition Security Policies' (7–8 May 2012), www.nfpcsp.org/agridrupal/sites/default/files/Compendium%20of%20inception%20and%20interim%20reports%20-%20Volume%20I.pdf.

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2012) 'Connecting with emigrants: a global profile of diasporas', www10.iadb.org/intal/intalcdi/PE/2012/11326.pdf.

Piper, N. (no date) 'Country study: Singapore', Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Project on Migrant Labor in Southeast Asia, www.fes.de/aktuell/focus_interkulturelles/focus_1/documents/8_000.pdf.

Shariat Ullah, M. (2012) 'Determinants of international labor migration from Bangladesh: a gravity model of panel data', Ritsumeikan University paper, www.ritsumei.ac.jp/acd/re/ssrc/result/memoirs/kiyou25/25-06.pdf.

Siddiqui, T. (2003) 'Migration as a livelihood strategy of the poor: the Bangladesh case', United Kingdom Department of International Development, http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/pdf/outputs/migrationglobpov/wp-c1.pdf.

The Jakarta Post (2009) 'Malaysia pulls visas for 55,000 Bangladesh workers', 11 March 2009, www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/03/11/malaysia-pulls-visas-55000-bangladesh-workers.html.

The Jakarta Post (2012) 'UAE stops issuing visas for Bangladeshis', 5 October 2012, www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/10/05/uae-stops-issuing-visas-bangladeshis.html.

Transparency International (2013) 'Corruption Perceptions Index 2013', www.transparency.org/cpi.

UN Security Council (2007) 'Security Council holds first ever debate on impact of climate change on peace, security, hearing over 50 speakers', United Nations Security Council, 5663rd Meeting (17 April, 2007), www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/sc9000.doc.htm.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2012) Millennium Development Goals: Bangladesh Progress Report 2012, www.bd.undp.org/content/dam/bangladesh/docs/MDG/2012%20Report%20MDG.pdf.

UNDP (2013) 'Human Development Report 2013: The Rise of the South', http://hdr.undp.org/en.
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2014) 'UNHCR Bangladesh Fact Sheet, March 2014', www.unhcr.org/50001ae09.html.

United States Library of Congress (1989) 'Bangladesh: A Country Study', Eds. J. Heitzman and R. Worden, Washington: Library of Congress, http://countrystudies.us/bangladesh/.

World Bank (2010) 'Bangladesh Poverty Headcount Ratio',
www.indexmundi.com/facts/bangladesh/poverty-headcount-ratio#SI.POV.DDAY.

World Bank (2011) 'Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011', second edition, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLAC/Resources/Factbook2011-Ebook.pdf?bcsi_scan_14cf79d043f374a1=0&bcsi_scan_filename=Factbook2011-Ebook.pdf.

World Bank (2013) 'Personal remittances, received (% of GDP),' World Factbook, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS.

World Bank (2014, April) 'Remittances to developing countries to stay robust this year, despite increased deportations of migrants workers, says WB', Press release, 11 April 2014, www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2014/04/11/remittances-developing-countries-deportations-migrant-workers-wb?_ga=1.29700279.981382829.1405312378.

World Bank (2014, July) 'Bangladesh Overview', www.worldbank.org/en/country/bangladesh/overview.

APPENDIX 7

ETHIOPIA

COUNTRY REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

This report examines migrant decision-making in relation to return, and the sustainability of assisted voluntary return, to Ethiopia. This country report is part of the comparative research project evaluating the assisted voluntary return and reintegration of migrants. The project examines findings from 15 origin, transit and destination countries within scope and relies on a mixed methodology involving quantitative and qualitative analysis. Ethiopia is one of the origin countries.

The project has been conceived and commissioned as part of the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Irregular Migration Research Programme,[1] and was informed by the programme's first occasional paper, which recognized the need to establish an evidence-base for policy deliberations on irregular migration to Australia.[2] The project is supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Maastricht University.

This country report provides a brief, descriptive overview of the economic, political and security contexts as they relate to migration, and an overview of migration trends to and from Ethiopia. This background information provides further country context for the comparative analysis in the research project's *Final report*. It also describes participants interviewed for the study and key results of the interviews conducted in Ethiopia.

2. COUNTRY CONTEXT

Ethiopia in global measures	
Human Development Index 2012, UNDP	**Low human development** 173rd out of 187
Hunger Index 2013, International Food Policy Research Institute	**Alarming level**
Peace Index 2013, Institute for Economics and Peace	**Low level of peace** 146th out of 162
Human Rights Risk Index 2014, Maplecroft	**Extreme risk**
Corruption Perceptions Index 2013, Transparency International	**Very corrupt** 111th out of 177
Freedom Index 2014, Freedom House	**Not free**
Visa Restrictions Index 2013, Henley and Partners	**Low passport mobility** 85th out of 173

The Horn of Africa is often described as one of the most unstable regions in the world. Aspirations for peace, prosperity and stability in Ethiopia—along with the other countries in the Horn of Africa (Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan and Djibouti) —are inextricably linked. All the countries in the region have at one time or another suffered from weak governance, political instability, civil and ethnic conflict, fragile economies, extreme levels of poverty, environmental stress, famine and cross-border wars, leading to internal displacement and refugee flows. Ethiopia is part of a complex web of interstate relations in the region and sub-Saharan Africa more broadly. In spite of a range of internal vulnerabilities, including environmental fragility, a stalling transition to democracy, human rights abuses and ongoing territorial disputes with neighbouring states, Ethiopia has emerged in the past decade as a growing economy and, in comparison to its immediate neighbours, a relatively stable state.[3]

[1] Information on the Irregular Migration Research Programme is at: www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research.
[2] Koser & McAuliffe (2013).
[3] Mohammad (2007).

2.1 Economy

Ethiopia's economy recorded strong growth in the past decade, resulting in a sharp decline in levels of poverty and inflation and an improvement in employment, education and health indicators.[4] Economic advances, however, are from a very low baseline[5] and Ethiopia remains one of the poorest countries in the world.[6]

The basis of the economy is agriculture.[7] Crop production fluctuates widely according to rainfall patterns, and the country is prone to devastating floods, drought and famine. Droughts have been increasing in severity since the 1970s as a consequence of population growth outstripping the productive capacity of the agricultural sector[8] and millions continue to face chronic food insecurity.[9] Indications are that there may be a return to severe drought conditions in the near future.[10] Much of the population lacks access to clean water, health care and education. Approximately 1.5 million people have HIV, some 120 000 of them are children.[11]

2.2 Political context

After 17 years of Soviet-aligned military rule, following the deposition of the Ethiopian monarchy in 1974, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) took power in 1991. The EPRDF won the first national democratic elections held in 1995 and has remained in power since.[12] According to the US State Department annual report on human rights, members of the opposition and the media have experienced intimation by the Ethiopian government.

2.3 Security and conflict

Ethiopia's internal and external security challenges are embedded in the country's complex ethnic and religious characteristics and in numerous territorial disputes with Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan over ill-defined borders.[13] The rise of radical Islam in the region, particularly in south-central Somalia, has also presented a significant security challenge for Ethiopia.

Ethiopia has about 80 different ethnic groups and significant populations of Ethiopians of Somali and Eritrean ethnic origin. Ethiopia is the only country in the Horn of Africa and Sub-Saharan region that has a Christian majority in a region where Muslim majorities dominate. Almost 63 per cent of the Ethiopian population is Christian. There is also a significant Muslim population making up nearly 34 per cent of the population.[14]

The most serious internal threat is from a long-running insurgency in the Ogaden region by a resistance movement with ethnic links to Somalia.[15] Ethiopia also contends with a range of external threats with the neighbouring states of Eritrea and Somalia, involving several extra territorial conflicts in recent years.[16]

3. MIGRATION AND RETURN FLOWS

Around 620 000 people born in Ethiopia live abroad.[17] Contemporary migration flows from Ethiopia are significant and complex. They are driven by multiple, inter-related factors, including political and ethnic persecution, conflict, poverty, resource scarcity, labour market conditions, access to higher education, and household livelihood strategies such as a reliance on remittances and social expectations to migrate.[18]

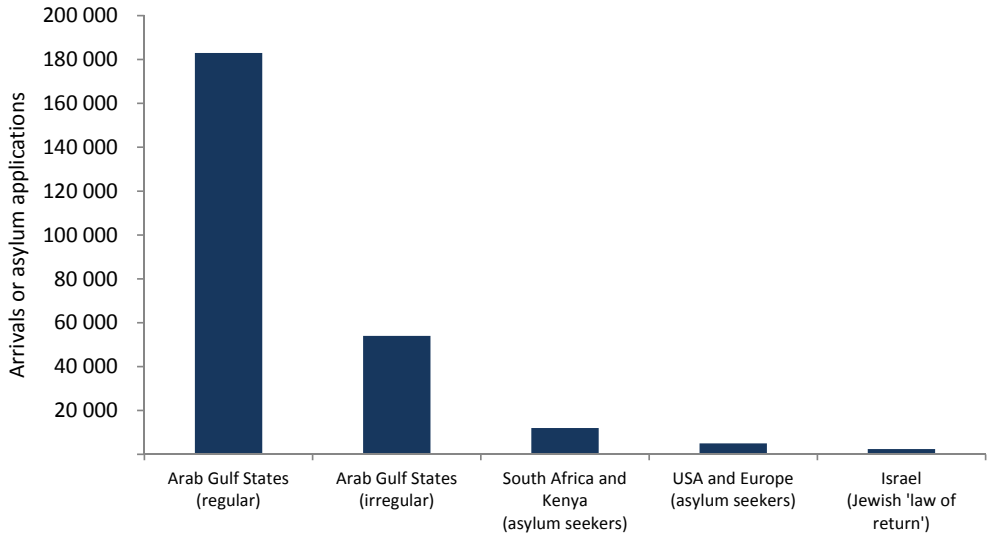
---

[4] World Bank (2013) (b); Saho (2013) & International Monetary Fund (2013).
[5] Smith (2013).
[6] World Bank (2013) (a).
[7] World Bank (2013) (b), p. 25.
[8] United States Library of Congress (2005), p. 9.
[9] United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (2013).
[10] World Bank (2013) (b), p. 25.
[11] UNICEF (2013).
[12] United States Library of Congress (2005) p. 9 & World Bank (2013) (b).
[13] United States Library of Congress (2005).
[14] Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) World Fact Book (2013).
[15] Healy (2007).
[16] Gettleman (2006), and Mohammad (2007).
[17] World Bank (2011), p. 114. Note: estimated stock of emigrants as at 2010.
[18] Cf. RMMS (2013, August), p. 9.

The majority of Ethiopian emigrants do not live in the industrialised countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The most significant destination for Ethiopian migrants is the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, particularly Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, whose oil-exporting economies rely heavily on large-scale expatriate labour forces from the Horn of Africa and South Asia. In 2013, more than 180 000 Ethiopians migrated lawfully to the GCC states, and a further estimated 54 000 attempted to migrate there irregularly, with many becoming stranded in Yemen en route.[19]

Countries in eastern and southern Africa and, to a lesser extent European countries, are also major destinations for Ethiopian asylum seekers. In 2013, the largest Ethiopian asylum seeker destinations were South Africa (more than 7100 asylum claims) and Kenya (4800 asylum claims). Europe and the United States are also significant, albeit smaller, asylum destinations. There were 3500 Ethiopian asylum claims lodged among nine European countries[20] in 2013 and almost 1500 claims lodged in the United States.[21] Finally, there is ongoing permanent migration to Israel under Israel's 'law of return' for the Jewish diaspora, with some 26 000 Ethiopian Jews migrating to Israel between 2003 and 2012.[22] Figure 7.1 compares the scale of recent Ethiopian migration flows to key destinations.

Figure 7.1: Estimated Ethiopian migration flows to selected countries and regions (2012–13)



Sources: Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS) (2014, June), UNHCR 2014, Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (2014).

In addition to being a major source of migrant workers, asylum seekers and other migrants, Ethiopia is also a significant host for some 570 000 refugees, mostly from neighbouring countries, with the largest populations (as at May 2014) being Somalis (243 000), South Sudanese (193 000), and Eritreans (94 500).[23] Ethiopia is also a key transit country, particularly for Eritrean asylum seekers travelling to Israel and Europe. Currently, an estimated 1500 to 2000 Eritreans arrive and/or transit through Ethiopia every month.[24]

3.1 Ethiopian migration to the GCC states

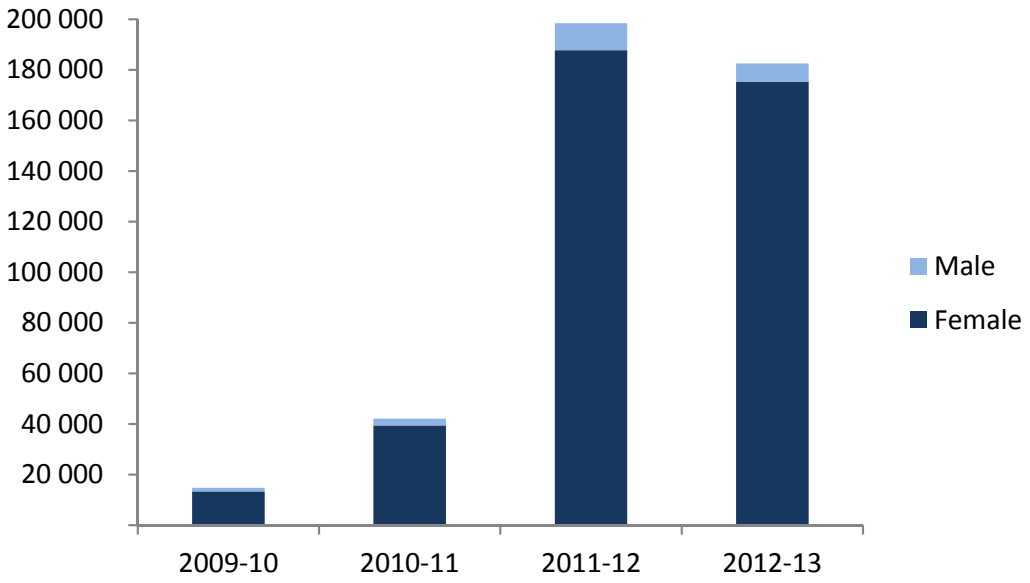
In 2012–13, Ethiopian Government records show that some 182 500 Ethiopians departed lawfully for the GCC states, the vast majority to Saudi Arabia. This migration flow is understood to be the primary source of remittance flows to Ethiopia. Personal remittances accounted for an important 1.5 per cent of Ethiopia's total Gross Domestic Product

[19] These flows are discussed in further detail below.
[20] This is the total number of Ethiopian asylum claims lodged in Norway, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, Italy, United Kingdom, France, Greece, and the Netherlands.
[21] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2014).
[22] Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (2014), cited in Jewish Virtual Library (2014).
[23] RMMS (2014, May).
[24] RMMS (2014, May).

(GDP) in 2012, up from 0.9 per cent in 2009.[25] This is even more significant when noted that Ethiopia's GDP increased significantly during this period.

As shown in Figure 7.2, the vast majority of Ethiopian regular migrants to the GCC states are women (96 per cent in 2012–13) employed as maids, nannies and cleaners. Figure 7.2 also shows that the current scale of Ethiopian expatriate flows to the GCC states is a relatively new phenomenon. In the 1990s and 2000s, Ethiopian domestic workers went predominantly to Lebanon and, to a lesser extent, Syrian Arab Republic.[26] The volume of flows to the GCC states increased rapidly in 2011–12, after the governments of Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia reached an informal bilateral agreement to facilitate the flow of labour migration.[27]

Figure 7.2: Lawful Ethiopian emigrant departures to selected GCC states for work by sex



Source: RMMS (2014) 'Blinded by hope: knowledge, attitudes and practices of Ethiopian migrants', Study no. 6, page 36. Notes: This data was compiled by RMMS using official statistics from the Ethiopian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The data only includes workers over age 18 who have migrated using the legal channels of employment services as described in Ethiopian law. The data only includes workers who migrated to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

Since 2009, there has been a significant increase in Ethiopians migrating without authorisation to the GCC states, a development that is probably related to the large increases in regular movement. Estimates suggest that in 2012, more than 84 000 Ethiopians crossed the Gulf of Aden irregularly, arriving in Yemen before mainly attempting to travel overland to Saudi Arabia.[28] Unlike the regular migrant flows, irregular flows mostly comprise men.[29]

Irregular movement to the GCC states is facilitated by porous land and sea borders, growing people smuggling and trafficking industries, and deep-rooted cultural and trade links between the Horn of Africa and Yemen.

The importance of migration as an Ethiopian household livelihood strategy is relevant to understanding both regular and irregular migration to the GCC states. Ethiopian households' growing reliance on remittances, and social expectations and pressures to migrate, helps to drive circular migration.[30]

3.2 Ethiopian migration outside the GCC

Asylum trends reveal the extent of Ethiopian emigration to countries other than the GCC states. Just over 30 000 Ethiopians lodged asylum claims in 2013, of which 24 500 were in non-industrialised countries, predominantly South Africa, Kenya and Yemen. European countries received just over 3500 Ethiopian asylum claims in 2013 (see Table 7.1).[31]

[25] World Bank (2013) (c).
[26] RMMS (2014, June), p. 36.
[27] ibid.
[28] RMMS (2014, June), p. 10.
[29] Cf. RMMS (2014, May).
[30] Cf. RMMS (2014, June); and RMMS (2012, Oct); Kanko et al (2013).

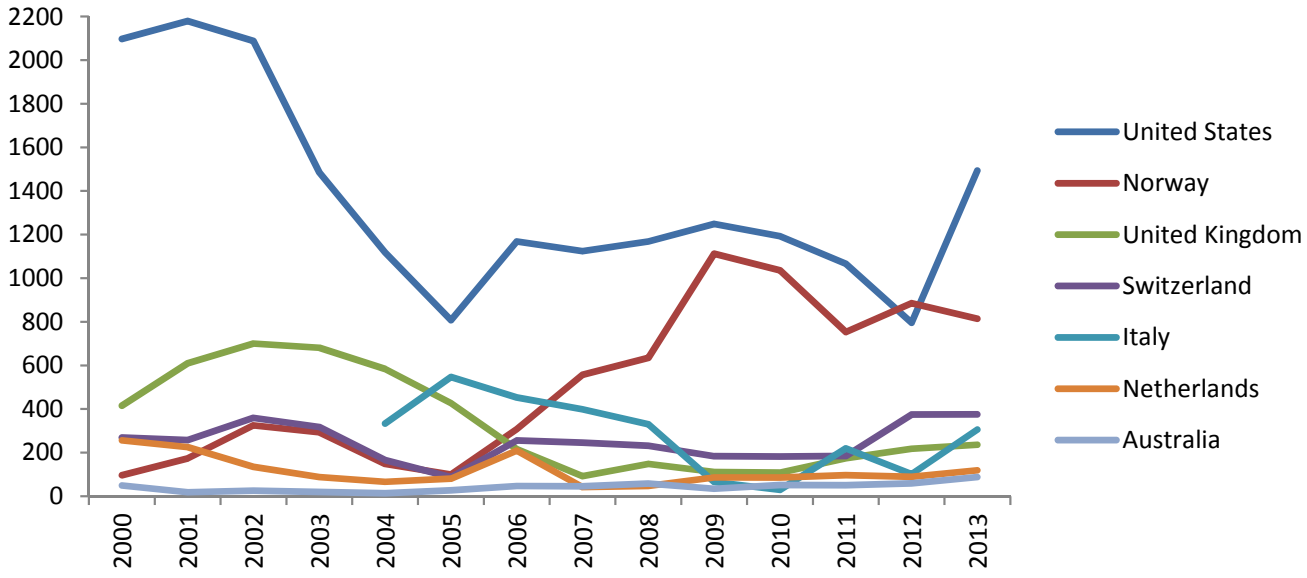
Table 7.1: Ethiopian asylum applications globally in 2013

	Ethiopian asylum seekers		Ethiopian asylum seekers
South Africa *	7165	Libya *	385
Kenya *	4801	Switzerland *	375
Yemen *	4229	Italy *	306
Sudan *	3147	United Kingdom *	236
Somalia *	2854	France *	182
United States *	1493	Greece *	151
Egypt *	1227	Canada *	126
Norway *	814	Netherlands *	119
Germany *	748	Turkey *	105
Sweden *	581	Australia *	88
Djibouti *	563	Others	403
		Total	30 098

Source: UNHCR Population Statistics database, http://popstats.unhcr.org, extracted on 24 June 2014.
*Red: non-industrialised / *Blue: industrialised.

Figure 7.3 shows that, since 2007, the United States and Norway have been the two main industrialised destinations for Ethiopian asylum seekers. Other European countries, as well as Australia, receive proportionally far fewer, noting that the United Kingdom saw a significant reduction in Ethiopian asylum flow in the mid-2000s.

Figure 7.3: Ethiopian asylum flows to selected industrialized destination countries



Source: UNHCR Population Statistics database, http://popstats.unhcr.org, extracted on 24 June 2014.

Notes: These countries are significant destination countries and countries within scope for this project. Asylum data for Italy is not available prior to 2004.

[31] This figure combines claims lodged in Norway, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, Italy, United Kingdom, France, Greece, and the Netherlands.

3.3 Ethiopian return migration

Except for the key circular migration patterns between Ethiopia and GCC labour markets, return migration to Ethiopia today is a small-scale phenomenon. The largest assisted voluntary return flows have been from neighbouring non-industrialised countries, notably Yemen. These flows have been undertaken as 'group' assisted voluntary returns (meaning that people are returned as a larger group and not individually), which focus mainly on voluntary return with extensive medical support, food, temporary shelter, family tracing and reunification for unaccompanied minors, and associated services. Movements are arranged in relatively larger groups instead of treating returnees on an individual basis. This also means that individuals do not receive a 'reintegration package' per se. Instead they received assistance on a per needs basis as noted above. Table 7.2 shows the number of Ethiopians undertaking 'group' assisted voluntary return has decreased between 2010 and 2013.

Table 7.2: Ethiopian group assisted voluntary returns, 2010 to 2013

Returned from	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Yemen	2 979	5 290	2 924	2 403	13 596
Tanzania	613	909	0	0	1 522
Somaliland	160	1 005	3	71	1 239
Puntland	486	0	3	0	489
Djibouti	0	61	0	400	461
Libya	128	191	0	0	319
Kenya	49	0	0	0	49
Total	4 415	7 456	2 930	2 874	17 675

Source: IOM Addis Ababa, 2014.

Ethiopians undertaking assisted voluntary return from Yemen include irregular migrants who have attempted a journey to Saudi Arabia but whose journey was disrupted, for example by being forced back from the Saudi Arabian border, being subject to extortion and exploitation, or lacking the funds to continue.[32]

As part of a wide-ranging crackdown on illegal migration in 2013, Saudi Arabia began constructing a border fence with Yemen and, during a three-month period (November 2013 to January 2014), conducted a mass deportation of some 160 000 Ethiopians.[33] Two-thirds of the deportees were men, a likely reflection of the Ethiopian irregular migrant gender profile.

In contrast to 'group' AVRs, relatively few Ethiopians undertake AVR on an individual basis. Individual AVR in the Ethiopian context is simply 'normal' AVR as conceptualised within this study, but receives the label 'individual' as a reference category to the 'group' AVRs that comprise the majority of the caseload in Ethiopia. As Table 7.3 shows, the largest number of individual AVRs are also from non-industrialised countries, particularly Egypt and Libya. Individual AVRs from European countries constitute 40 per cent of individual AVRs between April 2010 and April 2014 (inclusive).

[32] RMMS (2014, April), p. 18, 37.
[33] RMMS (2014, April), p. 67–70.

Table 7.3: Ethiopian individual assisted voluntary returns, April 2010 to April 2014

Returned from	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Egypt	0	5	39	135	0	179
Norway	25	35	55	49	11	175
Libya	0	0	8	50	101	159
Syria	0	4	1	18	6	29
Israel	2	9	3	11	0	25
Switzerland	8	6	3	7	1	25
United Kingdom	11	5	4	1	0	21
Belgium	3	2	4	5	1	15
Netherlands	0	3	1	3	0	7
Italy	0	2	2	1	1	6
Turkey	0	3	2	0	0	5
Finland	0	1	3	1	0	5
Canada	0	0	4	0	0	4
Ireland	2	2	0	0	0	4
Malta	0	1	1	2	0	4
Luxemburg	0	1	0	1	0	2
France	2	0	0	0	0	2
Equador	0	2	0	0	0	2
Republic of South Africa	0	0	1	0	0	1
Jordan	0	0	1	0	0	1
Germany	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	53	81	132	284	121	671
European only	*51*	*58*	*73*	*70*	*14*	*266*

Source: IOM Addis Ababa, 2014.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research in Ethiopia were to provide insight into decision-making factors in return and to assess the sustainability of return. Ethiopia was one of eight origin countries examined in the overall study.

To assess decision-making factors in return, this study follows the approach developed by Black et *al.* (2004).[34] The model is explained in Chapter 2 of the *Final report* and briefly summarised here. In essence, the model posits that decision-making on return is based on a combination of factors across five key areas. First, the political, economic and social conditions in the country of origin and second, the political, economic, and social conditions in the country of destination are considered, (referred to in this report as the 'conditions in origin/ destination country'). Third, individual factors such as age, gender, and personal attributes are considered. Fourth, social factors, such as familial reasons and the role of networks are considered in the decision to return. The final element included in the model is policy incentives and disincentives, such as assisted voluntary return policies or deportation campaigns. This is examined in the Ethiopian context in Section 6 below.

The research in Ethiopia also sought to assess sustainable return, which is achieved in this study through a return and reintegration index (explained in Chapter 6 of the *Final report*). The return and reintegration index is based on three dimensions: economic reintegration where an individual is able to sustain a livelihood and is not in a situation of economic vulnerability; social and cultural reintegration where the returnee is actively incorporated into the receiving society, for example at the level of the local community; and political-security reintegration where the returnee feels that they have access to safety and justice upon return. Each of these dimensions is assessed through five variables, which are included in Table 7.6 below. From these three dimensions an overall level of reintegration is determined through the index. This approach highlights the multi-dimensional nature of reintegration and sustainable return.

[34] Black et *al*. (2004).

5. METHODOLOGY AND PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

A semi-structured interview guide was used to interview all participants. There were three requirements for eligibility to be interviewed: first, they must have returned a minimum of 12 months before the interview; second, they had to have returned from an industrialised state, that is, Europe, North America or Australia; and third, they had to have participated in an assisted voluntary return. In the first interview, the participant had returned from Egypt and was included in the sample. However, all of the remaining participants had returned from an industrialised state. Israel was included as an eligible country for the Ethiopia study.

Recruitment of participants was quite challenging in Ethiopia. As shown in Table 7.3 above, the sample of returnees eligible for interviews was limited compared with other origin countries. As a result, the eligibility requirement was changed to include people who had returned within none months of the interview. The IOM team managing the recruitment called 129 people to invite them for interviews. Of this group, only 35 people accepted to be interviewed. Of these, 16 did not turn up to their interviews. In total, therefore, 18 interviews were completed during the fieldwork in April 2014. It is important to note that this sample is not representative of returnees to Ethiopia, nor is it reflective of the conditions of return in Ethiopia as a whole.

Table 7.4 shows an overview of the participants interviewed in the study. The average age of the Ethiopian participants was 40 years old, and 67 per cent of respondents were male. Two of the participants interviewed were Eritrean citizens, but had received assisted voluntary return to Ethiopia. This is an unusual example of assisted voluntary return being granted to non-nationals. The participants were from different ethnic groups in Ethiopia including Amhara (22 per cent, Tigray (22 per cent) and Oromo (17 per cent). In addition, the participants had a wide range of educational levels with 39 per cent having lower secondary or less education, 33 per cent having completed high school (upper secondary), and 22 per cent having a form of tertiary education. The majority of returnees were individuals (78 per cent) and the destination country from which most had returned was Norway (39 per cent). In 2012, the Government of Norway signed a re-admission agreement with Ethiopia. It is currently the only country in Europe to such an agreement with Ethiopia.

With the exception of the participant who had migrated to Egypt and one other, all participants had filed an asylum claim in the country of destination. The majority of participants had their asylum claim refused, but three participants made the decision to return before receiving the results of their asylum claim. These three chose to return for individual or social reasons.

Table 7.4: Participants overview

	Freq.	%				Freq.	%
Age (in years)					**Highest level of education**		
Range	25–88				No formal education	1	6
Average	40				Primary	2	11
Sex					Lower secondary	4	22
Male	12	67			Upper secondary	6	33
Female	6	33			Technical/ vocational	1	6
Total	18	100			Bachelor	2	11
Country of birth					Master or higher	2	11
Ethiopia	16	88			Total	18	100
Eritrea	2	12			**Type of returnee**		
Total	18	100			Individual	14	78
Nationality					Nuclear family	2	11
Ethiopia	16	88			Couple	1	6
Eritrea	2	12			Single-parent family	1	6
Total	18	100			Total†	18	100
Ethnicity					**Country of migration**		
Amhara	4	22			Norway	7	39
Tigray	4	22			Belgium	2	11
Oromo	3	17			Canada	2	11
Ethiopian	3	17			Israel	2	11
Eritrean	2	11			Switzerland	2	11
No answer	2	11			Egypt	1	6
Total	18	100			Luxembourg	1	6
					Netherlands	1	6
					Total†	18	100

6. UNDERSTANDING THE DECISION TO RETURN

Following from the aims and objectives for this study, this section examines the decision-making factors in return for participants in Ethiopia. Table 7.5 provides an overview of the key decision-making factors of returnees based on the model summarised in Section 4 above. It is notable that neither conditions in Ethiopia nor policy incentives and disincentives appear to have played any role in decision-making factors for this group.

Table 7.5: Number of individuals with at least one decision-making factor, by category

Category	Freq.	%	Sample size
Conditions in origin country	0	0.0	18
Conditions in destination country	14	77.78	18
Individual factors	4	22.2	18
Social factors	4	22.2	18
Incentives/disincentives (policy interventions)	0	0.0	18

In most cases, the decision to return was based on conditions in the destination country. In particular the inability to work legally was a key factor in people deciding to return. Without legal status and being able to work, participants felt they were 'wasting their time' in asylum reception centers. Those who had left asylum reception centers and were living irregularly commonly stated the stress of life as a factor in their return decision. One participant had a child in the destination country and when learning that the child would also not have legal status, she made the decision to return. She did not want her child to live as an undocumented migrant.

A second key aspect of conditions in the destination country was the rejection of any asylum claim and being tired of the prospect of living as an undocumented migrant. Similar to findings by Collyer et al. (2009), living undocumented 'wore people down'.[35] One respondent stated:

> 'I am very much thinking of my paper, there is no life…It is risky. Maybe one day [they] will come to my apartment, knock on my door and take me to the airport…To deport me to my country. I am thinking every day. And after that I decided to come to Ethiopia.''
>
> Male, age 40

The stress of living irregularly was the main decision-making factor in return for this participant and several others. In contrast, a few participants stated that they had a good life abroad and would have stayed, however their families really wanted them to return—therefore citing social factors as the primary reason for return. These participants were all married with children.

Participants also stated that if they told fellow Ethiopians in the asylum reception centers of their decision, they were discouraged from returning:

> 'Friends [Ethiopian asylum seekers in the reception centre] of mine still, I told [them] that I want to return home, they were like "What?"…They discouraged me, of course...It had a little bit impact on my decision, but after all I decided to return back.'

As a result, some participants stated that when they made the decision to return they did not tell anyone in the asylum reception centre and just left, as they knew their decision would be challenged. There is little evidence about the role of networks within asylum seekers centers in influencing co-ethnics' return decision-making. Further research would be required fully to understand the role of co-ethnics in influencing return decision making in asylum reception centres. As many of the participants were returnees from Norway they offered further insights into the return process from Norway (which was not a destination country for this report). Residents in the Norwegian reception centres who receive a rejection on their asylum claim are required to attend meetings once a week, where they are informed about their options for returning and that they cannot stay in Norway. In some reception centres, their living allowance is reduced if they do not attend these meetings. All participants returning from Norway stated that they were aware of the return process as a result of these meetings and that the information shared in these meetings was useful in informing them of their options for return. In this context at least, information dissemination appears to be a key aspect of assisted voluntary decision-making and uptake.

[35] Collyer et al. (2009).

7. EXTENT OF REINTEGRATION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF RETURN

Table 7.6 shows the return and reintegration index used in this study to examine reintegration and sustainable return. Overall, only 22 per cent of returnees in Ethiopia were considered reintegrated according to this index, which is considerably less than the average across all the countries (37 per cent).

Ethiopian returnees were least integrated in the economic dimension (44 per cent). The majority were not employed on return (66.7 per cent) and considered themselves to currently be struggling (61.1 per cent). At the same time, of those not working, only 27 per cent stated that they were actively looking for a job. A total of 45 per cent of those not working were either retired or in childcare activities, and not looking for employment. Eight participants had started a business since return, seven of which had started with the support of a reintegration grant. Five of these businesses were still operational in some way. Two were taxi businesses. For one participant this was highly profitable as he hired someone else to drive the taxi and took half the profit while he worked elsewhere, whereas the other participant was not able to pay his living costs from his taxi business. One other participant was also struggling with her business; she had opened an Internet shop, but had been robbed and could not afford to replace the equipment.

Half of the returnees had more than one source of household income and the majority did not have any debt (72.2 per cent). Only one participant had debt from funding their initial migration costs. One-third of participants owned their own house or land.

Only half of the returnees were considered reintegrated in the socio-cultural dimension, which is also lower than the average across all countries of 64 per cent. The majority reported having a network that they could rely on for support (61.1 per cent). The majority also reported receiving very positive treatment from their families on return. However, several participants reported negative sentiments from the community. One participant stated:

> 'People expect you have a lot of money, but you do not. The problem when returning from Europe is that society expects that you are in a good situation and that you bring money for the society.'
>
> Male, age 26

This may explain why only 55.5 per cent of returnees participated in local events, and 27.8 per cent were members of organizations at the time of the interview.

Half of the participants stated that they had transnational networks and 27.8 per cent reported being generally dissatisfied in the last month. Participants who reported being unhappy cited their economic situation, not having a job, poor health, and being back in Ethiopia as the reasons for being unhappy.

In the final dimension of political and security, participants had a high level of reintegration at 88.9 per cent, which is higher than the average across all countries of 71.3 per cent. The majority of participants felt safe in their home (94.4 per cent) and community (83.3 per cent), had not experienced harassment since their return (77.8 per cent) and felt that they could access justice if needed (77.8 per cent). The response to a question about trust in the government was much lower than the other variables in this dimension, with 55.6 per cent reporting that they trusted the government. The large differences in reintegration in the different dimensions of the index highlights that economic and socio-cultural reintegration are much greater challenges in Ethiopia than safety and security after return. This may, in part, reflect both the migration motivations of this group, which were highly mixed, and the common perception in Ethiopia that migration abroad is easy and that if you make it to Europe you will become rich. Several participants stated that before migrating, they thought it was easy. One participant even stated that he spoke to a returnee from Europe who told him it was not easy and not worth it, that he would just waste his years in Europe. He stated that he did not believe this friend and migrated anyway. In retrospect he now agrees with the advice he was given.

Table 7.6: Reintegration and return index

Variable	Threshold	Individual reintegration rates	n
Economic dimension:			
Employment	Individual is employed	33.3	18
Income sources	Individual's household has more than one source of income (more of a vulnerability indicator than reintegration)	50.0	18
Perceived economic situation	Individual does not consider themselves to be struggling	38.9	18
Debt	Individual has no debt	72.2	18
Land/ Housing	Individual owns land or house	33.3	18
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the economic variables		**44.4**	**18**
Socio-Cultural Dimension:			
Networks	Individual identifies themselves as having a network that they can rely upon for support	61.1	18
Transnational networks	Individual maintains a transnational network	50.0	18
Participate in local events upon return	Individual participates in local events	55.5	18
Self-perception of personal life	Individual is not generally dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their personal life on average in the last month	72.2	18
Membership in organizations upon return	Individual participates in one or more organizations	27.8	18
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the socio-cultural variables		**50.0**	**18**
Safety and Security Dimension:			
Perceived safety in home	Individual identifies feeling safe in their home	94.4	18
Perceived safety in the community	Individual identifies feeling safe in their community	83.3	18
Trust in the government	Individual identifies that they trust the government	55.56	18
Access to justice	Individual feels that they could access justice if their rights were violated in their country of return	77.8	18
Experienced personal harassment since return	Individual has not experienced personal harassment since return	77.8	18
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the safety and security variables		**88.9**	**18**
Percentage of participants that are effectively reintegrated across all three dimensions		**22.2**	**18**

Other studies on domestic worker migration from Ethiopia to the Middle East have found similar results of people not believing returnees when they advise them of the challenges of migration.[36]

[36] Kuschminder (2014).

Just over half of the sample stated that they would like to migrate again. Of this group, two people had concrete plans to migrate: one had received admission for studies abroad and a second was seeking family reunification. The remaining individuals who wanted to re-migrate ideally wanted to do so legally to a country that was safe and democratic.

Of those planning to stay in Ethiopia their most common plans were to work on their business or start a new business, go back to school, or find a job and work hard. Several of the participants were not happy with their economic reintegration and the fact that their businesses were not successful. For example, one participant had been involved in the cleaning industry abroad, but was not able to find a start in the cleaning industry on return. There were high levels of frustration with their current experience and not being able to change their situation.

Several participants reflected in the interviews that they had not understood how hard it was to migrate. Many regretted their initial decision to migrate and felt it was not worth it. For instance, one woman had migrated without authorisation to Europe via Turkey and Greece, and had endured a long and difficult transit experience in Greece. She had left her child and husband in Ethiopia in search of a better life for them. Upon return she stated:

> 'I really am happy, because I see the difference now. When I stayed there, like a prisoner, but now I am free, yeah…When I stay alone there it is so difficult. The people are so good, the government, everything is safe and good, but the only thing is depressed…oh…especially my case is negative, negative decision.'
>
> Female, age 32

Although not being satisfied with the economic situation upon return, several participants were happy that they had returned and strongly felt it was the right decision, as illustrated in the quote above.

8. CONCLUSION

Within the overall study, Ethiopia presents a unique case as it is the poorest origin country in the sample and has seen a large increase in migration and return flows over the past decade. At the same time, assisted voluntary return flows to Ethiopia are one of the lowest of the study countries, particularly from industrialised states. The greatest number of participants had returned from Norway, which is broadly representative as Norway had seven times more assisted voluntary returnees to Ethiopia than any other European country in 2013.

It is evident that for returnees to Ethiopia, conditions in the destination country were the most important in influencing their decision to return. As stated, all participants except one to Europe had filed an asylum claim, and the majority returned after their claim had been rejected. Those who returned while their claim was in process all returned for familial or health reasons.

Overall, Ethiopian returnees had a low level of reintegration, with only 22 per cent being reintegrated. Reintegration was lowest in the economic dimension, followed by the socio-cultural dimension, and it was quite high in the safety and security dimension. This suggests the need for further economic reintegration assistance for voluntary returnees to Ethiopia to increase the sustainability of return.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (2014) 'Ethiopia', *The CIA World Factbook*, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/et.html.

Collyer, M., Wimalasena, P., Ansar,N., Khan, M.A. (2009) 'Return Migrant in Sri Lanka', Institute for Public Policy Research.

Croos, C., Gelderblom, D., Roux, N., Mafukidze, J. (2006) 'Views on Migration in Sub-Saharan Africa', *African Migration Alliance Workshop*.

Freedom House (2014), 'Freedom in the World 2014', www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world-2014/release-booklet.

Gettleman, J (2006) 'Ethiopia launches open war in Somalia', *New York Times News Service*. www.utsandiego.com/uniontrib/20061225/news_7n25somalia.html.

Healy, S (2007) 'Conflict in the Ogaden and its regional dimensions', *A Horn of Africa Group Seminar Report*, Chatham House, www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/public/Research/Africa/310807ogaden.pdf.

Henley and Partners (2014), 'Visa Restrictions Index 2013', www.henleyglobal.com/visa-restrictions/.

Institute for Economics and Peace (2013), 'Global Peace Index 2013: measuring the state of global peace', www.visionofhumanity.org/#/page/indexes/global-peace-index.

International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies 'Ethiopian droughts: reducing the risks to livelihoods through cash transfers', www.ifrc.org/Global/Case%20studies/Disasters/cs-ethiopia-en.pdf.

International Food Policy Research Institute (2013) '2013 Global Hunger Index', *Issue Brief 79*.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2013) 'The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: Staff Report for the 2013 Article IV Consultation', *Debt Sustainability Analysis* p. 5.

Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (2014) 'Immigration to Israel: Total Immigration from Ethiopia', *Cited in Jewish Virtual Library*, www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/ejim.html.

Kanko, T. D., Bailey, A., and Teller, C. H. (2013) 'Irregular migration: causes and consequences of young adult migration from southern Ethiopia to South Africa', Paper presented at the XXVII IUSSP International Population Conference, 26–31 August, 2013, Busan, South Korea, www.iussp.org/en/event/17/programme/paper/2439.

Kuschminder, K. (2014). 'Female Return Migration and Reintegration in Ethiopia', *PhD Thesis*. Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, no. 42.

Maplecroft (2013), 'Human Rights Risk Index 2014', http://maplecroft.com/themes/hr/.

Mohammad, A (2007) 'Ethiopia's Strategic Dilemma in the Horn of Africa', *Social Science Research Council*. http://hornofafrica.ssrc.org/Abdul_Mohammed/.

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2013) *International Migration Outlook*, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/migr_outlook-2013-en.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2013) 'Human Development Report 2013: The Rise of the South', http://hdr.undp.org/en.

Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMMS) (2014, June) 'Blinded by Hope—Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of Ethiopian migrants', *Mixed Migration research series: explaining people on the move*, www.regionalmms.org/fileadmin/content/rmms_publications/Blinded_by_Hope.pdf.

RMMS (2014, May) *Regional mixed migration summary for April 2014 covering mixed migration events, trends and data for Djibouti, Eritrea, Sudan/South Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Puntland, Somalia, Somaliland and Yemen*, www.regionalmms.org/fileadmin/content/monthly%20summaries/April_2014_RMMS_Monthly_Summary.pdf.

RMMS (2014, April) 'The Letter of the Law: regular and irregular migration in Saudi Arabia in a context of rapid change', *Mixed Migration research series: explaining people on the move*, www.regionalmms.org/fileadmin/content/rmms_publications/RMMS_Letter_of_the_Law_-_Saudi_Arabia_report.pdf.

RMMS (2013, August) 'Response to mixed migration in the Horn of Africa & Yemen: policies and assistance responses in a fast-changing context', *Mixed Migration research series: explaining people on the move*, www.regionalmms.org/fileadmin/content/rmms_publications/series_three_booklet.pdf.

RMMS (2013, June) 'Migrant Smuggling in the Horn of Africa & Yemen: the political economy and protection risks', *Mixed Migration research series: explaining people on the move*, http://regionalmms.org/fileadmin/content/monthly%20summaries/series_booklet_Leo.pdf.

RMMS (2012, October) 'Desperate Choices: conditions, risks & protection failures affecting Ethiopian migrants in Yemen', *Joint report of the Danish Refugee Council with the RMMS*, http://www.drc.dk/fileadmin/uploads/pdf/IA_PDF/Horn_of_Africa_and_Yemen/RMMSbooklet.pdf?bcsi_scan_14cf79d043f374a1=0&bcsi_scan_filename=RMMSbooklet.pdf.

Saho (2013, September) 'Statement by Mr Saho, Executive Director for the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia', International Monetary Fund (IMF), www.elibrary.imf.org/abstract/IMF002/20849-9781475578997/20849-9781475578997/20849-9781475578997_A005.xml?rskey=MBKpmn&result=6.

Smith, D (2013, December 5) 'Ethiopia hailed as 'Africa Lion' with fastest creation of millionaires', *The Guardian*, www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/04/ethiopia-faster-rate-millionaires-michael-buerk.

The World Post (2011, August) 'Ethiopia: Hunger during the worst drought in 60 years'.

Transparency International (2013), 'Corruption Perceptions Index 2013', www.transparency.org/cpi.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2012) 'Mixed migration flow from the Horn of Africa reaches new record levels', *Briefing notes*, www.unhcr.org/4fb617e69.html.

UNHCR (2014) 'UNHCR Population Statistics' (online database), http://popstats.unhcr.org/.

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (July 21 2013) *Background: Ethiopia*, www.unicef.org/infobycountry/ethiopia_12162.html.

United States Library of Congress (2005) *Country profile: Ethiopia*, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Ethiopia.pdf.

United States State Department (2013) 'Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2013: Ethiopia', *Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor*.

World Bank (2011) *Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011*, 2nd Edition, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLAC/Resources/Factbook2011-Ebook.pdf?bcsi_scan_14cf79d043f374a1=0&bcsi_scan_filename=Factbook2011-Ebook.pdf.

World Bank (2013a) Atlas of Global Development, 4th Edition, www.app.collinsindicate.com/worldbankatlas-global/en-us.

World Bank (2013b) *Ethiopian Economic Overview*, www.worldbank.org/en/country/ethiopia/overview.

World Bank (2013c) *Personal remittances, received (% of GDP)*, World Factbook, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS.

APPENDIX 8

IRAQ

COUNTRY REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

This report examines migrant decision-making in relation to return, and the sustainability of assisted voluntary return, to Iraq. This country report is part of a comparative research project on the assisted voluntary return and reintegration of migrants. The project examines findings from 15 origin, transit and destination countries within scope and relies on a mixed methodology involving quantitative and qualitative analysis. Iraq is one of the origin countries.

The project has been conceived and commissioned as part of the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Irregular Migration Research Programme.[1] It was informed by the programme's first occasional paper, which recognized the need to establish an evidence-base for policy deliberations on irregular migration to Australia (Koser & McAuliffe, 2013). The project is supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Maastricht University.

This country report provides a brief, descriptive overview of the economic, political and security contexts as they relate to migration, and an overview of migration trends to and from Iraq. This background information provides further country context for the comparative analysis contained in the research project's *Final report*. It also describes participants interviewed for the study and key results of the interviews conducted in Iraq.

2. COUNTRY CONTEXT

Iraq in global measures	
Human Development Index as at 2012. See UNDP (2013).	**Medium human development** 131st out of 187
Peace Index as at 2014. See Institute for Economics and Peace (2014).	**Very low level of peace** 159th out of 162
Human Rights Risk Index as at 2013-14. See Maplecroft (2013).	**Extreme risk of abuse**
Corruption Perceptions Index as at 2013. See Transparency International (2013).	**Extremely corrupt** 171st out of 177
Freedom Index as at 2014. See Freedom House (2014).	**Not free**
Visa Restrictions Index as at 2013. See Henley and Partners (2014).	**Very low passport mobility** 92nd out of 173

Iraq faced significant economic, political and security challenges in 2014.
In spite of rising revenues from substantial natural resources, Iraq is recovering from a very low economic base. Many of Iraq's current economic problems stem from the international sanctions throughout the 1990s, extensive damage from multiple wars, ongoing instability, and large emigration flows since 2003.

[1] Information on the Irregular Migration Research Programme is at: www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research

2.1 Economy

The information relating to the state of Iraq's economy is based on the most recent international reports published in 2012 and 2013.[2] Given the fluid nature of recent security developments in Iraq, the economic circumstances are likely to have changed since these reports were published.

The Iraqi economy is heavily dependent on oil production.[3] According to the International Energy Agency, oil exports represented 95 per cent of government revenue and over 70 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2011.[4] Recent International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank reports noted that Iraq's reliance on oil revenue made the economy vulnerable. The oil industry was also estimated to employ only around one per cent of the local work force.[5]

Revenues from oil funded a large public sector, with government and state-owned enterprises providing employment for around half of Iraq's labour force.[6] Unemployment was estimated to be around 11 per cent, however, the actual figure was likely to be much higher, especially among youth.[7] Based on a 2007 household survey, literacy rates were estimated to be around 77 per cent with literacy among females likely to be significantly lower than males.[8] Rates of poverty remained high with around 23 per cent living on less than USD 2.2 per day.[9] Iraq continues to have serious infrastructure problems, including the slow restoration of basic services such as a stable water supply and adequate sanitation and waste disposal.[10] Electricity supplies to households and industry also remained inadequate.[11]

2.2 Political context

In the modern political era Iraq became an independent republic in 1958. After a power struggle lasting a decade, the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party took control of Iraq in 1968. Saddam Hussein emerged as the dominant political force, becoming the absolute leader of Iraq in 1979. He held power until the defeat of the Ba'athists by the United States-led Coalition Forces in 2003.[12]

Following the defeat, provisional Iraq administrations worked towards developing a constitution and a permanent parliamentary system. The principal challenge in establishing a representative government in Iraq has been to balance the complicated partisan sectarian interests among (and between) the majority Shia Muslim[13] and the minority Sunni Muslim groups,[14] as well as the Sunni Kurds, representing a significant minority group mainly located in an autonomous region in the north of Iraq.[15]

Under the constitution the elected members of the Council of Representatives choose the President and Prime Minster. Given the likelihood of a Prime Minister from one of the Shia political parties being elected, in an effort to establish a system of government that was representative, the constitution stipulated that the office of the President of Iraq should be held by a Kurd and the Parliamentary Speaker should be an Arab Sunni.[16] The legal system is a mix between civil and Islamic law.[17]

In spite of attempts to portray the government as committed to unifying competing sectarian interests, the Iraqi government has struggled to stabilise the country.[18] The central government and regional authorities have been accused of widespread corruption contributing to severe human rights abuses by officials and security forces. Citizens have also been vulnerable to arbitrary violence perpetrated by various competing militia forces and criminal gangs.[19]

---

[2] International Montary Fund (IMF) (2013); World Bank(2013); UNDP (2013); IEA (2012).
[3] IMF (2013). (IMF estimated that Iraq's economy grew by 8.4 per cent in 2012 primarily on the back of increased oil production).
[4] International Energy Agency (IEA) (2012) p.17. Iraq also has substantial natural gas reserves.
[5] (United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (2013).
[6] IMF (2013).
[7] IMF (2013); World Bank (2013).
[8] United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (2013).
[9] UNDP(2013).
[10] WHO (2013).
[11] IMF (2013); World Bank (2013); IEA (2012).
[12] United States Library of Congress (2006) p.1-4.
[13] Shia Muslims—predominantly Arabs, but including Turkmen, Shabak, Faili (Shia) Kurds, and others—represent 60–65 per cent of the Iraqi population.
[14] Sunni Muslims—Arab and Kurdish Sunni Muslims—make up 32–37 per cent of the population, while 18–20 per cent are Sunni Kurds, 12–16 per cent are Sunni Arabs, and the remaining 1–2 per cent are Sunni Turkmen.
[15] The Economist (2014). The autonomous status of the northern Kurdish regions of Iraq was confirmed in the 2005 constitution.
[16] The New York Times (2014).
[17] United States State Department (2013) (a).
[18] BBC (June, 2014).
[19] United States State Department (2013) (b).

2.3 Security context

Under the rule of Saddam Hussein, Iraq was drawn into a number of conflicts. In 1980, Iraq invaded Islamic Republic of Iran to settle long-standing territorial disputes. The war lasted eight years without a conclusive outcome. In 1991, Iraq invaded Kuwait claiming it was Iraqi territory. Iraq was driven out of Kuwait by United Nations forces led by the United States in the first Gulf War.[20] Iraq was invaded by United States-led Coalition Forces in 2003, on the basis that it was perceived to be an ongoing threat to international stability following the 11 September 2001 attacks in the United States.

Attempts to bring stability have been fractured by growing sectarian violence and insurgency against Coalition Forces and the elected government. Shia and Sunni militia groups have also targeted each other in a deadly power struggle. Non-Muslim minority groups, in particular, have struggled to withstand the disorder of the post-war period with large numbers becoming internally displaced or seeking asylum in neighbouring countries.[21] In 2013, the United Nations reported nearly 9000 Iraqis were killed in sectarian violence, the highest number of civilian and military deaths since 2008.[22]

Since 2013, ISIL has emerged as the most powerful jihadist group fighting government forces in both Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq, with the apparent aim of establishing an Islamic Caliphate that straddles Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq. As at July 2014, the group has had considerable success, taking over Raqqah, a provincial capital in Syrian Arab Republic, and making significant gains in Iraq, including the cities of Tikrit, Fallujah and Mosul.[23]

3. MIGRATION AND RETURN FLOWS

Until recently Iraq was among the world's largest sources of refugees, with over two million Iraqis residing in neighbouring countries, particularly Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan. Available data does not reveal the full picture of Iraqi refugee movements after 2011. Since the Syrian civil war began in 2011, many of the refugees are likely to have returned or moved further afield. Iraq now hosts at least 220 000 Syrian refugees,[24] in addition to an estimated 1.2 million internally displaced Iraqis.[25]

Recurring conflict, including inter-religious and sectarian violence are among the most visible drivers of Iraqi displacement. Migration also manifests as a broader livelihood strategy through circular cross-border movements of refugees between Iraq and neighbouring countries.

As well as being a major source of refugees, Iraq also attracts large populations of foreign workers from East and South Asia and the Horn of Africa, in the oil industry and also as private household and construction workers.[26] In addition, since the outbreak of the conflict in Syrian Arab Republic there have been significant refugee returns to Iraq.

3.1. Displaced Iraqi populations in neighbouring countries

Until recently, Iraq was the second largest source of refugees globally.[27] As Table 8.1 shows, in 2007, there were more than 2.1 million registered Iraqi refugees residing in nearby countries, the vast majority in Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan. By the end of 2013, the total number of Iraqi refugees in nearby countries had decreased almost 90 per cent compared with 2007, with Turkey being the only host country to experience an increase in Iraqi refugees.

---

[20] United States Library of Congress (2006), pp. 2–4.

[21] United States State Department (2013) (a). It is estimated that approximately three per cent of the population is composed of Christians, Yezidis, Sabean-Mandaeans, Bahais, Kakais and Jews.

[22] Byman (2014); The Guardian (2014).

[23] BBC (August, 2014); CBC (2014); Chulow (2014).

[24] As at 1 July 2014. UNHCR (2014, July).

[25] As at mid-July 2014. OCHA (2014, July).

[26] There are an estimated 15 000 Chinese citizens working in Iraq's oil industry. See Feng and Wong (2014). The Indian Government granted 'emigration clearance' to more than 10 000 Indian workers for Iraq, over the three years to June 2014. See The Times of India (2014). Precise numbers of migrants employed in private households or the construction industry are not available, but are known to include migrants from South Asia and the Horn of Africa. See Keating (2014), and Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) (2007).

[27] Note: refugees under United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) mandate. As at end of 2007, Iraqis were the second-largest group of UNHCR-mandated refugees globally (after Afghans). As at end of 2013, Iraqis were the seventh-largest. Source: custom extract from UNHCR's Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org, on 28 July 2014. Note that Palestinian refugees represent a significantly larger population within the region (approximately five million), but do not fall under UNHCR's mandate.

Table 8.1: Registered Iraqi refugee and estimated internally-displaced populations

	As at end 2007 (a)	As at end 2013 (a)	As at July 2014 (b)	Change
Internally-displaced	2 385 865	954 128	1 200 000	+26%*
Iraqi refugees in				
Syria	1 500 000	146 200		-90%
Jordan	500 000	55 509		-89%
Iran	57 414	43 268		-25%
Lebanon	50 000	4 944		-90%
Egypt	10 273	5 506		-46%
Turkey	3 662	13 467		+268%
Total (excluding internally-displaced persons)	2 121 349	268 894		-87%

Sources
(a) Custom extract from United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org, on 28 July 2014.
(b) United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (2014, July), 'Iraq IDP Crisis Situation Report No. 4.'
*Change from end 2013 to mid-2014.

The civil war in Syrian Arab Republic, which began in 2011, is a major driver of the decrease in the number of Iraqis in Syrian Arab Republic,[28] although the factors contributing to decreases in other countries are less clear. The available data does not reveal where the Iraqi refugee populations have moved to, although it is possible that some have repatriated, moved irregularly to other countries, and/or sought asylum in industrialised countries. UNHCR has also reported that, in the year leading to June 2012, more than 50 000 Iraqi refugees in Syrian Arab Republic returned to Iraq,[29] although this does not account for the full decrease in Iraqis in Syrian Arab Republic.

It is important to note that, as at July 2014, the military take-over of large parts of Iraq by ISIL had resulted in the internal displacement of approximately 1.2 million Iraqis.[30] It is currently not known how many may have been displaced outside Iraq, although it is possible that there will be an increase in cross-border movement as a result.

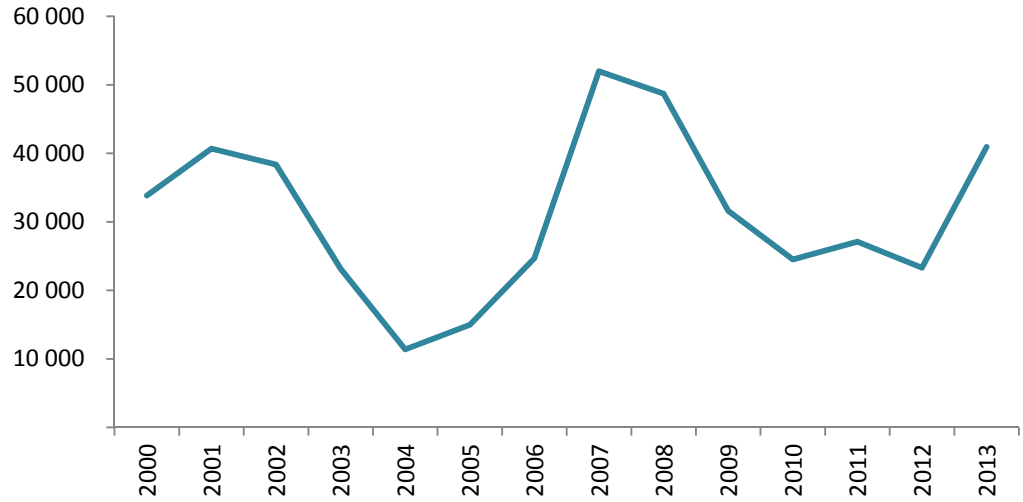
Iraq is also currently hosting refugees from the Syrian civil war, particularly Syrian Kurds. As of 1 July 2014, there were almost 220 210 Syrian 'persons of concern'[31] residing in Iraq,[32] and approximately 95 per cent of these were residing in the Iraqi Kurdistan provinces of Dohuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah.[33]

3.2. Iraqi asylum flows and resettlement to industrialised countries

In 2013, more than 40 900 Iraqis lodged asylum claims in industrialised countries, a 76 per cent increase compared with 2012 (23 300 asylum claims).[34] As Figure 8.1 shows, since 2000 there have been a number of peak periods of Iraqi asylum flows.

[28] UNHCR (2014, June), p. 11.
[29] UNHCR (2013, June).
[30] OCHA (2014, July).
[31] Includes registered refugees and refugees awaiting registration with UNHCR.
[32] UNHCR (2014, July).
[33] As per the infographics on UNHCR's Syrian Arab Republic Regional Refugee Response portal, http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=103, accessed 1 August 2014.
[34] Forty-four industrialised countries as defined by UNHCR. Custom extract from UNHCR's Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org, on 28 July 2014.

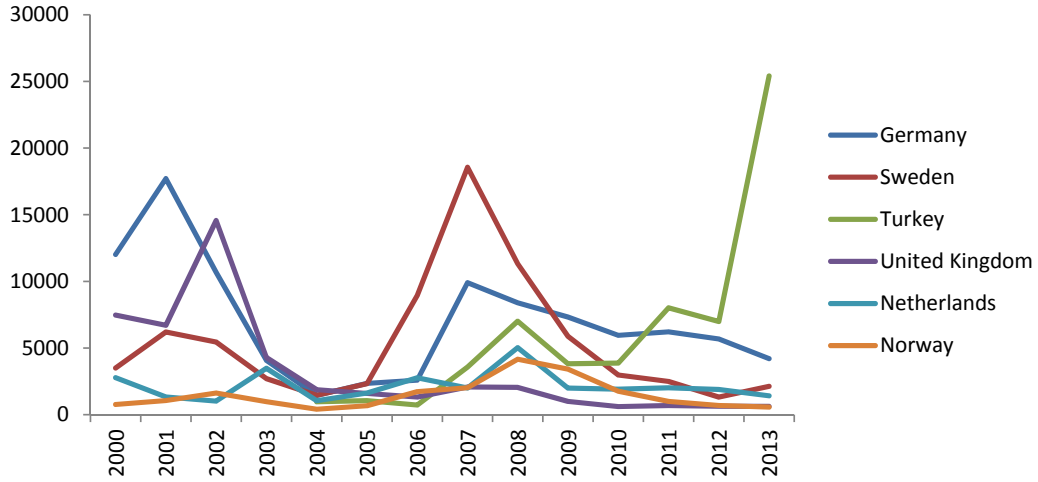
Figure 8.1: Iraqi asylum applications lodged in industrialised countries*



Source: Custom extract from UNHCR's Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org, on 28 July 2014.
*44 industrialised countries as defined by UNHCR.

During the 14 years from 2000 to 2013, more than 435 100 Iraqis sought asylum in industrialised countries. Almost one-quarter (23 per cent, or 98 489) sought asylum in Germany. Nine European countries received 86 per cent (373 271) of these Iraqis. Iraqis asylum flows to some of the most significant destination countries are shown in Figure 8.2.

Figure 8.2: Iraqi asylum applications lodged in key destination countries



Source: Custom extract from UNHCR's Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org, on 28 July 2014.
Data for Turkey is not available prior to 2004; data for Greece is not available prior to 2003.

It is important to note that these flows are not homogenous, but are religiously and ethnically diverse. They are likely to comprise changing proportions of Arab Muslim Sunnis and Shi'as, Chaldean and Assyrian Christians, Sabian-Mandeans and Iraqi Kurds.

Iraq has also been a major source of refugees resettled in industrialised countries. Iraq was the consistently among the top three source countries for UNHCR-referred refugees resettled in Australia between July 2003 and June 2013.[35] The United States resettled more than 73 000 Iraqi refugees between October 2006 and November 2012.[36] Resettled Iraqis include those who have worked for the Multinational Force in Iraq or for the United States Government, and members of religious minorities.[37]

[35] Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) (2013), p. 11.
[36] United States Department of State (2013, May).
[37] ibid.

3.4. Iraqi return migration

The IOM office in Iraq began assisted voluntary return programmes in 2003–2004. Table 8.2 shows the assisted voluntary return flows from 2003–2013 in Iraq. First, it is noteworthy that returnees come from a wide range of countries to Iraq. Second, the largest numbers of returnees come from European countries, in particular Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Norway, and Switzerland. There has also been a large caseload from Lebanon, however, these individuals did not receive a full reintegration package, they only received assistance to return to Iraq. Third, the overall flows per year appear to be quite sporadic, with a peak 2006, then a low in 2007. This does appear to somewhat mirror the peak in asylum figures represented in Figure 8.2 above in 2006-2007. Most recently, 2013 appears to have been a year of less than average AVR returns. The reason for the changes in these flows is unknown.

Table 8.2: Assisted voluntary returns to Iraq by country of return, 2003–2013

Returned from	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Afghanistan		6	5				2					24
Australia	4	39	6	1		4			5	9	52	223
Austria	37	32	8	1	10	16	22	22	2		6	227
Bahrain							7					7
Belgium	2	11	1	34	17	10	20	68	158	208	41	883
Bulgaria						4	3		2	69	56	192
Cambodia						5						5
China						6						6
Czech Republic		4		4	4	4		1				26
Denmark	158	200	47	18	6	21	63	9	23	19	25	911
Egypt					11	613						624
Finland	6	3	2	2	3	7	50	67	56	43	78	525
France		9	3				3					27
Georgia											35	70
Greece				9	14	7		33	89	147	72	574
Germany	266	807	646	519	165	270	434	445	474	492	387	8183
Hungary	2	1				2		1	3		1	16
Indonesia	45	32	19	4	4	5		72	40	86	20	514
Ireland	6		4	3	1	10	10	9	5			69
Italy	2	1	1	4	2	8	14	8	17	2		90
Jordan			28									56
Lebanon	542	1489	518	354	105	105		2				4673
Libya				3	28	13						47
Malaysia						6					1	8
Morroco							16					16
Nauru	23	1								3		28
Netherlands	82	168	135	259	42	183	708	538	815	475	245	5810
Norway	94	193	56	35	41	107	396	505	542	490	308	4406
Pakistan	37	141		2		1	26	4				358
Poland		2			5	2	2	4	1	4		27
Romania					2	7						9
Sweden	95	86	13	2	24	74	103	35	44	21	7	691
Slovakia					9	16		1	1			29
Switzerland	45	109	150	126	40	58	162	190	158	155	81	2088
Tunis						1			241			483
Turkmenistan			6									12
United Kingdom	91	433	769	1724	384	442	672	249				7939
Yemen			109	9	7	4	23					270
Total*	**1537**	**3771**	**2527**	**3116**	**926**	**2013**	**2736**	**2264**	**2677**	**2226**	**1416**	40 175

*Countries with less than five returnees in total have been removed from the table but are still included in the total number of returns per year.
Source, IOM Iraq, 2014.

The majority of individuals returning with reintegration assistance receive cash assistance at the airport before departure (Belgium) or after arrival in Iraq (Australia, United Kingdom, Finland, Denmark, Norway). A plan is made for returnees receiving in-kind assistance, either before return (Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Switzerland) or after return, following counseling provided by local IOM staff (Germany, the Netherlands, Norway). In-kind assistance usually comprises the following options:

- A business plan and set up: After approval of the business plan, supplies are bought for the returnee, who can use them to start their business.
- Job placement: A returnee has to find a job. If they find it, the salary will be topped up with a monthly amount, for three to five months.
- Housing allowance: A returnee has to find a place to stay and receives an allowance for the rent of the first few months
- Household items: Includes furniture, cooking supplies etc.
- Vocational training: The money is spent on school/ institute fees as well as on monthly costs for participating in vocation training courses. According to key informants, in practice, this is hardly used.

All of the participants involved in this study received some form of reintegration assistance as described above.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research in Iraq were to provide insight into decision-making factors among those who had returned and to assess the sustainability of return. Iraq is one of eight origin countries examined in the overall study.

To assess decision-making factors in return, this study follows the approach developed by Black et *al*., 2004.[38] The model is explained in Chapter 2 of the *Final report* and briefly summarised here. In essence, the model posits that decision-making on return is based on a combination of factors across five key areas. First, the political, economic and social conditions in the country of origin and second, the political, economic, and social conditions in the country of destination are considered, (referred to in this report as the 'conditions in origin/destination country'). Third, individual factors such as age, gender, and personal attributes are considered. Fourth, social factors, such as familial reasons and the role of networks are considered in the decision to return. The final element included in the model is policy incentives and disincentives, such as AVR policies or deportation campaigns. This will be examined in the Iraqi context in Section 6 below.

The research in Iraq also sought to assess sustainable return, which is achieved in this study through a return and reintegration index (explained in Chapter 6 of the *Final report*). The return and reintegration index is based on three dimensions: economic reintegration where an individual is able to sustain a livelihood and is not in a situation of economic vulnerability; social and cultural reintegration where the returnee is actively incorporated into the receiving society, for example at the level of the local community; and safety andsecurity reintegration where the returnee feels that they have access to safety and justice upon return. Each of these dimensions is assessed through five different variables, which are included in Table 8.5 below. From these three dimensions an overall level of reintegration is determined through the index. This approach highlights the multi-dimensional nature of reintegration and sustainable return.

5. METHODOLOGY AND PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

This research focuses on Iraqi returnees from western industrialised states. Interviews were conducted in Erbil with Iraqi Kurds who had returned to the Kurdistan Regional Government at least 12 months prior to the interviews. It is important to note that the socio-economic and security situation outside of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) is very different and this study is therefore not representative of the returnees to the rest of Iraq.

It is also important to note the timing of fieldwork, which took place between 15 and 19 June 2014: the second week after the sudden insurgence of ISIL that started in Mosul, a city 100 kilometres from Erbil. The threat of an emerging civil war trickled down into the reality of fieldwork, affecting the positions of returnees as well as their availability for research. On the first two days of fieldwork, people were remarkably silent about the recent developments. From the third day onwards, people started mentioning the current crisis and how it affected their lives. For example, travel

[38] Black et *al.* (2004).

restrictions were introduced and there was temporary unemployment due to the halting of construction projects. On the fourth day, when ISIL captured the important oil city Baji, the limited availability of petrol caused more unrest among respondents as well as practical difficulties in coming to the interview.

Table 8.3: Overview of participants

	Freq.	%
Age (in years)		
Range	23–60	
Average	36	
Sex		
Male	19	86
Female	3	14
Total	22	100
Nationality		
Iraqi	19	86
Other	1	5
Missing	2	9
Total	22	100
Ethnicity		
Kurdish	21	95
Missing	1	5
Total	22	100
Highest level of education		
No formal education	3	14
Primary	9	41
Lower secondary	2	9
Upper secondary	4	18
Bachelor	3	14
Missing	1	5
Total	22	100

Type of returnee		
Individual	18	55
Couple	3	14
Nuclear family	1	5
Total[†]	22	100
Country of migration		
Norway	6	27
Switzerland	5	23
Belgium	5	23
Sweden	2	9
Netherlands	1	5
Lithuania	1	5
Italy	1	5
Bulgaria	1	5
Total	22	100

Table 8.3 provides an overview of the participants interviewed. In total, 22 interviews were conducted with 26 people. This included three couples who had returned together, one nuclear family that had returned together and 18 people who had migrated and returned alone.

The average age of the sample was 38 years, with ages ranging from 23 to 60 years. Education levels varied throughout the sample with a large percentage (41per cent) having completed primary school. A further 14 per cent had no formal education, while 28 per cent had completed secondary school and 14 per cent had completed a bachelor's degree. Participants had migrated to eight different European countries, with the highest number returning from Norway, Switzerland and Belgium (27 per cent, 23 per cent and 23 per cent respectively). Other destinations included Sweden, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Italy and Bulgaria. Sometimes a relative already living in a certain country was a reason to choose that destination country, but very often participants did not have a preference for a specific country, and the choice depended on the smuggler or from hearsay about the best options to get asylum. According to IOM KRG, networks appear to determine destination, as Kurds from certain areas are overrepresented in certain countries of destination. Switzerland hosts many Kurds from Duhok and Zakho, the United Kingdom from Sulemani, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden have many Iraqi Kurds from Erbil, while Iraqis in Australia are mostly from Basra.

Migration initiatives were often motivated by multiple reasons including: (1) the general security/political situation in Iraq/the KRG; (2) economic reasons; and (3) personal security reasons (i.e. conflict in the family or personal (political) problems). The majority of participants had hired a broker/smuggler for a part of the journey (55 per cent). A common route was to travel legally to Turkey over land or by air, and then find a smuggler to bring them to a Western European country to apply for asylum. For the journey they paid between USD 5000 and USD 15,000, depending on the route,

the means and the speed of travel. A minority of wealthier participants traveled directly and quickly to the country of destination. The rest were in transit for a few months to a few years, during which they worked to pay for the next step in the journey. Ninety-five per cent of the participants claimed asylum on arrival in the destination country.

6. UNDERSTANDING THE DECISION TO RETURN

Table 8.4 shows the decision-making factors for return as cited by participants. Note that many respondents reported multiple factors.

Table 8.4: Number of individuals with at least one decision-making factor, by category

Category	Freq	%	Sample size
Conditions in origin country	1	4.6	22
Conditions in destination country	8	36.4	22
Individual factors	7	31.8	22
Social factors	4	18.2	22
Incentives/disincentives (policy interventions)	4	18.2	22

Conditions in the origin country were only cited by one participant, who referred specifically to employment opportunities in Iraq. This person felt that the job market would be more favourable in Kurdistan than it was in Europe, due to the economic crisis in Europe. He received job placement assistance and was working as a carpenter at the time of the interview.

Iraqis' decisions to return were not as unilaterally influenced by conditions in the destination country as was the case with returnees to some other origin countries. However, this category of decision-making factor was still predominant. Five participants stated that a negative asylum request had influenced their decision to return. Some had received temporary work permits in their destination countries or had been able to attend classes. Some appealed the negative asylum decision while others tried another country, but were deported back to the country where they had applied for asylum. Two participants also cited that difficulty finding employment or having no right to work in the destination country had influenced their decision to return. These participants also cited influential factors as psychological problems, nostalgia for the origin country, job prospects in the origin country and feeling like there was no other choice. Sometimes participants were disheartened by not being able to work at their skill level. One noted that he could have worked in other fields, but decided to return because he could not work as a doctor in his destination country. He stated:

> 'The only main reason is because I have a certificate and I am a doctor, there was no work for me.'
>
> Male, age 35

Individual return decision factors were also prevalent. Five individuals cited that they had no other choice but to return. All of these individuals eventually received a negative asylum decision, although some had been in their destination countries for as long as seven and a half years. Iraq is one of the few countries where the threat of deportation from a destination country is cited as a key reason for choosing assisted voluntary return. A key reason for this is that the KRG does not cooperate with forced return and accordingly, for a number of years, deportation was to Baghdad. Many participants mentioned that they preferred a safe return to Kurdistan over a forced return to Baghdad Many stressed that they did not have a real choice, because it was made clear that if they did not return voluntarily, they would be deported. Often a decision to return voluntarily was seen as the best option of the available negative outcomes. One respondent stated:

> 'When I get two negatives and a deportation notice, it means that by force the police they are coming to send me back. But they told me for another choice there is an organization called IOM. You can go back and they will give you with small money and help. Both ways it was bad for me.'
>
> Male, age 55

Social factors in the Iraqi case were somewhat less frequently cited. Three participants indicated they felt nostalgia for Iraq and its way of life, while one stated a desire for family reunification within Iraq. This participant had spent 15 years abroad and wanted to marry in Iraq. He married only 20 days after his return.

Policy incentives and disincentives were also less frequently cited, however, return factors indicated within this category were diverse. These included the desire to benefit from voluntary return programmes offered by the destination country (one participant), the desire to benefit from an incentive offered by Iraq (one participant), destination country policies (one participant), political change in the destination country (one participant), and wanting to comply with the law (one participant).

7. EXTENT OF REINTEGRATION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF RETURN

Table 8.5: Reintegration and return index

Variable	**Threshold**	**Individual reintegration rates**	**n**
Economic dimension:			
Employment	Individual is employed	63.6	22
Income sources	Individual's household has more than one source of income (more of a vulnerability indicator than reintegration)	27.3	22
Perceived economic situation	Individual does not consider themselves to be struggling	50.0	22
Debt	Individual has no debt	66.7	21
Land/ Housing	Individual owns land or house	59.1	22
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the economic variables		**52.4**	**21**
SocioCultural dimension:			
Networks	Individual identifies themselves as having a network that they can rely upon for support	40.9	22
Transnational networks	Individual maintains a transnational network	81.8	22
Participate in local events upon return	Individual participates in local events	86.4	22
Self-perception of personal life	Individual is not generally dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their personal life on average in the last month	31.8	22
Membership in organizations upon return	Individual participates in one or more organizations	68.18	22
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the socio-cultural variables		**40.9**	**22**
Safety and security dimension:			
Perceived safety in home	Individual identifies feeling safe in their home	66.7	21
Perceived safety in the community	Individual identifies feeling safe in their community	63.6	22
Trust in the government	Individual identifies that they trust the government	22.7	22
Access to justice	Individual feels that they could access justice if their rights were violated in their country of return	38.1	21
Experienced personal harassment since return	Individual has not experienced personal harassment since return	86.4	22
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the safety and security variables		**55.0**	**20**
Percentage of participants that are effectively reintegrated across all three dimensions		**15.8**	**19**

Overall, only 15.8 per cent of the Iraqi sample was effectively integrated across all three dimensions of the index. Economic reintegration fared the best, with 52.4 per cent of the sample being reintegrated in this dimension. However, returnees' economic situations were diverse: some were quite well-off and others were having a tougher time economically. While 63 per cent of the sample was employed, only 50 per cent felt they were not struggling economically.

Furthermore, 59 per cent of the sample owned a piece of land or their house. Those who sold their house and land to pay for their migration often stayed with family members at first before finding a rental house. For singles, it was more common to stay in the family home on return. Fourteen participants were in debt, either related to their migration costs, to meet their daily needs, or for marriage.

The post-return economic situation in part depended on class and the participants original economic situation. People who were relatively well-off prior to their migration were generally also fairly well-off after return. Even though they lost savings and sold their land, they generally still had access to family resources and networks to rebuild their lives. Other participants who did not have such support had to start from the beginning again and were in more vulnerable situations.

In some cases, extremely poor economic situations had a significant negative impact on mental health and wellbeing:

> 'When I gave birth to my child [after return to Iraq], my husband told me that we should all kill ourselves by medicine. Because it was so difficult. The life so difficult. In fact, it was really dreadful because my child needed milk and I was hungry and couldn't provide it.'
>
> Female, age 41

However, at the time of the interview, this participant stated that her husband was feeling a little better as he had been able to find work and support the family to a greater degree. This example showcases the importance of economic wellbeing and how it affects other aspects of life.

Socio-cultural reintegration registered the lowest level out of the three dimensions, with 40.9 per cent reintegrated in this dimension. While 81.8 per cent of had managed to maintain transnational social networks, only 40.9 per cent indicated that they had a strong network of family and friends who they could rely on for support within Iraq. This may be linked, however, to their failed migration experience. Shame was a central theme in the experience of return, especially in regard to peers. While non-migrants had remained in the KRG and benefited from the growing economy, some returnees had to start again from where they left off.

In addition to shame, according to IOM KRG a trend of individualisation is taking place within Kurdistan along with modernisation and busy economic life with long working hours (particularly for those with two jobs).. This means many returnees are no longer in contact with many people outside their family, reinforcing the importance of family background. Others said they mainly met with other returnees, which indicates a difficulty finding connections in society.

Although the level of participants with support networks was relatively low, 86.4 per cent still participated in local events and 68.2 per cent were members of some sort of organization.

Lastly, 55 per cent were effectively reintegrated according to the index in terms of safety and security. Reintegration levels were somewhat higher for the security aspect than for safety and security, yet this may have been due to the timing of the fieldwork. At the beginning of the interviews, the ISIL insurgency had just begun. Participants from areas closer to the (disputed) borders of the KRG were more outspoken about the impending dangers. Participants living in Erbil seemed convinced that the violence would not pass through the Peshmerga but people from rural areas felt less secure due to a lack of services and local authorities to protect them. One participant stated: 'If I knew Da'ash (IS) was coming I would never have come here' (male, age 26).

Despite the concerns regarding ISIL, 14 participants stated that they felt safe within their home and community. In addition, 86.4 per cent of respondents had not been harassed in any form since their return to Iraq. Levels were slightly lower in the safety and security dimension, with only five participants saying they trusted the government and eight stating that they thought they could access justice if their rights were violated within Kurdistan.

8. CONCLUSION

In the Iraqi context, both conditions in the destination country and individual factors were influential in making the decision to return. Many participants returned because they could not stay in the destination country, yet were disappointed with the opportunities for growth and advancement available back in Iraq.

Overall reintegration levels according to the index are very low for Iraq, with just 15.8 per cent of participants being reintegrated across all three dimensions. This is significantly lower than the overall reintegration rate across all origin countries of 36.8 per cent. Socio-cultural reintegration was lowest, perhaps due to high levels of shaming of failed migrants on return. While current return assistance focuses on economic livelihood, other key issues are equally important for reintegration, such as the availability of documents, access to the job market, and psychological and social issues. Efforts to address such issues would be highly beneficial in the Iraqi case. However, with the current insurgency and the UNHCR urging states not to forcibly return people to Iraq,[39] it is understandable that the situation regarding assisted voluntary return to Iraq is currently in flux.

[39] UNHCR (2014).

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

BBC (2014, August) 'Syria Iraq: The Islamic State Militant Group', (2 August 2014), www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-24179084.

BBC (2014, June) 'Profile: Nuri Maliki', (13 June, 2014), BBC News: Middle East, www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-11733715.

Byman, D., (2014) 'Five Myths about the Islamic State', *The Washington Post* (3 July 2014), www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/five-myths-about-the-islamic-state/2014/07/03/f6081672-0132-11e4-8572-4b1b969b6322_story.html.

CBC News (2014) 'ISIS in Iraq: Key players in the Gulf Nation conflict', (16 June 2014), www.cbc.ca/news2/interactives/who-iraq/.

Chatelard, G. (2009) 'Migration from Iraq between the Gulf and the Iraq wars (1990–2003): historical and socio-spatial dimensions,' Centre on Migration, Policy and Society, University of Oxford, Working Paper No. 68, www.compas.ox.ac.uk/fileadmin/files/Publications/working_papers/WP_2009/WP0968%20Chatelard.pdf.

Chulow, M. (2014) '40,000 Iraqis stranded on mountain as Isis jihadists threaten death', The Guardian (7 August 2014), www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/07/40000-iraqis-stranded-mountain-isis-death-threat.

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (2014) 'Iraq', T*he CIA World Factbook*, www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.htmlDFAT.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) (2014) 'Iraq country brief', www.dfat.gov.au/geo/iraq/iraq_country_brief.html.

Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) (2013) 'Information paper,' for public consultation on the composition of the Humanitarian Programme for 2014–15, www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/refugee/ref-hum-issues/pdf/humanitarian-program-information-paper-14-15.pdf.

Feng, B. and Wong, E. (2014) 'China keeps a close eye on oil interests in Iraq,' *The New York Times*, 17 June 2014, http://sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/06/17/china-keeps-a-close-eye-on-oil-interests-in-iraq.

Freedom House (2014) 'Freedom in the World 2014', www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world-2014/release-booklet.

Henley and Partners (2014) 'Visa Restrictions Index 2013', www.henleyglobal.com/visa-restrictions/.

International Energy Agency (IEA) (2012) 'Iraq Energy Outlook: World Energy Special Report', (9 October, 2012), www.worldenergyoutlook.org/media/weowebsite/2012/iraqenergyoutlook/fullreport.pdf?bcsi_scan_14cf79d043f374a1=1.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2013) 'Iraq,' IMF Country Report No. 13/217, www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2013/cr13217.pdf.

Institute for Economics and Peace (2014) 'Global Peace Index 2014: measuring peace and assessing country risks', www.visionofhumanity.org/#/page/indexes/global-peace-index.

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) (2007) 'Foreign workers lured to work in Iraq', 24 April 2007, www.irinnews.org/report/71776/iraq-foreign-workers-lured-to-work-in-iraq.

Keating, J. (2014) 'The vulnerability of Iraq's foreign workers,' Slate, 18 June 2014, www.slate.com/blogs/the_world_/2014/06/18/more_foreigners_abducted_in_iraq_the_country_s_foreign_workers_are_especially.html.

Koser, K. and McAuliffe, M. (2013) 'Establishing an evidence-base for future policy development on irregular migration to Australia,' Irregular Migration Research Programme Occasional Paper no. 1, www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research/.

Maplecroft (2013) 'Human Rights Risk Index 2014', www.maplecroft.com/themes/hr/.

New York Times (2014) 'Iraq picks new president to confront militant threat', *The New York Times* (24 July 2014), www.nytimes.com/2014/07/25/world/middleeast/ iraq-president-fouad-massoum.html?_r=0.

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (2014, July) 'Iraq IDP crisis: situation report no. 4 (19-26 July 2014),' http://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/iraq-idp-crisis-situation-report-no-4-19-26-july-2014.

The Economist (2014) 'The Kurds and Iraq: A winning hand (2014, 21 June) www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21604628-kurds-are-benefiting-mess-iraq-will-independence-follow.

The Guardian (2014) 'Iraq suffers its deadliest year since 2008', (2 January, 2014), www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jan/01/iraq-2013-deadliest-year-since-2008.

The Times of India (2014) 'Over 10,000 workers got emigration clearance for Iraq in 3 years: government,' 17 July 2014, http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Over-10000-workers-got-emigration-clearance-for-Iraq-in-3-years-Government/articleshow/38549683.cms.

United Kingdom Home Office (2011) 'Iraq: Country of origin information report', www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/311819/Iraq_COI_report_Aug_2011.pdf.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2013) 'About Iraq', UNDP in Iraq, www.iq.undp.org/content/iraq/en/home/countryinfo/.

UNDP (2013) 'Human Development Report 2013: The Rise of the South', http://hdr.undp.org/en.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)(2014) 'Literacy and Non Formal Education in Iraq', based on the findings of the Iraq Household Socio-Economic Survey (IHSES 2007).

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2014, June) 'UNHCR Global Trends 2013: war's human cost,' www.unhcr.org/5399a14f9.html.

UNHCR (2014, July) 'Syrian refugees in the region,' as at 1 July 2014, http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=6450.

UNHCR (2014, October) 'UNHCR position on returns to Iraq,' as at 27 October 2014 http://www.refworld.org/docid/544e4b3c4.html.

United States Department of Homeland Security (2013) 'Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2012—Refugees and Asylees', www.dhs.gov/yearbook-immigration-statistics-2012-refugees-and-asylees.

United States Department of State (2013) 'Iraq 2013 Human Rights Report', www.state.gov/documents/organization/220565.pdf.

United States Department of State (2013, May) 'Iraqi refugee resettlement: fact sheet', www.state.gov/j/prm/releases/factsheets/2013/210132.htm.

United States Library of Congress (2006) 'Country Profile: Iraq Federal Research Division', www.lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Iraq.pdf.

World Health Organization (WHO) (2013) 'Iraq: Environmental Health', www.emro.who.int/irq/programmes/environmental-health.html.

World Bank (2014) 'Iraq Overview', www.worldbank.org/en/country/iraq/overview.

APPENDIX 9

PAKISTAN

COUNTRY REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

This report examines migrant decision-making in relation to return and the sustainability of assisted voluntary return to Pakistan. This country report is part of a comparative research project on the assisted voluntary return and reintegration of migrants. The project examines findings from 15 origin, transit and destination countries and relies on a mixed methodology involving quantitative and qualitative analysis. Pakistan is one of the origin countries.

The project has been conceived and commissioned as part of the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Irregular Migration Research Programme[1]. It was informed by the programme's first occasional paper, which recognized the need to establish an evidence-base for policy deliberations on irregular migration to Australia (Koser & McAuliffe, 2013). The project is supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Maastricht University.

This country report provides a brief, descriptive overview of the economic, political and security contexts as they relate to migration, and an overview of migration trends to and from Pakistan. This background information provides further country context for the comparative analysis in the research project's *Final report*. It also describes participants interviewed for the study and key results of the interviews conducted in Pakistan.

2. COUNTRY CONTEXT

Pakistan in global measures	
Human Development Index as at 2012. See UNDP (2013).	**Low human development** 146th out of 187 (tied with Bangladesh)
Peace Index as at 2014. See Institute for Economics and Peace (2014).	**Very low level of peace** 154th out of 162
Hunger Index as at 2013. See International Food Policy Research Institute (2013).	**Serious level of hunger**
Human Rights Risk Index as at 2013-14. See Maplecroft (2013).	**Extreme risk of abuse**
Corruption Perceptions Index as at 2013. See Transparency International (2013).	**Very corrupt** 127th out of 177
Freedom Index as at 2014. See Freedom House (2014).	**Partly free**
Visa Restrictions Index as at 2013. See Henley and Partners (2014).	**Low passport mobility** 91st out of 173

The flow of migrants from Pakistan represents one of the largest migration movements in the world. Remittances from migrant workers have been instrumental in lifting many Pakistanis out of poverty. Nevertheless, in spite of these gains Pakistan faces a range of economic, social, political and security challenges that create significant uncertainty about its future.

Pakistan has been buffeted by external economic forces that have halted economic growth in recent years.

Embedded corruption and entrenched political, ethnic and religious interests continue to dominate the political landscape. Successive governments, both democratic and autocratic regimes, have largely failed to balance the demands of a labyrinth of ethnic, tribal and religious interests to effectively secure stable government and foster economic prosperity.

[1] Information on the Irregular Migration Research Programme is at: www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research

An emerging middle class has begun to challenge entrenched political elites, driving the reform of democratic processes, but Pakistan is also contending with a range of serious internal and external security issues, not least of which is the outcome of the transition of responsibility for security to Afghan authorities by the end of 2014.

2.1 Economy

After several years of growth, Pakistan's economy was badly impacted by the global financial crisis in 2007. The economy suffers from a number of pressures including high inflation, chronic energy shortages and a rapidly expanding population. Agriculture is central to the Pakistan economy with more than 40 per cent of the working population employed in this sector.[2] It has scarce water resources, shrinking stocks of arable land, serious environmental damage to land through overuse and severe air pollution in cities.[3] Pakistan is also vulnerable to recurring natural disasters such as floods, cyclones and earthquakes.[4] Corruption and weak governance, as well as a range of security issues also pose significant threats to economic prosperity and stability.

Poverty rates have fallen in the past decade, with remittance payments thought to have played a key role in this decline.[5] In spite of this, nearly half the population continues to live in poverty[6] with around 21 per cent of the population living on less than USD 1 per day.[7] However, strong social networks of support mitigate against the abject destitution these figures imply.[8] Tax revenues represent less than 10 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)[9] and the Pakistan government spends only 2 per cent of GDP on health and education. Weak health and education indictors reflect this low level of investment in social services.[10]

A 30-million strong middle class emerged, largely during a sustained period of economic growth between 2000-2007, leading to demands for economic and political reform.[11] According to the most recent World Bank assessment in 2014, Pakistan has enormous, as yet, unrealised economic potential.[12]

2.2 Political context

Pakistan's political and cultural landscape is 'a complex mix of overlapping and competing clans, sects, tribes, beliefs and practices,'[13] with a caste system, dictating occupation, applying to some ethnicities or language groups.[14] The language spoken often indicates ethnic identity and defines provincial boundaries. Urdu along with English are the official languages.[15] The state of Pakistan was established in 1947 by a process of partition from India following the end of British colonial rule.[16] It has a federal parliamentary system, an active media, a vibrant business sector, an industrial base, an improving road network and communications infrastructure, an established public service and banking system,[17] cultural plurality and an engaged political opposition. Pakistan also has an independent court and legal system.[18] The emerging middle class has begun to challenge entrenched political weaknesses. Widespread protests in 2007 succeeded in ousting the Musharraf regime leading to democratic elections, the latest of which was held in May 2013.[19]

Nevertheless, Pakistan has endured repeated periods of undemocratic governments and continues to be hampered by weak governance and administrative practices, high levels of corruption, a systemic system of political patronage and nepotism, serious security issues and volatile relations with neighbouring states.[20]

---

[2] Library of Congress (2005).
[3] Library of Congress (2005) p.7.
[4] UNDP (a) (2013).
[5] IMF(2014) p. 8.
[6] UNDP (b) (2013).
[7] UN Millennium Goal Indicators (2014) p.7.
[8] Kaplan (2012).
[9] *Ibid.* p.8.
[10] World Bank (b) (2014).
[11] Kaplan (2012).
[12] World Bank (b) (2014); Kaplan (2012).
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] Library of Congress (2005).
[15] *Ibid.* (Punjabi is spoken by around 44% , Pakhtu 15%, Sindhi 14% , Siraiki 10%, Urdu 8% and Balochi around 4%. The establishment of Urdu as the official is regarded by many groups as prejudicial to political and economic participation and opportunity.)
[16] Library of Congress (2005).
[17] Lodhi (2011).
[18] Legal professionals played a leading role in protests against the Musharraf regime.
[19] DFAT (2014).
[20] World Bank (b) (2014); IMF (2014); Kaplan(2012); US Library of Congress (2005).

Accusations of human rights abuses continue to be levelled at Pakistan authorities. Societal discrimination and violence based on caste, gender, religion, ethnicity and race is a deep-seated and persistent problem.[21]

2.3 Security context

Borders, decided on by colonial powers with little regard to local and regional sensitivities, have led to ongoing territorial tensions. Pakistan and India have fought three wars over the state of Kashmir since Independence. Pakistan has also had periodic border clashes with Afghanistan over the 'Durand line', a border originally drawn by the British. In 1971 Pakistan engaged in a civil war over a disputed election result that ended with the establishment of the People's Republic of Bangladesh as an independent state in what was East Pakistan.[22]

Pakistan faces a number of serious internal security challenges, including conflict between religious communities, sectarian violence, terrorist attacks and urban criminal activity. Pakistan's proximity to Afghanistan ensures that the future stability of Pakistan will to some extent hinge on what unfolds in Afghanistan as that country attempts to manage the political and security transition taking place in 2014. The provinces that lie on the border with Afghanistan are particularly dangerous areas. The Taliban and other militant groups have carried out a campaign of abductions, killings, bombings and attacks, making the frontier provinces particularly insecure. The government has undertaken a number of military operations against militants in Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta, Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Balochistan that has displaced around one million people within Pakistan, many of whom have been unable to return home.[23]

3. MIGRATION AND RETURN FLOWS

While Pakistan is itself a product of huge migration flows following partition in 1947, today it is a major emigrant-producing country, with an estimated 4.7 million Pakistani-born people residing outside the country in 2010.[24]

While current Pakistani emigrant flows are predominantly to skilled and unskilled expatriate labour markets in the Middle East, contemporary Pakistani migration must also been viewed in the context of its neighbour, Afghanistan.

Pakistan is the world's largest host of Afghan migrants (1.6 million[25] registered refugees, and an additional estimated 2.2 million[26] undocumented migrants);[27] while increased insecurity in the regions bordering Afghanistan since 2009 has contributed to sustained internal displacement of Pakistanis, who totaled 750,000 at the beginning of 2014.[28] Over the same period, Pakistani asylum flows to industrialised countries have also risen.

3.1. Pakistani labour migration to the GCC and the OECD

The vast majority of Pakistani emigrant flows are to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, whose oil-exporting economies rely heavily on large-scale expatriate labour forces from South Asia. In the first nine months of 2012 alone, over 460,000 Pakistani workers were deployed to four GCC states. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates collectively hosted some 2.9 million Pakistani workers as at 2012.[30]

In contrast to the GCC, Pakistani migrant flows to OECD countries are much smaller. The latest published data shows that approximately 105,600 Pakistanis migrated legally to OECD countries in 2011, and that this movement has grown over time, from 73,600 in 2005.[31] The largest OECD destination for Pakistani migrants in 2011 was the United Kingdom (43,000), which also hosts the largest population of Pakistani students studying abroad (10,000 in 2011).[32]

---

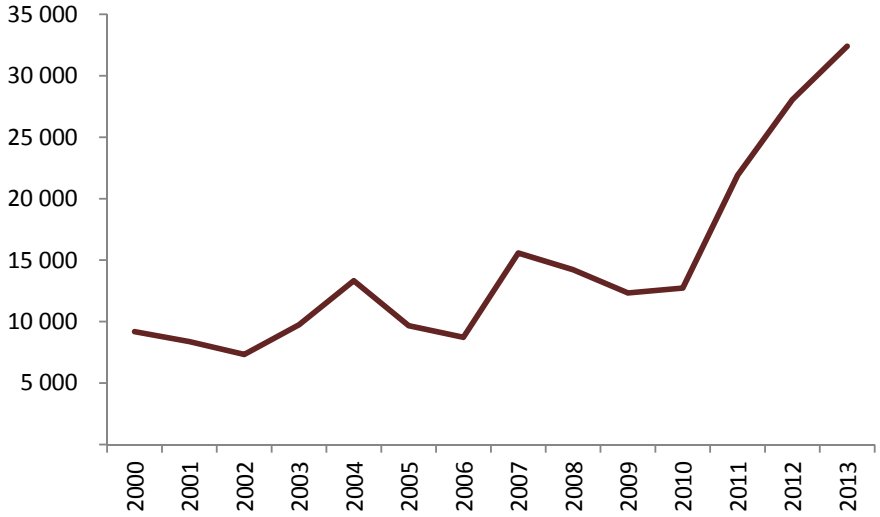
[21] US State Department (2013).
[22] When Pakistan was first established in 1947, it comprised both current-day Pakistan and Bangladesh (then known as East Pakistan), geographically separated by the land mass of India.
[23] UNHCR (2013); US State Department (2013); UK Government (2014).
[24] World Bank (2011), p. 3.
[25] UNHCR (2014). Data extracted on 1 July 2014.
[26] BEFARE (2009), p. 41. This estimate is based on Pakistan government records, as at 2008.
[27] More information on Afghan displaced populations is provided in the separate Afghanistan Country Report.
[28] As at beginning of 2014. UNHCR (2014).
[29] ADBI (2014), p. 60. The four GCC states were Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Oman and Qatar.
[30] ADBI (2014), p. 60.
[31] ADBI (2014), p. 60.
[32] ADBI (2014), p. 60.

The economic importance of labour emigration is significant and growing, with remittances accounting for a significant 6.2 per cent of Pakistan's Gross Domestic Product in 2012, up from 5.2 per cent in 2009.[33]

3.2. Pakistani asylum flows

As Figure 9.1 shows, there has been a significant increase in Pakistani asylum flows to industrialised countries since 2011. In 2013, over 32,400 Pakistanis lodged asylum claims in industrialised countries,[34] more than twice as many as in 2010 (12,700 claims).[35]

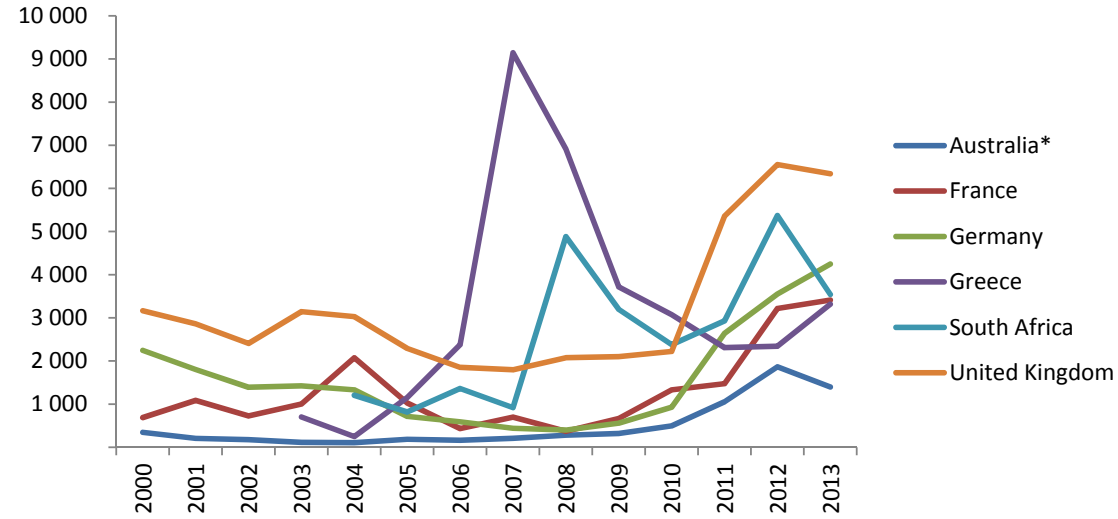
Figure 9.1: Pakistani asylum claims in industrialised countries*



Source:
UNHCR Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org/, extracted on 8 July 2014.
*in 44 industrialised countries as defined by UNHCR. Note: excludes South Africa.

As Figure 9.2 shows, European countries are major destinations for Pakistani asylum seekers, which also host a large the Pakistani diaspora. There are approximately 2.2 million people in Europe who identify Pakistani ancestry.[36]

Figure 9.2: Pakistani asylum claims in selected destinations



Source:
UNHCR Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org/, extracted on 8 July 2014.
*Note: Australia's asylum figures do not include illegal maritime arrivals (IMAs) who have been transferred to third countries or who had not been able to lodge a protection visa application. As such, asylum application flows to Australia are not necessarily reflective of IMA flows to Australia.

[33] World Bank (2013).
[34] The 44 industrialised countries as defined by UNHCR.
[35] UNHCR (2014). Data extracted on 8 July 2014.
[36] Abbasi (2010), p. 5.

Outside of the UNHCR-defined industrialised countries, South Africa is also a major destination of Pakistani asylum seekers, receiving over 3,500 Pakistani asylum claims in 2013 (a decline on 2012, when over 5,300 applied).[37] There have also been significant increases in Pakistani asylum seekers in Sri Lanka (from 152 in 2012 to over 1,400 in 2013), and Thailand (from 504 in 2012 to almost 1,250 in 2013).[38]

3.3.1 Pakistani return migration

Table 9.1 shows that Pakistanis represent a growing number of voluntary and forced returns from European Union (EU) states, with voluntary returns representing one third of all Pakistani returns between 2011 and 2013.

In 2013, Pakistanis were the second largest citizenship group of forced returns from the EU (after Albanians), with over 8,300 Pakistanis forcibly returned, and more than double the figure forcibly returned in 2011 (just over 3,900). Similarly, voluntary returns of Pakistanis from the EU have increased in volume, from just over 2,200 in 2011 to 3,600 in 2013.[40]

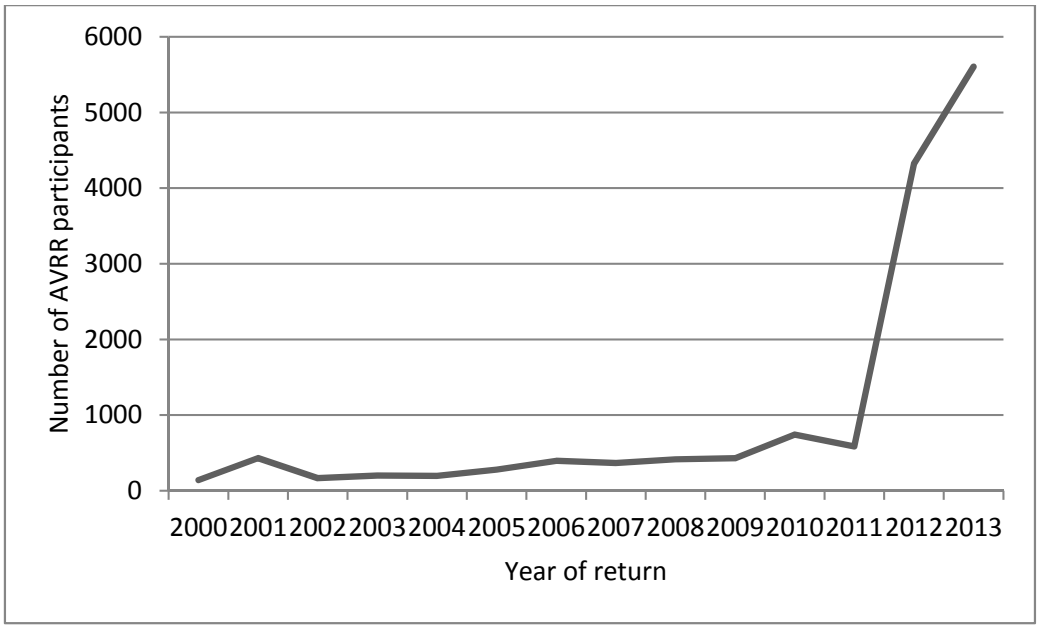
Table 9.1: Pakistani returns effected by European Union states, 2011 to 2013

	2011	2012	2013	Total	Percent
Forced returns	3 938	7 178	8 368	19 484	68
Voluntary returns	2 230	3 076	3 663	8 969	32
Total Pakistani returns	6 168	10 254	12 031	28 453	100

Source: Frontex (2014), p. 79.

Figure 9.3 shows the number of assisted voluntary returnees to Pakistan from 2003-2014. It is evident that from 2011 there has been a significant increase in these flows. As discussed in the final report, this can primarily be attributed to the introduction of an assisted voluntary return programme in Greece in 2010. The majority of returnees to Pakistan from 2010-2013 were coming from Greece.

Figure 9.3: Assisted voluntary return and reintegration flows to Pakistan, 2000-2013



Source: International Organization of Migration (IOM), 2014.

[37] UNHCR (2014). Data extracted on 8 July 2014.
[38] UNHCR (2014). Data extracted on 8 July 2014.
[39] Frontex (2014), p. 79.
[40] Frontex (2014), p. 79. Includes IOM-assisted returns. Breakdowns not available.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research in Pakistan were to provide insight into decision-making factors by those who had already returned and to assess the sustainability of return. Pakistan was one of eight different origin countries examined in the overall study.

To assess decision-making factors in return, this study follows the approach developed by Black et *al.* (2004).[41] The model is explained in Chapter 2 of the *Final report* and briefly summarised here. In essence, the model posits that decision-making on return is based on a combination of factors across five key areas. First, the political, economic and social conditions in the country of origin and second, the political, economic, and social conditions in the country of destination are considered (referred to in this report as the 'conditions in origin/ destination country'). Third, individual factors such as age, gender, and personal attributes are considered. Fourth, social factors, such as familial reasons and the role of networks are considered in the decision to return. The final element included in the model is policy incentives and disincentives, such as assisted voluntary return policies or deportation campaigns. This is examined in the Pakistani context in Section 6 below.

The research in Pakistan also sought to assess sustainable return, which is achieved in this study through a return and reintegration index (explained in Chapter 6 of the *Final report*). The return and reintegration index is based on three dimensions: economic reintegration where an individual is able to sustain a livelihood and is not in a situation of economic vulnerability; social and cultural reintegration whereby the returnee is actively incorporated into the receiving society, for example at the level of the local community; and safety and security reintegration where the returnee feels they have access to safety and justice on return. Each of these dimensions is assessed through five variables, which are included in Table 9.4 below. From these three dimensions an overall level of reintegration is determined through the index. This approach highlights the multidimensional nature of reintegration and sustainable return.

5. METHODOLOGY AND PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

A semi-structured interview guide was used to interview all participants. The requirements for eligibility to be interviewed were three-fold: First, they must have returned a minimum of 12 months before the time of interview; second, they had to have returned from an industrialized state (that is, Europe, North America or Australia); and third, they had to have participated in assisted voluntary return.

All interviews were conducted in Lahore. According to IOM staff, more than 80 per cent of all returnees to Pakistan return to Punjab, via the Lahore office. Forty individuals were called, of which 38 were spoken to. Four individuals refused to participate in the interviews and six did not show up at their scheduled interview time. As noted in the Final report in Chapter 3, recruitment for participants in Pakistan was much easier than in other countries.

Table 9.2 provides an overview of the basic characteristics of the participants included within the sample. The average age of participants was 33 years old, but ranged from 17 to 56 years, with two of the participants being unaccompanied minors at the time of migration. The sample was entirely male and all participants had returned to Pakistan as an individual. However, 35 per cent of the sample was married and had traveled abroad without their families, but had lived with their spouse prior to their migration. The substantial gender bias found within this sample is common in other publications on Pakistani return, as women often follow men once they are in more stable migration situations and are therefore less likely to return (Bolognani et *al.* 2009).

The participants were fairly diverse in terms of educational achievement. While one participant had no formal education and one had completed a Bachelor's degree, the majority of participants fell somewhere in the middle, with 26 per cent completing primary school, 48 per cent completing secondary school and 16 per cent completing some sort of technical or vocational education. Ethnic/religious self-identification also varied widely within the group. Forty-five per cent of participants identified themselves as Sunni, one participant as Muslim, one as Christian, while the remaining 9 participants did not give an answer.

Although education and religious beliefs varied somewhat, all participants in the sample had migrated to Greece, while 20 per cent had moved further into Europe, finally arriving in Austria and Belgium. Although Greece, as a border

[41] Black et *al.* (2004).

country of the European Union, is an important transit country for asylum seekers, participants in this study said they deliberately chose Greece as a destination country. This finding is corroborated within this study from the interviews in Greece wherein Pakistanis also stated that they migrated to Greece as the intended destination. A first reason may be that Greece was cheaper to get to for people of more modest background. The possibility to work, either through relatively easily obtained work permits or as undocumented migrants was also appealing to some migrants. One respondent, who had migrated to Greece and then to the Netherlands during an earlier migration episode decided to go to Greece the second time for this reason. Third, an already large Pakistani community within Greece may work to attract more and more migrants as people hear of the country through their relatives and friends, as was the case with roughly half of the participants in this study. Fourth, the journey to Greece from Pakistan can be done over land and is facilitated by a large network of smugglers (Bolognani et *al*. 2009).

Table 9.2: Overview of participants

	Freq	%
Age (in years)		
Range	17-56	
Average	33	
Sex		
Male	20	100
Female	0	0
Total	20	100
Country of birth		
Pakistan	20	100
Total	20	100
Nationality		
Pakistani	20	100
Total	20	100
Ethnicity		
Sunni	9	45
Unspecified	7	35
Christian	1	5
Muslim	1	5
No answer	2	10
Total	20	100

Highest level of education		
No formal education	1	5
Primary	5	26
Lower secondary	6	32
Upper secondary	3	16
Technical/ vocational	3	16
Bachelor	1	5
Total[†]	19	100
Type of returnee		
Individual	19	100
Total	19	100
Country of migration		
Austria	2	10
Belgium	2	10
Greece	16	80
Total	20	100

A unique element of the Pakistani interviews is that all participants worked in the country of migration. Forty-five per cent of participants worked in the formal sector and the remaining worked in the informal sector. The average income across both groups was €580 per month and ranged from €100/ month to €1200 per month. This desire to work in the destination country may in part explain the low rate of asylum applications among the sample. Overall, only four participants within filed an asylum claim within their destination country.

6. UNDERSTANDING THE DECISION TO RETURN

Following from the aims and objectives for this study, this section examines the decision making factors in return for participants in Pakistan. Table 9.3 provides an overview of the key decision-making factors of returnees based on the model summarized in Section 4 above. It is important to note that many participants reported multiple factors. Similar to the other countries in this study, conditions in Pakistan and policy incentives or disincentives played a very limited role in return decision making processes.

Table 9.3: Number of individuals with at least one decision-making factor, by category

Category	Freq	%	Sample size
Conditions in origin country	2	10.0	20
Conditions in destination country	14	70.0	20
Individual factors	7	35.0	20
Social factors	8	40.0	20
Incentives/ disincentives (policy interventions)	1	5.0	20

Conditions in the origin country were infrequently cited as influential in the decision to return in the Pakistani case. Only two participants cited reasons within this category, both indicating that an improvement in the security situation in Pakistan had influenced their decision to return.

Conditions in the destination country were much more influential in the Pakistani case, with 70 per cent of participants citing reasons within this category. Eleven participants stated that they experienced difficulty in finding work (in Greece) or not having the right to work. As mentioned in the previous section, 55 per cent of participants were working in the informal sector, however salaries across both those working in the formal or informal sector were quite marginal. Many mentioned the economic crisis in Greece as being impactful to their situation. Furthermore, two participants had stated that they were influenced in their decision to return by a lack of access to social services or healthcare, while two had been influenced by negative asylum applications.

Individual factors were somewhat frequently cited within the Pakistani case at 35 per cent. Within this category, six participants had stated that they were tired of living as undocumented migrants and one indicated that they were unable to meet their migration aspirations. The choice to return was often a mixture of individual and family preferences and sometimes the migrant disagreed with his family on the subject. Participants often felt guilty for returning before being able to make the desired amount of money, as the family had invested significantly in their journey. As was stated above, two participants within this sample were unaccompanied minors at the time of their migration. The researcher noted that feelings of responsibility towards the family may have been heightened for younger migrants. Two participants stated:

> ‘My father said, we paid to send you, now we fear the moment that we have to pay someone to bring you back. You’re not sending anything, it is better if you come back.’
>
> Male, age 28

> ‘My parents told me to come back but I didn’t want to, because I wanted first to earn the money back they had spent on me.’
>
> Male, age 18

Social factors were also cited quite frequently within the Pakistani case, as 40 per cent of participants indicated that a decision factor within this category had influenced their decision to return. Six participants stated that they felt a desire to be reunited with their families in Pakistan, despite sometimes feeling guilt or shame, as described above. In addition to wanting to reunite with family despite economic worries, two participants in the sample returned to Pakistan due to changes in their family circumstance. One participant returned after his brother had died and he had to marry his young widow to take care of her and their children. Another participant explained how he had recently arrived in Austria after having faced personal security threats in Pakistan and had just begun his asylum procedure when his father fell seriously ill. He immediately came back to Pakistan, where IOM had arranged a car to take him to the hospital. When asked whether he had considered not returning in light of the security threats he faced, he said:

> ‘When we were small and we couldn’t walk, he made us walk. Now that he is in need, how can we just leave him?’
>
> Male, age 38

In his opinion, his own risk did not free him from his responsibility to take care of his family.

Lastly, policy incentives or disincentives were only cited as being influential by one participant, who had wanted to benefit from a voluntary return programme offered by the destination country.

7. EXTENT OF REINTEGRATION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF RETURN

Table 9.4 shows the return and reintegration index used in this study to examine reintegration and sustainable return. Overall, 61.1 per cent of participants in Pakistan were considered reintegrated according to this index, which is significantly higher than the average (36.8 per cent) across all of the countries.

In the Pakistani case, the economic dimension featured the lowest rate of reintegration at 60 per cent. It is important to note, however, that this is still higher than the origin country overall average of 56.2 per cent. The economic outcome of the migration and return experience within the Pakistani sample was very diverse. Some participants felt that they had accomplished their migration goal of earning money and being able to save it. In other cases, the journey did not generate any profit and financial support from the IOM was insufficient to compensate this loss.

Table 9.4: Reintegration & return index

Variable	Threshold	Individual reintegration rates	n
Economic dimension:			
Employment	Individual is employed	95.0	20
Income sources	Individual's household has more than one source of income (more of a vulnerability indicator than reintegration)	30.0	20
Perceived economic situation	Individual does not consider themselves to be struggling	50.0	20
Debt	Individual has no debt	50.0	20
Land/ housing	Individual owns land or house	65.0	20
Percentage of participants reintegrated in at least 60 per cent of the economic variables		**60.0**	**20**
Socio-cultural dimension:			
Networks	Individual identifies themselves as having a network that they can rely upon for support	75.0	20
Transnational networks	Individual maintains a transnational network	84.2	19
Participate in local events upon return	Individual participates in local events	94.4	18
Self-perception of personal life	Individual is not generally dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their personal life on average in the last month	63.16	19
Membership in organisations upon return	Individual participates in one or more organisations	55.0	20
Percentage of participants reintegrated in at least 60 per cent of the socio-cultural variables		**83.3**	**18**
Safety and security dimension:			
Perceived safety in home	Individual identifies feeling safe in their home	73.7	19
Perceived safety in the community	Individual identifies feeling safe in their community	68.4	19
Trust in the government	Individual identifies that they trust the government	0.0	20
Access to justice	Individual feels that they could access justice if their rights were violated in their country of return	50.0	20
Experienced personal harassment since return	Individual has not experienced personal harassment since return	68.4	19
Percentage of participants reintegrated in at least 60 per cent of the safety and security variables		**63.16**	**19**
Percentage of participants that are effectively reintegrated across all three dimensions		**61.1**	**18**

All of the participants returned to the same community that they were living in before they migrated. While some were also able to buy or build a new house with the money they had earned abroad, others faced a direct negative consequence of their migration in that they had to sell their house to pay for their journey and were now renting. One participant stated:

> 'I sold my house. I had the dream to make a bigger house, but I could not even pay my own journey home.'
>
> Male, age 36

While 95 per cent of participants were employed, 50 per cent considered themselves to be struggling economically and 50 per cent were in debt, hinting at possible underemployment or insufficient compensation even when the participant had found employment. Those who were in debt (11 participants) commonly cited the need to pay off their migration costs (4 participants), fund their initial business set-up (5 participants) or other reasons such as meeting their daily needs, or marriage were the reason for going into debt. One participant said:

> 'We lost 5 to 6 years of our lives and whatever we spent on going there, we lost it. Now we come back and have to start from scratch.'
>
> Male, age 26

Being able to work in the migration destination also impacted the participants' economic reintegration. While almost all migrants to Greece had been able to work, this was more difficult for those in the Western European countries. One participant remarked:

> 'They should give permission to work to earn a living. And he should pay tax to contribute to the development of that country, so he is not a burden to that country. This is ultimately in their favour.'
>
> Male, age 40

In terms of socio-cultural reintegration, 83.3 per cent of participants were reintegrated according to the index, making it the highest level of reintegration out of the three different dimensions. This is also higher than the average of all origin countries at 64.2 per cent. Seventy five per cent of participants indicated that they had a strong network of family and friends that they could rely upon, while a striking 84.2 per cent had maintained transnational networks. Participation in local events was also very high, at 94.4 per cent of participants. One participant explained this as follows:

> 'After a long period, all are very glad. They take you on the shoulders. For two months, I was invited for dinners and everything. In our tradition, the whole neighbourhood welcomes you in such cases. There were 30 people at the airport.'
>
> Male, age 40

Only 37 per cent of participants stated that they were dissatisfied with their personal lives. Upon return, most participants said their families and friends had received them very well and that they were happy. One participant stated:

> 'In my neighbourhood they are just glad that I'm alive. God gave me a second life.'
>
> Male, age 25

This quote reflects that communities understand the potential risks associated with migration and highlights that these decisions are not made lightly. The high levels of socio cultural reintegration may be related to the country's large scale of migration and return. The large Pakistani community in Greece made it possible to stay close to cultural influences, as migrants reported that there were Pakistani mosques, networks of employers, information and family members. This is different from what Bolognani et al. identify as social and cultural dislocation, and political and social frustration and nostalgia to the host country, which they noticed among Pakistani returnees from the United Kingdom (Bolognani et *al.* 2009).

In regards to the last dimension, 63.16 per cent of participants had been effectively reintegrated in terms of safety and security, which is lower than the overall origin country average of 71.3 per cent.
This must be interpreted with caution, however, as due to the political circumstances and the advice of the local IOM office, the question 'do you trust the government' was not asked to participants. Therefore, in order to include Pakistan in the overall index, this question was reported for all participants as a no. If we were to remove the variable 'trust in the government' from the index and only consider the other four variables, 88 per cent of participants are reintegrated in at least two of the remaining four variables.

Seventy three per cent of participants indicated that they felt safe within their house, while 68.4 per cent felt safe within their community. Furthermore, 68.4 per cent of participants had not experienced harassment since their return to Pakistan. Although no general conflict or violence was taking place in Punjab, several returnees were involved in land issues or faced other threats. Nevertheless, most said they felt safe enough. There was also a striking resilience of returnees regarding safety and security issues. One participant whose two uncles were recently murdered in a village rivalry said that there was not a direct threat, but that it was always lingering. Many returnees wanted to reinforce that they felt safe in their community. Only those who said they had left for security reasons mentioned insecurity as an issue.

Furthermore, only half felt that they could access justice in Pakistan if their rights were to be violated. Many reported that they did not think that institutions such as courts and the police would be able to help them. They indicated that they felt more or less on their own in terms of governmental or institutional help.

8. CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it is evident that conditions in the destination country, as well as individual and social factors were the most important factors in return decision making for Pakistani returnees. The majority of participants in this study went to Greece to work, and returned either because they had achieved their goals of earning money, or because they had failed to contribute to the family income and instead further indebted their family money.

Overall, reintegration among the three dimensions was fairly high. In the Pakistani case, there are a few important points to remember. First, employment should not be taken as an indicator of economic success, as many people who were employed were also struggling economically. Second, the fact that most of the sample migrated to Greece may have boosted levels of socio cultural reintegration, as a large Pakistani community exists there. It is interesting to note the difference between the Greek returnees and the few Western European returnees. The Greek returnees showed a great level of resilience and acceptance of their life as it was. Having gained from the migration experience or not, the idea that they had had the chance to try their luck on a migration, in combination with having lived a harsh working life in Greece, seemed to reconcile them with their life after return. Western European returnees, in contrast, seemed to feel they had not been given a chance to participate in the destination society. Upon return, they found it much harder to accept that they had not been able to reach their goals, did not feel the IOM assistance was sufficient and had strong feelings of relative deprivation and problems with social and cultural integration.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abbasi, N. M. (2010) 'The Pakistani diaspora in Europe and its impact on democracy building in Pakistan,' International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, www.idea.int/resources/analysis/upload/Abbasi_low_2-2.pdf.

ADBI (Asian Development Bank Institute) (2014) 'Labor migration, skills and student mobility in Asia,' www.oecd.org/migration/Labour-migration-skills-student-mobility-in-Asia.pdf.

BEFARE (Basic Education for Awareness Reforms and Empowerment) (2009) 'Baseline study on illegal migration, human smuggling and trafficking in Pakistan', www.befare.org/Baseline%20Survey.pdf.

Bolognani, M., Rehan Zhid Khawaja, Nida Haseeb Khan, and Ahmed Waheed. (2009)
Return Migrants in Pakistan. London: Institute for Public Policy Research.

CIA (2014) 'Pakistan,' The CIA World Factbook, www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html.

DFAT (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) (2014) 'Pakistan country brief,'
www.dfat.gov.au/geo/pakistan/pakistan_brief.html.

The Economist (2012) India, Pakistani and Chinese Border Disputes: Fantasy Borders, 18 February 2012, www.economist.com/blogs/dailychart/2011/05/indian_pakistani_and_chinese_border_disputes.

Erdal, Marta Bivand. (2012) "'A Place to Stay in Pakistan': Why Migrants Build Houses in their
Country of Origin." *Population, Space and Place* no. 18 (5):629-641. doi: 10.1002/psp.1694.

Freedom House (2014) 'Freedom in the World 2014', www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world-2014/release-booklet.

Frontex (2014) 'Annual Risk Analysis 2014,' http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Annual_Risk_Analysis_2014.pdf.

Henley and Partners (2014) 'Visa Restrictions Index 2013,' www.henleyglobal.com/visa-restrictions/.

Institute for Economics and Peace (2014) 'Global Peace Index 2014: measuring peace and assessing country risks, www.visionofhumanity.org/#/page/indexes/global-peace-index.

International Food Policy Research Institute (2013) '2013 Global Hunger Index' Issue Brief 79, www.ifpri.org/publication/2013-global-hunger-index-0.

IMF (International Monetary Fund) (2014) 'Pakistan,' IMF Country Report No. 14/90, www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2014/cr1490.pdf.

Kaplan, S. (2012) 'Improving Pakistan's Political Economy: What foreign assistance should contribute', Global Economic Symposium (GES), GES Brief: Ideas 1/2012,
www.global-economic-symposium.org/solutions/publications/ges-briefs/ges-brief-improving-pakistans-political-economy-hq?bcsi_scan_14cf79d043f374a1=0.

Lodhi, M. (2011) 'Introduction', Pakistan: Beyond the 'Crisis State', ed. Maleeha Lohdi, Hurst & Co.

Maplecroft (2013) 'Human Rights Risk Index 2014', www./maplecroft.com/themes/hr/.

OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) (2012) 'Connecting with emigrants: a global profile of diasporas,' www10.iadb.org/intal/intalcdi/PE/2012/11326.pdf.

Transparency International (2013) 'Corruption Perceptions Index 2013', www.transparency.org/cpi.

UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office (2014) 'Pakistan – Country of Concern' Corporate report, www.gov.uk/government/publications/pakistan-country-of-concern/pakistan-country-of-concern.

UNDP (United Nations Development Program) (2013) (a) 'Annual Report 2013: Pakistan'.

UNDP (United Nations Development Program) (2013) (b) 'Human Development Report 2013: The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World'.

UNHCR (2014) 'UNHCR Population Statistics', online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org/.

UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) (2014) 'UNHCR regional operations profile: Pakistan,' www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e487016&submit=GO.

UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) (2013) 'UNHCR Global Report 2013: Pakistan,' www.unhcr.org/539809fbb.html.

United Nations Millennium Goal Indicators (2014) United Nations Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, www.millenniumindicators.un.org/unsd/mdg/SeriesDetail.aspx?srid=580.

US Library of Congress (2005) Country Profile: Pakistan Federal Research Division Accessed July 2014, www.lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Pakistan.pdf.

US State Department (2013) 'Pakistan 2013 Human Rights Report,' www.state.gov/documents/organization/220614.pdf.

World Bank (2014) 'Pakistan Overview,' www.worldbank.org/en/country/pakistan/overview.

World Bank (2011) 'Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011,' Second edition, www.siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLAC/Resources/Factbook2011-Ebook.pdf?bcsi_scan_14cf79d043f374a1=0&bcsi_scan_filename=Factbook2011-Ebook.pdf.

World Bank (2013) 'Personal remittances, received (% of GDP),' World Factbook, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS.

APPENDIX 10

SRI LANKA

COUNTRY REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

This report examines migrant decision-making in relation to return and the sustainability of assisted voluntary return to Sri Lanka. This country report is part of a comparative research project on the assisted voluntary return and reintegration of migrants. The project examines findings from 15 origin, transit and destination countries and relies on a mixed methodology involving quantitative and qualitative analysis. Sri Lanka is one of the origin countries.

The project has been conceived and commissioned as part of the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Irregular Migration Research Programme[1]. It was informed by the programme's first occasional paper, which recognized the need to establish an evidence-base for policy deliberations on irregular migration to Australia (Koser & McAuliffe, 2013). The project is supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Maastricht University.

This country report provides a brief, descriptive overview of the economic, political and security contexts as they relate to migration, and an overview of migration trends to and from Sri Lanka. This background information provides further country context for the comparative analysis in the research project's *Final report*. It also describes participants interviewed for the study and key results of the interviews conducted in Sri Lanka.

2. COUNTRY CONTEXT

Sri Lanka in global measures	
Human Development Index as at 2012. See UNDP (2013).	**High human development** 92nd out of 187
Peace Index as at 2014. See Institute for Economics and Peace (2014).	**Medium level of peace** 105th out of 162
Hunger Index as at 2013. See International Food Policy Research Institute (2013).	**Serious level of hunger**
Human Rights Risk Index as at 2013-14. See Maplecroft (2013).	**Extreme risk of abuse**
Corruption Perceptions Index as at 2013. See Transparency International (2013).	**Moderately corrupt** 91st out of 177
Freedom Index as at 2014. See Freedom House (2014).	**Partly free**
Visa Restrictions Index as at 2013. See Henley and Partners (2014).	**Low passport mobility** 88th out of 173

Sri Lanka has emerged from decades of civil conflict as one of the strongest performing economies in South Asia. However, it faces political, social and economic challenges as it continues to rebuild, address ethnic and religious grievances and develop a more stable economy.

Sri Lanka must also contend with a number of climate challenges that present risks to prosperity, including severe droughts and floods.

International migration is a significant and enduring strategy in Sri Lankan society, at both personal and national levels, as a means of improving education, social and economic opportunities. It has also been used by those seeking to leave Sri Lanka for security and protection reasons.

[1] Information on the Irregular Migration Research Programme is at: www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research

2.1 Economy

Since the end of the civil war in 2009, Sri Lanka has emerged as a leading economy in South Asia, recording economic growth of around seven per cent in 2013. In 2012, around 58 per cent of the Sri Lankan economy was based on the provision of services and around 30 per cent on industry.[2] In 2013, overall unemployment was recorded at around 4 per cent,[3]however youth unemployment was high at around 17 per cent. Remittances from a large migrant workforce of more than two million constituted around the 10 per cent of GDP.[4] Further developing overseas employment opportunities is a priority for the government.[5]

According to the World Bank, a key strategic aim of the Sri Lankan government is transitioning to an 'upper middle income country'.[6] Sri Lanka has made a number of advances towards this goal. There is a compulsory and free education system with 90.8 per cent literacy rates[7] and overall poverty has been reduced by half in the last decade.[8] However, there are a number of challenges to overcome with poverty rates remaining disproportionally high in the Northern and Eastern provinces where 68 per cent of the ethnic Tamil minority population reside. These provinces have been most affected by decades of war and displacement.[9] While the central government has begun a reconstruction program[10] the extent of the damage to infrastructure and continued displacement present significant economic and social challenges.[11]

Sri Lanka is also vulnerable to multiple climate risks, including typhoons, as well as regular floods and drought that pose a threat to growth and development in Sri Lanka over the long term.[12]

2.2 Political context

Sri Lanka is a former British colony, gaining independence in 1948.[13] The post-independence political landscape of Sri Lanka has to a large extent been shaped by ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity. The Sinhalese who constitute the majority ethnic community have monopolised political power since independence and have struggled to placate the various historical tensions in the community.[14] As a consequence, until end of the civil war in 2009, conflict was a constant feature of Sri Lanka's post- independence history.

Sri Lanka is a constitutional multi-party republic, initially based on the Westminster model moving to a semi-presidential system of government in 1978.[15] The current government, dominated by family allegiances to the president, was elected for another six year term in 2010.[16]

While the situation has improved since the end of the civil war, concerns about serious human rights abuses continue to be raised in a range of recent reports and recommendations by other governments and international organizations.[17] Attacks against Muslims and some Christian groups increased in 2013 and ethnic Tamils continue to be a target of discrimination.[18] The most difficult issues faced by the government is the reconstruction of the war ravaged provinces. Reconstruction efforts by the government have been recognized internationally.[19]

---

[2] Central Bank of Sri Lanka (2012).
[3] World Bank (March 2014).
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (2011).
[6] World Bank (March 2014).
[7] HRCSL (2012).
[8] IMF (2013).
[9] UNDP (2012) p.2.
[10] IMF (2013) and World Bank (March 2014).
[11] UNDP (2012) p.119.
[12] World Bank (April 2014) This is particularly true for northern and eastern provinces.
[13] *Ibid.* Main Ethnicities - Sinhalese 74.5%; Tamils 11.2%; Indian Tamils 4.2%; Moors 9.2% . Main Religions - Buddhist 70.2%; Hindu 12.6%; Islam 9.7%; Roman Catholic 7.6%.
[14] Jayasuriya and McAuliffe (2013).
[15] Ahmed (1996).
[16] UNDP (2012).
[17] UK Government (2014); US State Department (2013); Canadian Government (2014) and OHCHR (2013).
[18] *Ibid.*
[19] OHCHR (2012).

2.3 Security context

Since gaining independence from Britain in 1948, Sri Lanka has experienced a series of conflicts along ethnic and regional lines, as well as after a Marxist uprising in the 1970s and late 1980s.[20] Since 1983, there was almost continuous conflict between government forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) who wanted an independent state for Tamils. There was a peace accord in 2001, but tensions remained high with civil war resuming in 2006. The war came to an end in 2009 when the LTTE was militarily defeated by the Sri Lankan government.[21] However, the impact of the conflict continues to reverberate economically and politically in Sri Lanka.

Estimates of the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Sri Lanka vary. In 2013, the Sri Lankan Ministry for Resettlement estimated there were around 23,500 people remaining out of an original total of more than 758,700 displaced persons in Sri Lanka at the end of the war.[22] The United Nations High Commission for Refugees reports that there are currently more than 42,000 IDPs in their care, but suggests it is difficult to determine the true figure.[23]

Since 2009, there have been a number of formal mechanisms established seeking to examine the reasons for the conflict and to assist with reconciliation. In 2010, the Sri Lankan government established the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC)[24] that the conflict had been due to Sinhalese politicians failing to offer a solution acceptable to the Tamil community and the Tamil politicians fanning militant separatism. A United Nations sponsored report[25] in 2011 found evidence of war crimes and crimes against humanity by both sides, a finding rejected by the Sri Lankan government.[26] In March 2014, the United Nations Human Rights Council passed a resolution to launch an independent investigation into alleged atrocities during the civil war in Sri Lanka.[27] The resolution was rejected by the Sri Lanka government.

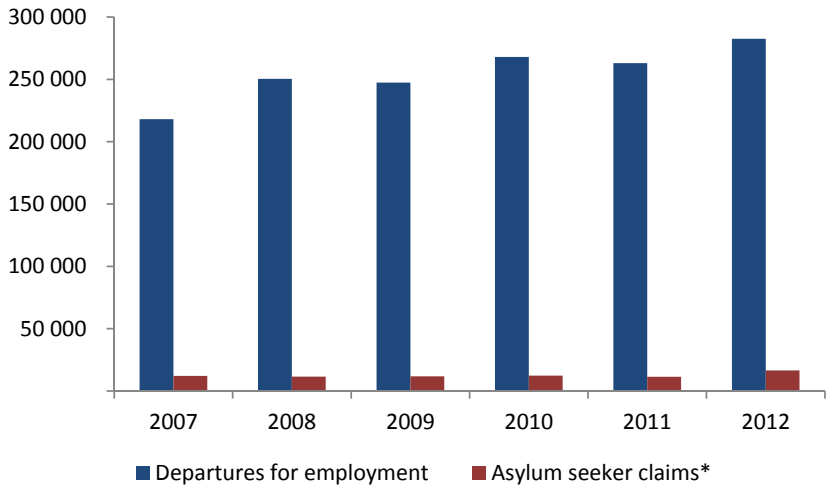
3. MIGRATION AND RETURN FLOWS

Sri Lanka is among the world's top emigration countries, with approximately 1.8 million Sri Lanka-born living outside the country in 2010.[28] Approximately 54 per cent were living in the Middle East, as migrant workers, and approximately 34 per cent living in industrialised countries.[29] Sri Lankan Tamils constitute the overwhelming majority of diaspora communities found in industrialised countries, while migrant workers (such as those to the Middle East) are largely Sinhalese.[30]

Sri Lanka ranks among the world's top remittance-receiving countries,[31] and migrant workers constitute the vast majority of current Sri Lankan migration flows. As Figure 10.1 shows, Sri Lankan migrant worker departures are significant in contrast to Sri Lankan asylum seeker flows to industrialised countries. Additionally, there has also been a recent increase in people seeking asylum in Sri Lanka, particularly Pakistanis. In 2013, over 1,400 Pakistanis sought asylum in Sri Lanka, compared with 152 in 2012.[32]

[20] UNDP (2012), p.3.
[21] Jayasuriya and McAuliffe (2013).
[22] Sri Lankan Government (2013).
[23] UNHCR (2014).
[24] LLRC (2011).
[25] Secretary-General's Panel of Experts on Sri Lanka (2011).
[26] Haviland (2011).
[27] Burke (2014).
[28] World Bank (2011), p. 3.
[29] Jayasuriya and McAuliffe (2013), p. 9.
[30] Jayasuriya and McAuliffe (2013), p. 9.
[31] As a percentage of GDP, as at 2009. World Bank (2011), p. 14.
[32] UNHCR Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org/, extracted 8 July 2014.

Figure 10.1: Sri Lankan migrant worker departures compared with Sri Lankan asylum flows



*lodged in the 44 industrialised countries as defined by UNHCR.
Sources: Central Bank of Sri Lanka (2013), p. 42; and UNHCR Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org/, extracted on 3 July 2014.

3.1. Sri Lankan migrant worker flows to the GCC

In 2012, Sri Lankan authorities recorded over 280,000 departures for employment reasons, accounting for approximately 23 per cent of all lawful departures by Sri Lankan citizens in that year.[33] The vast majority of employment-related departures are to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, whose oil-exporting economies rely heavily on large-scale expatriate labour forces from South Asia.[34]

Currently, emigration to the GCC is roughly evenly split between males and females, with males filling skilled and unskilled jobs in the construction and manufacturing sectors, and females working mostly in the household sector as housemaids, cleaners and nannies.[35] However, prior to the GCC construction boom in the early to mid-2000s, females represented closer to two thirds of all Sri Lankan worker departures.[36]

Expatriate remittances are an important part of Sri Lanka's economy. Overall, remittances accounted for a significant 10.1 per cent of Sri Lanka's Gross Domestic Product in 2012, up from 7.9 per cent in 2009,[37] and Sri Lankans in the GCC states contributed the majority (56 per cent) of all remittance inflows to Sri Lanka in 2012.[38]

3.2. Sri Lankan asylum flows and refugee populations

Given the nature of the civil conflict, Sri Lankan asylum and refugee flows have mainly comprised Tamils. India has historically been, and continues to be, the main host country of Sri Lankan refugees. At the end of 2013, it hosted some 65,700 Sri Lankan (predominantly Tamil) refugees.[39] Estimates suggest there are an additional 30,000[40] to 34,000[41] Tamil refugees who are unregistered or who do not reside within the UNHCR-managed camps. Almost all the Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in India reside in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, whose population is also predominantly ethnic Tamil.

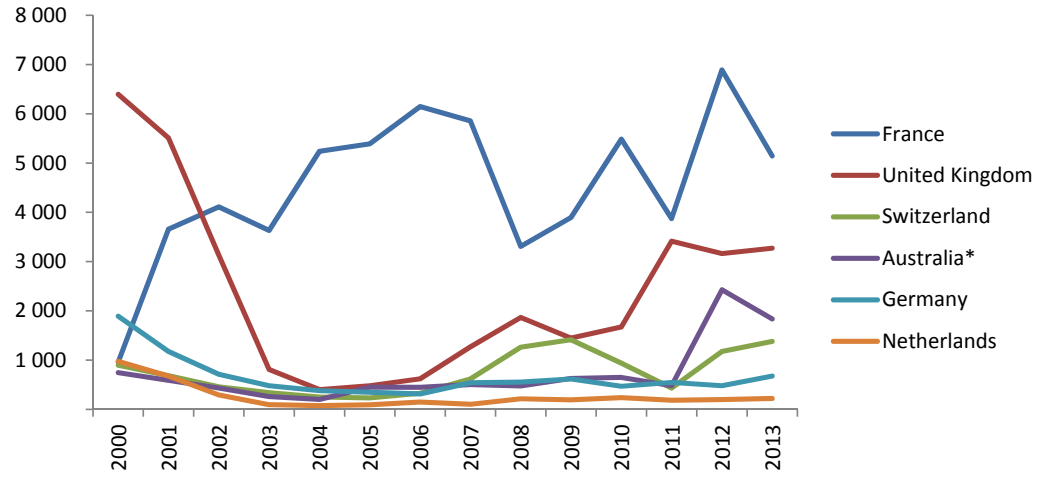
Outside of the thousands of Sri Lankan refugees hosted in India, Sri Lankan asylum seekers historically have travelled to specific destination countries. Figure 10.2 shows that since the end of the civil war in 2009, France and the United Kingdom have been the two major destinations for Sri Lankan asylum seekers. These countries also have significant Sri Lankan diaspora.[42]

---

[33] Central Bank of Sri Lanka (2013), p. 42.
[34] Gamburd (2010).
[35] Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (2013), p. 13-14.
[36] Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (2013), p. 13.
[37] World Bank (2013).
[38] Central Bank of Sri Lanka (2013), p. 42.
[39] UNHCR Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org/, extracted on 3 July 2014.
[40] IRIN (2012).
[41] International Crisis Group (2011), p. 32.
[42] Jayasuriya and McAuliffe (2013), p. 15.

In 2012, in addition to the Sri Lankan asylum claims to Australia shown in Figure 10.2, Australia received a significant number of Sri Lankan illegal maritime arrivals (over 6,400), equivalent to the total number of Sri Lankan asylum claims in France in that year.[43]

Figure 10.2: Sri Lankan asylum flows to selected industrialised destinations, 2000 to 2013



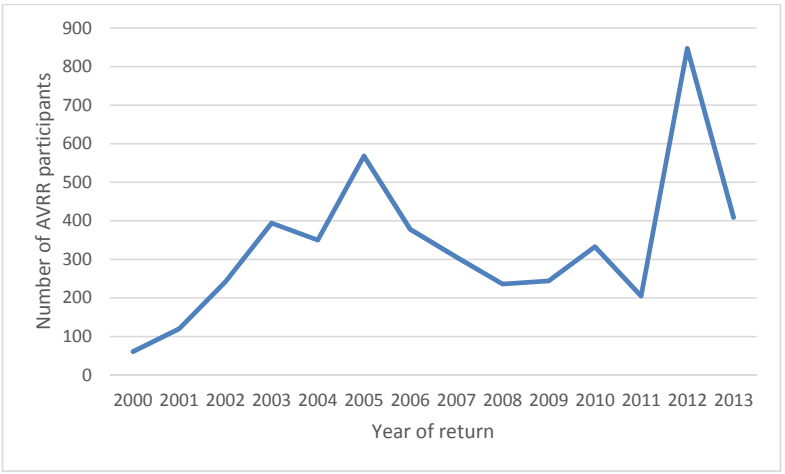
Source: UNHCR Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org/, extracted on 3 July 2014.
*Note: Australia's asylum figures do not include illegal maritime arrivals (IMAs) who have been transferred to third countries or who had not been able to lodge a protection visa application. As such, asylum application flows to Australia are not necessarily reflective of IMA flows to Australia.

3.3 Sri Lankan return migration

Recent violent conflict has had an influential impact on Sri Lankan return migration. Between the end of the civil war in May 2009 and January 2012, UNHCR assisted with the voluntary repatriation from India of more than 4,500 Sri Lankan refugees.[44] More recent figures are not widely available, however, in 2012, UNHCR reported that repatriations had slowed from 2,054 returnees in 2010, to less than 1,300 in 2012.[45]

Participation in return and reintegration assistance from all destination countries has grown in recent years, with a large jump in returnees after the end of the civil war in 2009 as illustrated in Figure 10.3. As this data was provided by the IOM, the significant drop seen in 2013 could in part be explained by the fact that assisted voluntary return and reintegration participants returned from the United Kingdom in that year went through a different organization in Sri Lanka instead of IOM. The United Kingdom is one of the main countries which sends back assisted voluntary return and reintegration participants to Sri Lanka.

Figure 10.3: Number of AVRR participants returned to Sri Lanka



Source: International Organization of Migration (IOM), 2014

[43] Jayasuriya and McAuliffe (2013).
[44] IRIN (2012).
[45] UNHCR (2012), p. 7.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research in Sri Lanka were to provide insight into decision-making factors in return and to assess the sustainability of return. Sri Lanka was one of eight different origin countries examined in the overall study.

To assess decision-making factors in return, this study follows the approach developed by Black et *al.* (2004).[46] The model is explained in Chapter 2 of the *Final report* and briefly summarised here. In essence, the model posits that decision making on return is based on a combination of factors across five key areas. First, the political, economic and social conditions in the country of origin and second, the political, economic, and social conditions in the country of destination are considered (which are referred to in this report as the 'conditions in origin/ destination country'). Third, individual factors such as age, gender, and personal attributes are considered. Fourth, social factors, such as familial reasons and the role of networks are considered in the decision to return. The final element included in the model is policy incentives and disincentives, such as assisted voluntary return policies or deportation campaigns. This is examined in the Sri Lankan context in Section 6 below.

The research in Afghanistan also sought to assess sustainable return, which is achieved in this study through a return and reintegration index (explained in Chapter 6 of the *Final report*). The return and reintegration index is based on three dimensions: economic reintegration whereby an individual is able to sustain a livelihood and is not in a situation of economic vulnerability; social and cultural reintegration whereby the returnee is actively incorporated into the receiving society, for example at the level of the local community; and safety and security reintegration whereby the returnee feels they have access to safety and justice on return. Each of these dimensions is assessed through five different variables, which are included in Table 10.3 below. From these three dimensions an overall level of reintegration is determined through the index. This approach highlights the multidimensional nature of reintegration and sustainable return.

5. METHODOLOGY AND PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

In Sri Lanka, 20 participants were interviewed using a semi structured interview guide. Participants had to meet three requirements to be eligible for an interview. First, they must have returned a minimum of 12 months prior to the time of interview; second, they had to have returned from an industrialised state (that is, Europe, North America or Australia); and third, they had to have participated in assisted voluntary return. In Sri Lanka, an exception was made and seven participants were returned from states outside of Europe, North America or Australia, specifically from Togo, Benin, Mali and Indonesia. Locating participants in Sri Lanka proved to be somewhat difficult due to the high rates of missed calls and refusals to participate. Overall, 120 people were called, of which 60 were spoken to. Of those 60, 30 individuals refused to participate in an interview and out of the 30 who did agree, five failed to arrive at the actual interview. It is important to note that this sample is not representative of returnees to Sri Lanka, nor is it reflective of the conditions of return in Sri Lanka as a whole.

Participants' ages ranged from 23 to 68 with an average age of 42. The sample consisted of 13 males and 7 females, with 50 per cent of participants being Sinhalese and 45 per cent being Tamil. The participants overall had a low level of education, as 75 per cent of the participants interviewed had only completed lower secondary school and 20 per cent had completed upper secondary. No participants within the sample held a Bachelor's or Master's degree, yet all participants did have at least some level of education. The sample included 16 individual returnees, 3 nuclear families and one single parent family. Countries of destination varied greatly, but popular destinations included the United Kingdom and Australia, followed by Switzerland and France, and a variety of non-Western countries including Indonesia, Togo, Benin and Mali.

[46] Black et *al.* (2004).

Table 10.1: Overview of participants

	Freq	%
Age (in years)		
Range	23 - 68	
Average	42	
Sex		
Male	13	65
Female	7	35
Total	20	100
Ethnicity		
Sinhalese	10	50
Tamil	9	45
Muslim	1	5
Total	20	100
Highest level of education		
Lower secondary	15	75
Upper secondary	4	20
Technical/ vocational	1	5
Total	20	100

Type of returnee		
Individual	16	80
(Nuclear) family	3	15
Single-parent family	1	5
Total	20	100
Country of migration		
United Kingdom	6	30
Australia	3	15
Indonesia	2	10
Mali	2	10
Togo	2	10
France	2	10
Switzerland	2	10
Benin	1	5
Total	20	100

Reasons for migration were largely economic in nature, as 65 per cent of participants indicated that they had migrated for employment purposes. A further 20 per cent had left Sri Lanka due to concerns about the security/political situation, while other reasons for migration included family reunification, education of children and fleeing a disapproving family. A minority of participants (42 per cent) had applied for asylum upon their arrival in the destination country. The United Kingdom and France, which have large Sri Lankan diaspora populations, were among countries in which participants applied for asylum. No asylum applications were made in Benin, Togo, Mali, or Australia. Most of those who applied for asylum appealed their negative decision, sometimes multiple times. Many participants were in the appeals process for a number of years.

6. UNDERSTANDING THE DECISION TO RETURN

Following from the aims and objectives for this study, this section examines the decision making factors in return for participants in Sri Lanka. Table 10.2 provides an overview of the key decision-making factors of returnees based on the model summarised in Section 4 above. It is important to note that many respondents reported multiple factors. It is striking that individual factors were so prominent in the decision to return, especially as compared to other countries within this study.

Table 10.2: Number of individuals with at least one decision-making factor, by category

Category	Freq	%	Sample size
Conditions in origin country	1	5.0	20
Conditions in destination country	8	40.0	20
Individual factors	17	85.0	20
Social factors	2	10.0	20
Incentives/ disincentives (policy interventions)	11	55.0	20

Return decisions in the Sri Lankan case were influenced by a variety of factors. Only one participant cited a condition in the origin country as a reason to return, specifically an improvement in the security situation in Sri Lanka. This participant had migrated to France for security/political reasons and returned when the asylum application was rejected.

Conditions in the destination country, on the other hand, were cited by 40 per cent of participants as being influential in making the decision to return, although this is lower than the overall origin country average of 59 per cent. These reasons were sometimes financial in nature, as two participants cited that they couldn't support themselves in the destination country. One of these participants one was working informally and the other was not working. Two different participants cited that they had difficulty finding employment and that this was part of their reason for return. They had migrated to Benin and Mali. One participant to the United Kingdom stated:

> 'I did not want to come back to Sri Lanka because I spent everything to (get to the UK). So then I am working, people are saying, 'you can get a lot of money' but I am not getting a lot of money. And then I had to rent a room and is so expensive- and I am working and getting no money. I worked for six months and after that so much headache- and so much work.'
>
> Female, age 40

Another participant returned from Benin stated:

> ''I didn't have a job there, so I had nothing to do. So there were some Sri Lankans who already informed IOM that they were coming back to Sri Lanka, so I also decided to go to IOM and to go back.'
>
> Male, age 34

Reasons within this category were also concerned with civil rights, as two participants stated that they were influenced to return from the lack of security in their destination country. These two participants had migrated to the United Kingdom and were living undocumented within the country. Three different participants cited that they had returned in part due to a lack of access to social services or healthcare and had migrated to Togo and the United Kingdom. All three participants were irregular, with the participant who migrated to Togo having arrived with no status and the two participants who migrated to the United Kingdom having overstayed tourist visas.

Sri Lanka is a highly unique case in that 85 per cent of participants indicated individual factors as being influential in their decision to return, as compared to the overall origin country average of 38 per cent. The most common factor within this category was the respondent feeling that they "had no other choice", with 11 individuals selecting this factor. Participants who indicated this were represented in all of the destination countries except for Benin and France and four of these 11 had applied for asylum. One participant who voluntarily returned to avoid deportation from the United Kingdom stated:

> 'I did not decided to leave actually, they decided. We tried at least for our daughter to stay there, but we could not. It was for our daughter, we wanted her to have a future. Now she is 20, always we were thinking about that.'
>
> Male, age 68

Furthermore, six participants indicated that they were experiencing psychological problems such as depression or frustration in their country of destination, and three participants returned due to an inability to meet their migration aspirations.

Social factors, similar to conditions in the origin country, were not commonly cited as being influential in the decision to return. Of the two participants who noted social factors, one stated a desire for family reunification in Sri Lanka and the other nostalgia about Sri Lanka and the way of life there. One of these participants was imprisoned in self-described "tough" conditions in Indonesia and felt that it would have taken too long to wait for a decision on his asylum application.

Lastly, Sri Lanka is also unique from the overall sample in that 55 per cent of participants indicated that policy interventions had influenced their decision to return. Six participants indicated that they had decided to return in order to comply with the law and leave voluntarily, while six participants indicated that they wanted to benefit from voluntary return programmes offered by their destination country. These six were returned from Australia Benin, Indonesia, Togo and the United Kingdom. One participant stated:

> ‘Initially I had hope that I was going to get some legal permission, but after that I had lost it. There was not really any chance. I heard about the reintegration assistance from IOM. This was an encouragement for me to go back.’
>
> Male, age 31

7. EXTENT OF REINTEGRATION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF RETURN

Table 10.3 shows the return and reintegration index used in this study to examine reintegration and sustainable return. Overall, 21.1 per cent of participants in Sri Lanka were considered reintegrated according to this index, which is lower than the average (36.8 per cent) across all of the countries.

Rates of reintegration varied substantially between the individual dimensions. Out of the three dimensions, reintegration within the economic dimension was lowest at 47.4 per cent, as compared to 56.2 per cent for all origin countries. While 80 per cent of participants was employed, 35 per cent of participants considered themselves to be struggling financially. Nine participants had their own business, including a beauty salon, delivery services, a taxi, grocery shops, a fishing enterprise and a textile business. Six of the businesses were formal and had been started with assistance and seven were deemed profitable, while two were considered struggling.

Only 30 per cent owned land or a house and 55 per cent of participants were in debt. The majority of loans (73 per cent) were taken out to fund the migration, with other reasons including meeting daily needs, business, housing and financing children’s education. The value of the debts ranged from 400 euro to 10,000 euro. Accordingly, financial outlooks held by returnees were somewhat mixed.

One participant had migrated for employment reasons but was unable to work in his destination country of Australia and had to use his assisted voluntary return and reintegration assistance to repay loans upon return to Sri Lanka. He stated:

> ‘When I returned I came back to the same place that I was four months back. I felt that again I had to start everything at the beginning.’
>
> Male, age 29

Another participant who had spent around 17,000 euros worth of informal loans from family and friends to fund his migration stated:

> ‘They said it was good I came back safely. My family is average type of people (in terms of socioeconomic status). They got upset because I lost everything on the trip. After receiving IOM assistance I was happy –after that it was a mix.’
>
> Male, age 40

Some participants specifically noted that assisted voluntary return and reintegration assistance was of great help to them. One participant who attended a one day business training seminar and received 1410 euro of business support opened a brick distributor business upon return. She stated:

> ‘The assistance from IOM really helped and supported me. There was a training here on business skills and they gave us ideas on different businesses. They really helped us with everything. The financial support really helped me to continue my business.’
>
> Female, age 39

Table 10.3: Reintegration & return index

Variable	Threshold	Individual rates	N
Economic dimension:			
Employment	Individual is employed	80.0	20
Income sources	Individual's household has more than one source of income	31.6	19
Perceived economic situation	Individual does not consider themselves to be struggling	65.0	20
Debt	Individual has no debt	45.0	20
Land/ housing	Individual owns land or house	30.0	20
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the economic variables		**47.4**	**19**
Socio-cultural dimension:			
Networks	Individual identifies themselves as having a network that they can rely upon for support	80.0	20
Transnational networks	Individual maintains a transnational network	45.0	20
Participate in local events upon return	Individual participates in local events	55.0	20
Self-perception of personal life	Individual is not generally dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their personal life on average in the last month	65.0	20
Membership in organisations upon return	Individual participates in one or more organisations	25.0	20
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the socio-cultural variables		**60.0**	**20**
Safety and security dimension:			
Perceived safety in home	Individual identifies feeling safe in their home	80.0	20
Perceived safety in the community	Individual identifies feeling safe in their community	80.0	20
Trust in the government	Individual identifies that they trust the government	45.0	20
Access to justice	Individual feels that they could access justice if their rights were violated in their country of return	80.0	20
Experienced personal harassment since return	Individual has not experienced personal harassment since return	75.0	20
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the safety and security variables		**80.0**	**20**
Percentage of participants that are effectively reintegrated across all three dimensions		**21.1**	**19**

Sixty per cent of participants were reintegrated in the socio-cultural dimension. Within this category, 80 per cent of participants identified as having a strong network of family and friends, 55 per cent participated in local events and 65 per cent stated that they were not dissatisfied with their personal life. Only 58 per cent of the participants felt that they had been positively received by their family upon return. Some participants noted that family members did everything they could to help them upon their return, but that this often very little as family members were also struggling. One participant stated:

> 'My family members are happy that I am back, but they are worried about the situation that we are having today. So they are worried, they also have their own things. For them. They gave some old furniture to us. All different things we manage. That was the only thing they could do.'
>
> Male, age 68

Of those that felt that they were negatively received, many indicated that some family members were happy to see them and other were not. Many also cited that their family was upset due to financial issues and perceived their migration as a financial failure. However, some participants were happy to have made at least basic gains since return. One participant stated:

> 'When I came to the airport (in SL) I had no idea what would happen to us. I had no idea what to do, where to live and all that. So at least now we have got shelter, and at least a little income is there –for that I am happy. You must be satisfied with what you have. When I think about that I am happy –That we are still surviving.'
>
> Male, age 68

Lastly, reintegration within the safety and security dimension was the highest across the three dimensions, with 80 per cent of participants being reintegrated in this area. This result is somewhat logical, as only 20 per cent of participants had migrated due to security or political concerns originally. Specifically, 80 per cent of participants felt safe in their homes and communities and felt that they could access justice in Sri Lanka if their rights were in some way violated. Furthermore, 75 per cent of participants had not experienced harassment since their return. However, only 45 per cent of participants stated that they could trust the government, often cited widespread corruption and bribery.

As was stated previously, only 21.1 per cent of Sri Lanka participants were effectively reintegrated across all three dimensions. Furthermore, 60 per cent of participants felt that their quality of life was worse after their migration than it was prior to it. Twenty five per cent felt that their quality of life had remained the same and only 15 per cent felt that it had improved. Thirteen participants stated that they wished to re-emigrate in the future and four had concrete plans to go. Of those that planned to remain in Sri Lanka, plans included developing and growing businesses, supporting children and starting families.

8. CONCLUSION

In the Sri Lankan context, it is important to note that individual factors were indicated by the highest percentage of participants as being influential in their return making decision. This was followed by policy incentives or disincentives and then conditions in the destination country. Forty two per cent of participants had submitted asylum applications and many had appealed their negative decisions.

In regards to reintegration, the overall number of participants reintegrated across all three dimensions in Sri Lanka was very low at 21.1 per cent. While reintegration in the safety/security dimension was fairly high, economic reintegration was the lowest. This suggests that future return and reintegration assistance should be focused on economic assistance in the Sri Lankan context, as is the current work of IOM in Sri Lanka.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ahmed, I. (1996) 'Communal conflict in modern Sri Lanka: search for a resolution', Vol. 1, No. 2 The International Journal of Peace studies.
www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol1_2/Ahmed.htm.

Burk, J. (2014) "UN takes step towards Sri Lanka war crimes inquiry", The Guardian 28 March 2014
www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/27/un-step-sri-lanka-war-crimes-inquiry.

Central Bank of Sri Lanka (2013) 'Sri Lanka Socio-Economic Data', Vol. XXXVI, June 2013, www.cbsl.gov.lk/pics_n_docs/10_pub/_docs/statistics/other/Socio_Econ_Data_2013_e.pdf.

CIA (2014) 'Sri Lanka', The CIA World Factbook, www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ce.html.

Gamburd, M. R. (2010) 'Sri Lankan migration to the Gulf: female breadwinners – domestic workers,' Middle East Institute, www.mei.edu/content/sri-lankan-migration-gulf-female-breadwinners-domestic-workers.

Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade & Development (2014) 'Obhrai visits Geneva to discuss situation in Sri Lanka', Government of Canada 25 March 2014, www.news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=829109.

Foreign & Commonwealth Government Office (2014) 'Sri Lanka-Country of Concern: latest update, 31 March 2014'.
www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-rights-in-countries-of-concern-sri-lanka.

Freedom House (2014) 'Freedom in the World 2014', www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world-2014/release-booklet.

Haviland, C. (2011) 'Sri Lanka rejects secret UN war report as 'flawed'', Retrieved July 2013, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-13069063.

Henley and Partners (2014) 'Visa Restrictions Index 2013', www.henleyglobal.com/visa-restrictions/

Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (2012) Annual Report 2012, www.hrcsl.lk/PFF/annual_report_2012/English.pdf?bcsi_scan_d20c301d7a026bb4=0&bcsi_scan_filename=English.pdf.

IMF (International Monetary Fund) (2013) 'Sri Lanka,' IMF Country Report No. 13/120, www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2013/cr13120.pdf.

Institute for Economics and Peace (2014) 'Global Peace Index 2014: measuring peace and assessing country risk', www.visionofhumanity.org/#/page/indexes/global-peace-index.

Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (2013) 'Migration Profile: Sri Lanka,' http://www.ips.lk/ips_migration/publication/migration_profile/migration_profile_ips.pdf?bcsi_scan_d20c301d7a026bb4=0&bcsi_scan_filename=migration_profile_ips.pdf.

International Crisis Group (2011) 'India and Sri Lanka after the LTTE,' Asia Report no. 206, 23 June 2011, www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/south-asia/sri-lanka/206-india-and-sri-lanka-after-the-ltte.aspx.

International Food Policy Research Institute (2013) '2013 Global Hunger Index' Issue Brief 79, www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ib79.pdf.

IRIN (Integrated Regional Information Networks) (2012) 'Sri Lanka: Tamil refugees slowly return from India,' 11 January 2012, www.irinnews.org/report/94622/sri-lanka-tamil-refugees-slowly-return-from-india.

Jayasuriya, D. and McAuliffe, M. (2013) 'Placing recent Sri Lankan maritime arrivals in a broader migration context,' Irregular Migration Research Program Occasional Paper no. 2, www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research.

LLRC (Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Committee) (2011) 'Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation', www.defence.lk/news/pdf/FINAL-LLRC-REPORT.pdf?bcsi_scan_14cf79d043f374a1=0&bcsi_scan_filename=FINAL-LLRC-REPORT.pdf.

Maplecroft (2013) 'Human Rights Risk Index 2014,' www.maplecroft.com/themes/hr/.

OHCHR (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) (2012, March 8) 'A/HRC/19/L.2 Promoting Reconciliation and Accountability in Sri Lanka', Nineteenth session of the Human Rights Council, Geneva, http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/LTD/G12/115/97/PDF/G1211597.pdf?OpenElement.

OHCHR (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) (2013, March 19) 'A/HRC/22/L.1/Rev.1 Promoting reconciliation and accountability in Sri Lanka', Twenty-second session of the Human Rights Council, Geneva, http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/LTD/G13/122/61/PDF/G1312261.pdf?OpenElement.

Secretary-General's Panel of Experts on Sri Lanka. (2011) 'Report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Experts on Accountability in Sri Lanka', United Nations, www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/Sri_Lanka/POE_Report_Full.pdf?bcsi_scan_14cf79d043f374a1=B18Ni2+AScn4+Ucrt0zg4PzrHP8iAAAAhVpfQQ==&bcsi_scan_filename=POE_Report_Full.pdf.

Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (2011) 'Annual Statistical Report of Foreign Employment – 2011', www.slbfe.lk/article.php?language=2&article=68.

Sri Lanka Ministry of Resettlement (2013) 'Notes on Performance', http://resettlementmin.gov.lk/site/images/stories/pdf/2013/english%20report.pdf?bcsi_scan_14cf79d043f374a1=0&bcsi_scan_filename=english%20report.pdf.

Transparency International (2013) 'Corruption Perceptions Index 2013', www.transparency.org/cpi.

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) (2012) 'Sri Lanka Human Development Report 2012: Bridging Regional Disparities for Human Development'. www.lk.undp.org/content/dam/srilanka/docs/localpublications/Sri%20Lanka%20Human%20Development%20Report%202012.pdf?bcsi_scan_14cf79d043f374a1=andrm/c6QGNGgMnEU3sdKWzeRzIfAAAAwTEqPA==&bcsi_scan_filename=Sri%20Lanka%20Human%20Development%20Report%202012.pdf.

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) (2013) 'Human Development Report 2013: The Rise of the South', http://hdr.undp.org/en.

UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) (2012) 'Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Asylum-Seekers from Sri Lanka,' 21 December 2012, www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/50d1a08e2.pdf.

UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) (2014) '2014 UNHCR regional operations profile – South Asia: Sri Lanka', http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e4878e6&submit=GO.

US State Department (2013) 'Sri Lanka 2013 Human Rights Report', www.state.gov/documents/organization/220616.pdf.

World Bank (2011) 'Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011,' second edition, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLAC/Resources/Factbook2011-Ebook.pdf?bcsi_scan_14cf79d043f374a1=0&bcsi_scan_filename=Factbook2011-Ebook.pdf.

World Bank (2013) 'Personal remittances, received (% of GDP),' World Factbook, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS.

APPENDIX 11

SUDAN

COUNTRY REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

This report examines migrant decision-making in relation to return and the sustainability of assisted voluntary return to Sudan. This country report is part of a comparative research project on the assisted voluntary return and reintegration of migrants. The project examines findings from 15 origin, transit and destination countries and relies on a mixed methodology involving quantitative and qualitative analysis. Sudan is one of the origin countries.

The project has been conceived and commissioned as part of the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Irregular Migration Research Programme[1]. It was informed by the program's first occasional paper, which recognized the need to establish an evidence-base for policy deliberations on irregular migration to Australia (Koser & McAuliffe, 2013). The project is supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Maastricht University.

This country report provides a brief, descriptive overview of the economic, political and security contexts as they relate to migration, and an overview of migration trends to and from Sudan. This background information provides further country context for the comparative analysis in the research project's *Final report*. It also describes participants interviewed for the study and key results of the interviews conducted in Sudan.

2. COUNTRY CONTEXT

Sudan in global measures	
Human Development Index as at 2012. See UNDP (2013).	**Low human development** 171st out of 187
Peace Index as at 2014. See Institute for Economics and Peace (2014).	**Very low level of peace** 157th out of 162
Hunger Index as at 2013. See International Food Policy Research Institute (2013).	**Alarming level of hunger**
Human Rights Risk Index as at 2013-14. See Maplecroft (2013).	**Extreme risk of abuse**
Corruption Perceptions Index as at 2013. See Transparency International (2013).	**Extremely corrupt** 174th out of 177
Freedom Index as at 2014. See Freedom House (2014).	**Not free**
Visa Restrictions Index as at 2013. See Henley and Partners (2014).	**Low passport mobility** 88th out of 173

This section focuses on the Republic of Sudan, although much of its economic, political, security and migration context is intertwined with South Sudan.

Since independence in 1956, Sudan has fought two long civil wars between the mainly Arab, Muslim north and the mainly Christian south which sought – and eventually won - independence from the north. A complicated process of negotiation ended the second civil war in 2005. Based on the results of a referendum the secession of South Sudan took place in 2011.

The implications of the secession are still unfolding for Sudan. This has been complicated by the recent destabilisation in South Sudan that threatens the flow of crucial oil revenues for both countries. Ongoing internal conflict in Darfur and other southern regions of Sudan also continues to inhibit Sudan's progress towards political and economic stability.

[1] Information on the Irregular Migration Research Programme is at: www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research

2.1 Economy

Sudan's economy is subject to a number of internal and external pressures. At a global level, international sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council have had a significant impact on Sudan's ability to conduct business internationally.[2] At a national level, the secession of South Sudan in 2011 had a fundamental impact on the structure of Sudan's economy with the loss of oil fields to South Sudan. The pipelines that originate in South Sudan, transit Sudan where the refineries are also located. Therefore, both countries are reliant on each other to maintain oil revenues and have been forced to cooperate.[3] However, the agreements reached so far have been disrupted by a range of political and security issues.[4]

The secession of South Sudan also depleted Sudan's foreign exchange reserves, the Sudanese pound sharply devalued, and according to a recent report, the overall economy has been contracting at a rate of around 10 per cent annually.[5] More optimistic assessments suggest that Sudan's Gross Domestic Product grew by 3.6 per cent in 2013.[6] In response to an inflation rate that reached as high as 45 per cent in 2012, the government imposed severe austerity measures, including substantial reductions in government subsidies on food and fuel.[7] Inflation remained high in 2013 at a rate of 36 per cent.[8]

A key factor that makes a comprehensive assessment of Sudan's economy challenging is the disparity of indicators between the relatively stable central and northern regions of Sudan and regions such as Darfur, South Kordofan and the Blue Nile affected by long-term, ongoing conflict.[9]

In addition to a range of security related problems, Sudan's economy is vulnerable to environmental factors such as flooding, drought and environmental degradation and famine is not uncommon.[10] According to the International Monetary Fund, Sudan's economic outlook is vulnerable to further political instability and volatile security situations within Sudan and in relation to South Sudan.[11]

2.2 Political context

The Federal Republic of Sudan is an authoritarian regime which has been dominated by the National Congress Party (NCP) since 1989. Omar Hassan al-Bashir has ruled as the president of Sudan for more than two decades.Elections were held in 2010 in which opposition parties were permitted to participate for the first time, but the process and outcome of the election was regarded as flawed by international observers. The next elections are due in 2015.[12]

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that ended the second civil war signed in 2005, and provided for a referendum on the creation of the new state of South Sudan, included an Interim National Constitution (INC) that was, in part, intended to resolve the future of regions such as the Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan in southern Sudan. It was intended that these regions would be given the opportunity to decide on greater autonomy from Khartoum. A referendum in Abyei State was also promised to decide whether the region would stay with Sudan or become part of South Sudan. There has been little progress on these measures to-date.[13]

The ethnic, tribal and religious make-up of Sudan is integral to any understanding of the complex political forces at play in Sudan, some of whom are organized into militia groups opposing government security forces.[14] However, identifying accurate information on the demographic make-up of Sudan is difficult. According to UNDP, in 2012, approximately 60

---

[2] DFAT (2014). The UNSC adopted resolution 1556 (2004) on 30 July 2004, imposing sanctions in response to the ongoing humanitarian crisis and widespread human rights violations in Sudan, including continued attacks on civilians. The sanctions regime has been amended and renewed by several subsequent UNSC resolutions.

[3] BBC (2014)

[4] IMF (2013); Downie (2011); UK Border Agency (2012); New York Times (2011). Sudan lost almost 75 per cent of its oil production to South Sudan.

[5] Omestad (2013).

[6] Eltahir et. al.(2014). It is not clear what this estimate is based on and if the disparity between Khartoum and other regions and other factors were taken into account whether the GPD would register any growth.

[7] IMF (2013); Reuters (2012).

[8] IMF (2013).

[9] UNDP (2012) p.34. (Work on the UNDP report commenced in 2009, before the secession of South Sudan, however, the final report is based on data concerning Sudan only).

[10] Downie (2011)

[11] IMF (2013).

[12] The New York Times (2011); US State Department (2013) .

[13] US Institute of Peace (2014); US State Department (2013). (The Comprehensive Peace Agreement is a collection of agreements. The final North/South CPA was signed in January 2005, granted the southern rebels autonomy for six years followed by a referendum on independence for Southern Sudan).

per cent of the Sudanese population were Arab and 40 per cent of non-Arab origin. Within these broader groupings UNDP reported that there are 16 major ethnic groups and 527 tribes, speaking over 320 languages.[15] According to Sudanese government sources around 97 per cent of the population are Muslim and three per cent Christians.[16] Many Sudanese of the main faith groups also observe Indigenous beliefs.[17]

The INC cites Islamic law as a source of legislation in the country and the official laws and policies of the government and ruling NCP favour Islam.[18] Restrictions on religious freedoms and other serious human rights concerns are widely reported.[19]

2.3 Security context

Sudan is geographically located in a region that contains some of the most unstable countries in the world, and since it gained independence Sudan has had a long history of interference in neighbouring states.[20] The multifarious and confusing interconnections between governments and the various guerrilla movements throughout the region results in an extremely volatile security and political mix.[21]

Since independence in 1956, Sudan has been embroiled in two major civil wars[22] that have been broadly characterised as wars between the politically and economically dominant Arab, Muslim, northerners of Sudan, against the marginalised, mainly African, Christians in the south. Conflict in Sudan has often also been mired in more localised disputes based on territory, resources, ethnic, tribal and religious rivalry and grievances.[23]

Ongoing conflict continues in Dafur between government security forces and various militia groups, representing ethnic and rival religious groupings opposed to the Khartoum government. There is also conflict with militias in the Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan regions located in the south who remain in limbo following the secession of South Sudan and resent what they see as their neglect and mistreatment by the Khartoum authorities.[24]

Local and intercommunal violence across the border between different groups from Sudan and South Sudan relating to cattle raids and grazing rights are also frequent. More serious conflict between the two countries has flared over the future of the Abyei region.[25]

3. MIGRATION AND RETURN FLOWS

It is important to understand current migration flows from Sudan in relation to flows from South Sudan and other neighbouring countries. Sudan and South Sudan share complex, evolving, and interlinked migration histories. Sudan and South Sudan are both major sources of refugees residing in neighbouring countries; major sources of asylum flows to industrialised countries; major host and transit countries of refugees and irregular migrants from neighbouring countries (both also host refugees from each other); and both experience large-scale internal displacement.

Inter-ethnic conflict and persecution, intermixed with environmental change and food insecurity are among the most visible drivers of Sudanese displacement. Migration also manifests more broadly as a livelihood strategy through seasonal nomadic pastoralist migration, and migrant worker flows to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states.

[14] Eltahir et.al. (2014); Deressa et. al. (2013); US State Department (2013); UK Border Control (2013); UNDP (2012).
[15] UNDP (2012) pp. 67 and 94.
[16] US State Department (2012). The International Religious Freedom Report advises that the Culture and Information Ministry of Sudan is the source for these estimates.
[17] Ibid.
[18] US State Department (2013); Prunier (2008).
[19] DFAT (2014); US Institute of Peace (2014); US State Department (2013); US State Department (2012); UNDP(2012); UK Border Agency (2012).
[20] UK Border Agency (2013).
[21] Prunier (2008).
[22] Civil wars between 1956-1972 and 1983 -2005.
[23] Wilson (2014); Osmestad (2013); US State Department (2013); UK Border Control (2013); UNDP (2012).
[24] Wilson (2014).
[25] BBC (2014).

3.1. Displaced populations within and from Sudan and South Sudan

As shown in Table 11.1, Sudan and South Sudan host displaced people from neighbouring countries, including the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Chad. Both also host large numbers of displaced persons from each other, as well as over a million internally-displaced persons in both countries.

Table 11.1: Displaced populations within Sudan and South Sudan

Within Sudan		**Within South Sudan**	
Internally-displaced persons (a)	1 873 300	Internally-displaced persons (b)	1.1 million
Non-Sudanese		**Non-South Sudanese**	
From South Sudan (b)**	86 444	From Sudan (c)	219 346
From Eritrea (a)	109 640	From D. R. of Congo (c)	14 495
From Chad (a)	41 666	From Ethiopia (c)	4 959
From Ethiopia (a)	5 108	From Central African Republic (c)	1 873
From Central African Republic (a)	2 183	From others	Unknown
From others (a)	1 241		
Total (excl. South Sudan) (a) **	**159 838**	**Total (c)**	**240 673**

Sources:
(a) as at 31 December 2013. Custom extract from UNHCR's Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org, on 22 July 2014.
(b) as at 17 July 2014. UNHCR (2014, July), 'South Sudan Emergency: Regional Overview.'
(c) as at 30 June 2014. UNHCR (2014, June), 'Refugee Population Statistics in South Sudan.'
Notes:
**The total figure of populations from Eritrea, Chad, Ethiopia, CAR and others is accurate as at December 2013. The figure for the population from South Sudan, however, is valid as at 17 July 2014. Note that the majority of South Sudanese in Sudan became displaced after December 2013. See UNHCR (2014, July) for more information.

In addition to the registered refugee populations listed in Table 11.1, it is estimated that, in 2013, South Sudan hosted 'tens of thousands' of undocumented migrants from Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia, mostly in the capital, Juba.[26] Earlier, in 2012, the South Sudan government reported that it had deported more than 500 irregular migrants to neighbouring countries.[27]

Sudan is a also major transit country for irregular migrants, particularly Eritreans, travelling overland towards Egypt, Israel and Europe. It is estimated that between 1,000 and 3,000 Eritreans enter Sudan every month.[28]

As shown in Table 11.2, Sudan and South Sudan are both sources of over half a million refugees each within neighbouring countries, including between each other. Among the almost 530,000 South Sudanese refugees in neighbouring countries as at 17 July 2014, 80 per cent arrived after the onset of South Sudan's political crisis in December 2013.[29]

[26] RMMS (2013, August), p. 89.
[27] RMMS (2013, August), p. 90.
[28] RMMS (2013, August), p. 91.
[29] UNHCR (2014, July).

Table 11.2: Displaced populations from Sudan and South Sudan

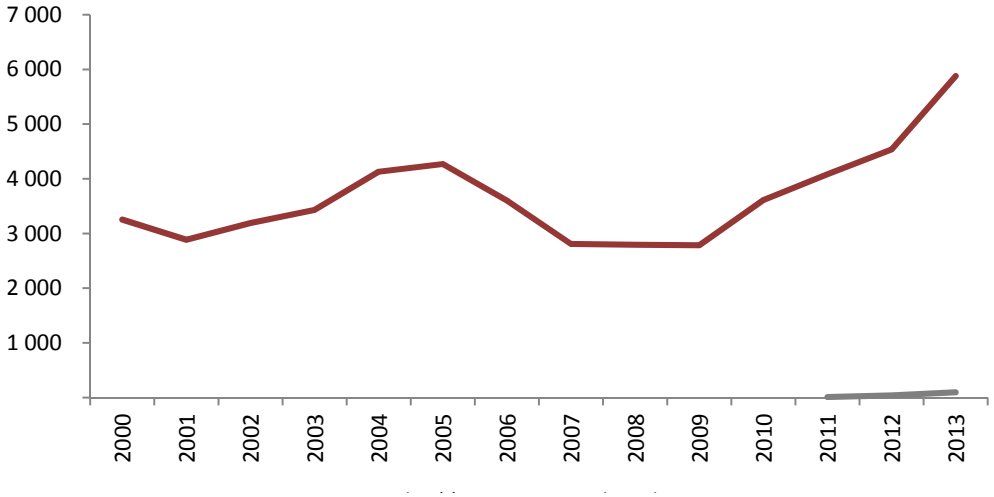
From Sudan (a)		From South Sudan (b)	
In nearby countries		**In nearby countries**	
In Chad	352 948	In Ethiopia	215 647
In South Sudan**	208 130	In Uganda	141 971
In Ethiopia	33 582	In Sudan	86 444
In Egypt	12 927	In Kenya	85 837
In Kenya	3 907	*Of which, arrived since 15 Dec. 2013^*	*418 841*
Total	**611 494**	**Total**	**529 899**

Sources:
(a) as at 31 December 2013. Custom extract from UNHCR's Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org, on 22 July 2014.
(b) as at 17 July 2014. UNHCR (2014, July), 'South Sudan Emergency: Regional Overview.'
Notes:
**This figure is valid as at 31 December 2013, and differs from the more recent figure (as at 30 June 2014), published in UNHCR (2014, June), which shows 219,346 Sudanese displaced in South Sudan.
^The date on which the South Sudanese political crisis began, as used by UNHCR (2014, July).

3.2. Sudanese asylum seekers and resettlement to industrialised countries

In comparison with refugee flows to neighbouring countries, asylum seeker flows to industrialised countries from Sudan and South Sudan are minor, which is likely to reflect their inability to migrate further afield.[30] Figure 11.1 shows total asylum flows from Sudan to 44 industrialised countries since 2000. Note that prior to 2011, these flows comprise asylum seekers from both Sudan and South Sudan, before the latter's secession.

Figure 11.1: Sudanese asylum flows to industrialised countries*



Sources:
*44 industrialised countries as defined by UNHCR.
**Figures up to and including 2011 include people from present-day South Sudan.

Table 11.3 shows key industrialised destination countries for Sudanese and South Sudanese asylum seekers in 2013, noting that statistics on South Sudanese asylum flows to industrialised countries are very small.

[30] Cf. Carling (2002).

Table 11.3: Top five industrialised destinations for asylum seekers in 2013

Sudanese asylum applications in industrialised countries*		South Sudanese asylum applications in industrialised countries*	
Top 5 destinations in 2013		**Top 5 destinations in 2013**	
France	1 509	Austria	26
United Kingdom	919	Germany	22
Norway	886	Norway	20
Germany	402	Switzerland	19
Sweden	299	United States	7
Others	1 863	Others	0
Total	**5 878**	**Total**	**94**

Sources:
Custom extract from UNHCR's Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org, on 22 July 2014.
*44 industrialised countries as defined by UNHCR.

Sudan is also a major source of refugee resettlement to industrialised countries. The United States resettled over 13,400 refugees from Sudan between 2003 and 2012,[31] noting that published resettlement statistics do not detail the proportion of resettled Sudanese refugees from South Sudan.[32]

Sudan was also the largest source of UNHCR-referred refugees resettled in Australia between 2003–04 and 2007–08.[33] Many of the Sudanese resettled in Australia are understood to be from South Sudan, with at least one source estimating there were 30,000 South Sudanese living in Australia, as at early 2013.[34]

3.3. Sudanese migrant worker populations

Sudan is a major exporter of migrant labour. According to the Sudan government, there were almost 800,000 Sudanese working abroad in early 2010.[35] Table 11.4 shows the populations of Sudanese migrant workers in 2010 who were registered as such by the Sudan government.[36] The vast majority were in the GCC states, whose oil-exporting economies rely heavily on expatriate labour from South Asia and the Horn of Africa.

Remittances accounted for 0.6 per cent of Sudan's GDP in 2013, a decline from 2009 (2.6 per cent).[37] Data on remittance flows to South Sudan is not available.

Table 11.4: Sudanese migrant workers as at 9 March 2010

Location	Sudanese migrant workers*	Percent
GCC states**	652 258	82
Libya***	58 890	7
Iraq	52 441	7
Yemen	19 575	2
Egypt	1 394	0
Lebanon	1 215	0
Others	8 070	1
Total	793 843	100

Sources: IOM (2011), p. 127.
Notes:
*Data is as at 9 March 2010, and based on records of the Sudan Government's Secretariat of Sudanese Working Abroad. Note that the data pre-dates South Sudan's independence.
**Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, and Bahrain combined.
***Note that these figures pre-date the Libyan civil war of 2011, which resulted in the displacement or evacuation of much of the migrant worker population there.

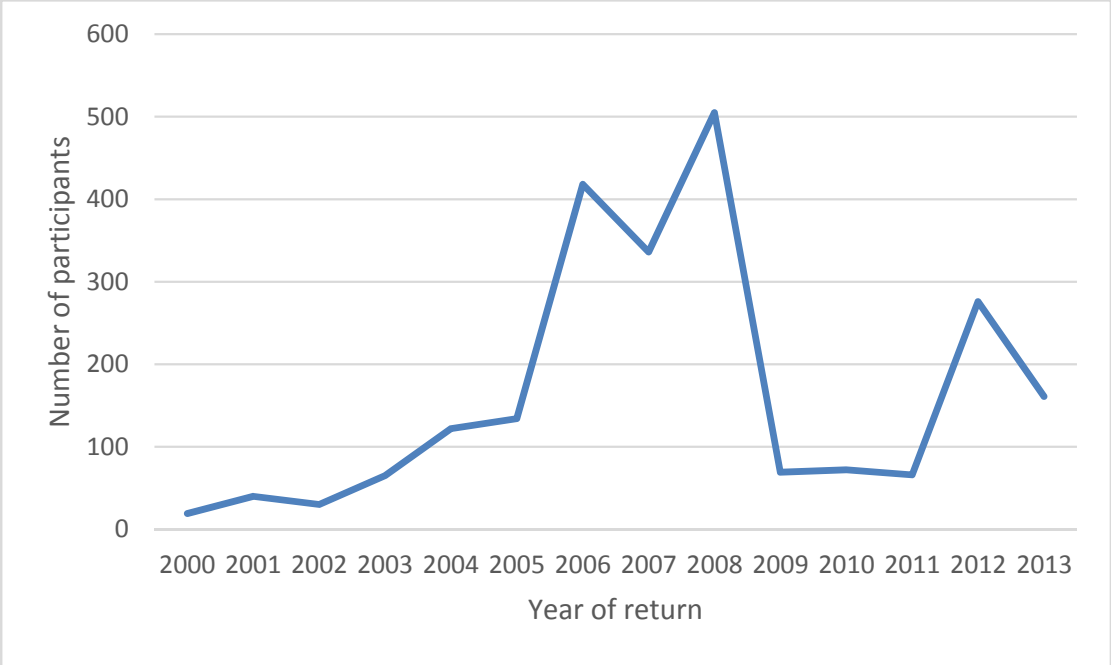
[31] Refers to US fiscal years, i.e. October 2003 to September 2012.
[32] US Department of Homeland Security (2013).
[33] DIBP (2013), p. 11. Refers to Australian financial years, i.e. July 2003 to June 2008.
[34] Marlow, et al. (2013), p. 7.
[35] IOM (2011), p. 127. Note that this figure was calculated prior to South Sudan's independence. It is not known what proportion would be from South Sudan.
[36] According to IOM, it is "highly likely" that these figures are undercounted. See IOM (2011), p. 55.
[37] World Bank (2013).

3.4. Sudanese return migration

In the lead up to and following South Sudan's independence in mid-2011, large numbers of displaced South Sudanese repatriated to South Sudan. IOM estimates that over 1.8 million South Sudanese repatriated between 2007 and the end of 2012.[38] There were also reports of resettled South Sudanese refugees, including in Australia, returning to South Sudan.[39]

The number of assisted voluntary return participants returned to Sudan is illustrated in Figure 11.2. Overall numbers remain relatively small. In 2008 assisted voluntary return participant rates hit an all-time high, with 505 individuals participating, while a smaller spike occurred again in 2012, with 276 participants.

Figure 11.2: Number of AVR participants returned to Sudan



Source: International Organization of Migration (IOM), 2014.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research in Sudan were to provide insight into decision-making factors in return by those who had already returned and to assess the sustainability of return. Sudan was one of eight different origin countries examined in the overall study.

To assess decision-making factors in return, this study follows the approach developed by Black et al. (2004).[40] The model is explained in Chapter 2 of the *Final report* and briefly summarised here. In essence, the model posits that decision-making on return is based on a combination of factors across five key areas. First, the political, economic and social conditions in the country of origin and second, the political, economic, and social conditions in the country of destination are considered (referred to in this report as the 'conditions in origin/ destination country'). Third, individual factors such as age, gender, and personal attributes are considered. Fourth, social factors, such as familial reasons and the role of networks are considered in the decision to return. The final element included in the model is policy incentives and disincentives, such as assisted voluntary return policies or deportation campaigns. This is examined in the Sudanese context in Section 6 below.

The research in Sudan also sought to assess sustainable return, which is achieved in this study through a return and reintegration index (explained in Chapter 6 of the *Final report*). The return and reintegration index is based on three

[38] IOM (2013), p. 2.
[39] For example, see Gridneff (2013).
[40] Black et *al.* (2004)

dimensions of: economic reintegration whereby an individual is able to sustain a livelihood and is not in a situation of economic vulnerability; social and cultural reintegration whereby the returnee is actively incorporated into the receiving society, for example at the level of the local community; and safety and security reintegration where the returnee feels they have access to safety and justice on return. Each of these dimensions is assessed through five variables, which are included in Table 11.7 below. From these three dimensions an overall level of reintegration is determined through the index. This approach highlights the multidimensional nature of reintegration and sustainable return.

5. METHODOLOGY AND PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

In Sudan, 17 participants were interviewed using a semi structured interview guide. Participants had to meet three requirements to be eligible for an interview. First, they must have returned a minimum of 12 months before the interview; second, they had to have returned from an industrialized state (that is, Europe, North America or Australia); and third, they had to have participated in assisted voluntary return. Regarding recruitment, 47 people were called in Sudan, while the number of people contacted was not recorded. Of this 47, 22 people refused to participate and seven people did not appear for the actual interview. It is important to note that this sample is not representative of returnees to Sudan, nor is it reflective of the conditions of return in Sudan as a whole.

Table 11.5 provides an overview of the participants interviewed. Within the Sudanese sample, ages ranged from 22 to 53 years of age, with an average of 38 years and the sample was predominately male (82 per cent). The level of education of participants varied widely but featured participants with very high levels of education. One participant had no formal education, while one participant had completed primary school and seven participants had completed some form of secondary education. In terms of higher education, two participants had completed a form of technical or vocational education, four had completed a Bachelor's degree and two held a Master's degree or higher. The majority of participants were individual returnees, although there were also included two nuclear families and two single parent families. The two predominant countries of destination were France and Norway, attracting 35 and 29 per cent of participants, respectively. Other destinations included Sweden, Belgium, Malta, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

Table 11.5: Overview of participants

	Freq	%
Age (in years)		
Range	22 - 53	
Average	38	
Sex		
Male	14	82
Female	3	18
Total	17	100
Country of birth		
Sudan	17	100
Total	17	100
Highest level of education		
No formal education	1	6
Primary	1	6
Lower secondary	3	18
Upper secondary	4	24
Technical/ vocational	2	12
Bachelor	4	24
Master or higher	2	12
Total	17	100

Type of returnee		
Individual	13	76
Nuclear family	2	12
Single-parent family	2	12
Total	17	100
Country of migration		
France	6	35
Norway	5	29
Sweden	2	12
Belgium	1	6
Malta	1	6
Netherlands	1	6
UK	1	6
Total	17	100

Reasons for migration varied widely, however the most common reasons remained to be employment, with seven participants citing this as their main motivation to leave Sudan. Other reasons included security and political reasons (5 participants), seeking a better lifestyle (2 participants) and to escape military service (1 participant). Thirteen participants in the sample submitted an asylum application upon arrival in their destination country. The reasons for migration among these 13 varied between security (4 participants), employment (5 participants) and other concerns (4 participants).

6. UNDERSTANDING THE DECISION TO RETURN

Table 11.6 provides an overview of the key decision-making factors of returnees based on the model summarised in Section 4 above. It is important to note that many participants reported multiple factors. Similar to the other countries in this study, conditions in Sudan and policy incentives or disincentives played a very limited role in return decision making processes. It is unique in the Sudanese case, that the social factors were the most frequently cited decision-making factor in return.

Table 11.6: Number of individuals with at least one decision-making factor, by category

Category	Freq	%	Sample size
Conditions in origin country	0	0.0	17
Conditions in destination country	8	47.1	17
Individual factors	3	17.7	17
Social factors	9	52.9	17
Incentives/ disincentives (policy interventions)	3	17.7	17

None of the participants within the sample cited conditions in Sudan as being influential in their decision to return. Conversely, conditions in the destination country were very influential, with 47.1 per cent of participants citing their importance. Specifically, the most commonly cited factor was a negative decision on an asylum request, cited by 5 participants. These participants often stated that after (sometimes multiple) negative decisions on their asylum status; they felt that they had no other option but to return home. Two participants stated that they had left the country before a decision regarding their application was made. One participant cited that he had returned prematurely due to a lack of income in the country of migration and another individual mentioned that he had only intended to apply for a work permit, but that an asylum procedure had been started instead.

Besides the receipt of a negative decision on an asylum request, participants also stated that they could not support themselves (3) and that they had difficulty finding employment or had no right to work in their destination countries. Of the three participants who could not support themselves, one was not working, while two were employed informally on the black market. Another participant also cited a lack of security or discrimination in Sweden as influential in the decision to return.

This lack of security sometimes stemmed from domestic sources. One participant stated:

> 'My husband started to treat me not in the right way, his attitude changes a lot and I started to feel. I was insecure even with my husband. That is why I decided to return. I started to feel that the government, the government of Sweden, did not protect me. And even from my husband I did not find the protection. At the end I decided to return because neither protection from both sides had been provided. Neither from the government nor from my husband.'
>
> Female, age 30

Individual factors within the Sudanese sample were only cited three times. Within this category, participants had expressed that they were tired of living as undocumented, unable to meet migration aspirations and felt that they had no choice. Two of these three participants had filed asylum claims that were rejected and one was living on the street prior to return.

In the Sudanese case, social factors were most commonly indicated as having been influential in the decision to return. Specifically, a change in family situation was stated by various participants as one of the main reasons for return. These participants however highlighted that they would not have returned and would have awaited ongoing asylum procedures if problems within the household had not occurred. Specifically, these five respondents stated that they had to leave the host country because of family related matters including family members being sick, problems with a

teenage son and the inability of families to sustain their household without the head of household (the migrant) being in Sudan. Half of these participants did not await the asylum procedure and returned home to take care of the family/ household before a decision was made. One respondent stated:

> 'My mother was sick, very sick and this is the main reason for me to return back, no other reasons. The results of my asylum claim came late, and I did not have time enough to wait. If my mother was not sick I would never have returned.' Male, age 28

Sometimes the decision to return was influenced by a mixture of factors. One participant noted a combination of being unable to meet migration aspirations, in addition to a sick family member at home. He stated:

> 'I had a phone call with my father and he was quite sick at that time. I felt that the family was in need of me … And I needed about ten to fifteen years before I could help them from Europe. I looked at the people who were there for seven years and they did not achieve anything … My father asked me to return, and after I heard that my father was so sick, I could not stay there' Female, age 33

Lastly, policy incentives or disincentives were, like individual factors, only cited by 3 participants as being influential in their decision to return. The three reasons cited were wanting to benefit from a voluntary return program, a political change in the destination country (Belgium) and wanting to comply with the law.

In terms of involvement of others in the decision to return, only six out of 17 participants stated that their family was involved. Five of these six were supported by their family in their return, due to changing family circumstances as explained above. Additionally, three participants stated that family in the host country supported their return. Beyond familial influence, other participants stated that they discussed the option of return with the IOM, government institutions and friends in the asylum centre. Discussions with government institutions tended to be focussed on negative asylum claims, the possibility of deportation and the end of support (e.g. housing and living allowance).

7. EXTENT OF REINTEGRATION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF RETURN

Table 11.7 shows the return and reintegration index used in this study to examine reintegration and sustainable return. Overall, 57.1 per cent of returnees in Sudan were considered reintegrated according to this index, which is significantly higher than the average (36.8 per cent) across all of the countries in the study.

Like most of the origin countries studied, the economic dimension reported the lowest rate of reintegration in the Sudanese case at 56.3 per cent, which is almost equal to the average of the overall sample at 56.2 per cent. Although the majority of returnees were able to raise a (small) monthly income (76.5 per cent were employed) or owned a piece of land or a house (64.7 per cent); individuals that had a successful business or could return to their formal job after return spoke more positively about their return experience than did individuals who struggled to obtain income. Overall, 59 per cent of participants considered themselves to be struggling economically. About half of the participants were in debt, with reasons for the initial loan including the funding of a migration (4 participants), daily needs (1 participant), business needs (1 participant), the building or repair of housing (1 participant), medical treatments (1 participant). The value of these debts ranged from 500 to 6,000 euros.

It is noteworthy that in Sudan several examples were provided of successful business start-ups under the assisted voluntary return and reintegration support, which were viewed by returnees as positively impacting economic reintegration. One participant was able to buy cows upon return under the assisted voluntary return and reintegration package and enlarged his livestock significantly. He was even able to invest the profits into a second business focused on trade. Another participant had learned steel and iron crafts before migrating to Europe and after return, was able to open his own steel workshop with support of the AVRR package.
Conversely, other stories revealed that the current economic context in Sudan makes it challenging for businesses to be sustainable. At the same time, some participants felt that owning your own business and being self-employed was preferable to being an employee. One participant stated:

> 'I believe that income from business is better than to be employed for a company or for the government. Because a business can give you more income than a salary can provide ... the wage. In addition; it is really hard now to find work, to be employed. It is not easy to find an employer' Male, age 37

Table 11.7: Reintegration and return index

Variable	Threshold	Individual reintegration rates	n
Economic dimension:			
Employment	Individual is employed	76.5	17
Income sources	Individual's household has more than one source of income (more of a vulnerability indicator than reintegration)	31.25	16
Perceived economic situation	Individual does not consider themselves to be struggling	41.17	17
Debt	Individual has no debt	52.9	17
Land/ housing	Individual owns land or house	64.7	17
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the economic variables		**56.3**	**16**
Socio-cultural dimension:			
Networks	Individual identifies themselves as having a network that they can rely upon for support	70.6	17
Transnational networks	Individual maintains a transnational network	58.8	17
Participate in local events upon return	Individual participates in local events	100.0	17
Self-perception of personal life	Individual is not generally dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their personal life on average in the last month	58.8	17
Membership in organisations upon return	Individual participates in one or more organizations	88.2	17
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the socio-cultural variables		**88.2**	**17**
Safety and security dimension:			
Perceived safety in home	Individual identifies feeling safe in their home	76.5	17
Perceived safety in the community	Individual identifies feeling safe in their community	70.6	17
Trust in the government	Individual identifies that they trust the government	5.9	17
Access to justice	Individual feels that they could access justice if their rights were violated in their country of return	50.0	16
Experienced personal harassment since return	Individual has not experienced personal harassment since return	75.0	16
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the safety and security variables		**73.3**	**15**
Percentage of participants that are effectively reintegrated across all three dimensions		**57.1**	**14**

In terms of socio-cultural reintegration, 88 per cent of participants were reintegrated, which is significantly higher than the overall country average of 64.2 per cent. A first key reason for this may be that more participants from Sudan cited social reasons as central in the return decision making. Many participants highlighted that their family was very happy to see them again but on the other hand also clearly expressed that they were disappointed in the participant for not succeeding in obtaining European citizenship. Despite these mixed reactions, 70 per cent of the participants felt that they have a strong network of family and friends in Sudan. Furthermore, all of the respondents participated in local events and 88 per cent of the sample held membership in some form of organization. Fifty-nine per cent of the participants stated that they were not dissatisfied with their personal life. Of those that were unsatisfied, all cited economic problems as the source of their unhappiness, relating back to economic reintegration. Even some of those who were employed stated that their income was not enough to cover the basic needs of the family and some were without their own accommodation.

Reintegration rates were also relatively high in the safety and security dimension, with 73.3 per cent of participants being reintegrated. Seventy-seven per cent of participants felt safe in their homes and 71 per cent felt safe within their communities. Furthermore, 12 participants had not experienced personal harassment since their return to the country. Only one participant stated that they felt that they could trust the government, while eight participants felt that they could access justice if their personal rights were to be violated. Overall, 57.1 per cent of Sudanese participants were reintegrated across all three dimensions.

Upon return, 53 per cent of the participants stated that compared to other people in their community, their quality of life was worse. Almost 59 per cent of the participants rated their current quality of life as worse than their quality of life before migration, while 29 per cent felt that their current quality of life was better than before their migration episode. Among this 29 per cent, one participant stated:

> ‘The standard of living is better now (than before migration) because he has a vehicle, he also has land and especially if he finishes building his house, it will be better than what was in the past’
>
> Male, age 33

A lack of economic opportunities for the majority of the sample in Sudan was reflected in the future planning of participants. Although various participants highlighted that they wished to stay in Sudan and build a future (get married, build a house, start a business, find employment), the majority of participants had a negative perception towards their personal future and opportunities in Sudan. Various respondents highlighted that re-emigration would be the only solution to build a good future. Almost 63 per cent of the participants stated that they wish to re-emigrate, with the majority of these wishing to migrate to Europe again. With the exception of one person, participants that wished to migrate again had not made any concrete plans.

8. CONCLUSION

In the Sudanese case, social factors, as well as conditions in the destination country were most commonly cited as being influential in the decision to return. The majority of the sample had submitted asylum applications within the country of destination, but some had to return before an answer was given due to individual and social factors. In regards to reintegration, on the whole, participants were more likely to be reintegrated at 57.1 per cent than compared to the wider sample at 36.8 per cent. In particular, participants had much higher levels of socio-cultural reintegration, which may be attributed to the higher importance of social factors in return decision making for this group. As in all of the other countries, economic integration featured the lowest rate out of the three dimensions. Participants often highlighted that the current economic situation in Sudan was highly insecure and this in some cases prompted consideration of a re-emigration to Europe. The majority of participants highlighted that the reintegration-package did help them to build a new future in Sudan, however the current economic situation including high levels of inflation etc. made it difficult to sustain businesses or find stable jobs.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

BBC (2014) 'South Sudan profile' (23 April, 2014), www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14069082.

Carling, J. (2002) 'Migration in the age of involuntary immobility: theoretical reflections on Cape Verdean experiences,' *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, volume 28, no. 1, pp. 5-42.

DFAT (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) (2014) 'Sudan country brief,' http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/sudan/.

DIBP (Department of Immigration and Border Protection) (2013) 'Information paper,' for public consultation on the composition of the Humanitarian Programme for 2014-15, www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/refugee/ref-hum-issues/pdf/humanitarian-program-information-paper-14-15.pdf.

Downie, R., and Kennedy, B. (2011) 'Sudan: Assessing the Risks to Stability', (June 2011) Centre for Strategic & International Studies, Washington, www.csis.org/files/publication/110623_Downie_Sudan_Web.pdf.

Eltahir, Y., Darbo, S., and Suliman K. (2014) 'Sudan', African Economic Outlook, www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/fileadmin/uploads/aeo/2014/PDF/CN_Long_EN/Soudan_EN.pdf.

Freedom House (2014) 'Freedom in the World 2014', www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world-2014/release-booklet.

Gridneff, I. (2013) 'Hopes draw Australia's South Sudanese home,' The Sydney Morning Herald, 13 July 2013, www.smh.com.au/world/hopes-draw-australias-south-sudanese-home-20130712-2puhr.html.

Henley and Partners (2014) 'Visa Restrictions Index 2013,' www.henleyglobal.com/visa-restrictions/.

Institute for Economics and Peace (2014) 'Global Peace Index 2014: measuring peace and assessing country risks', www.visionofhumanity.org/#/page/indexes/global-peace-index.

ICC (International Criminal Court) (2008) 'ICC prosecutor presents case against Sudanese president, Hassan Ahmad AL BASHIR, for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur', ICC-OTP-20080714-PR341, ICC, www.icccpi.int/en_menus/icc/situations%20and%20cases /situations/situation%20icc%200205/ press%20releases/Pages/a.aspx.

IMF (International Monetary Fund) (2013) 'Sudan, Staff Report for the 2013 Article IV Consultation', www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2013/cr13317.pdf.

International Food Policy Research Institute (2013) '2013 Global Hunger Index', Issue Brief 79, www.ifpri.org/publication/2013-global-hunger-index-0 .

IOM (International Organization for Migration) (2011) 'Migration in Sudan: a country profile 2011,' http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/MPSudan_18Nov2013_FINAL.pdf.

IOM (International Organization for Migration) (2013) 'IOM South Sudan Annual Report 2012,' www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/Country/docs/IOM_South_Sudan_Annual_%20Report_2012.pdf.

IOM (International Organization for Migration) (2014, March) 'Situation report on the population movements into Sudan,' 1 March 2014, www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/Country/docs/Situation-report-on-the-population-movements-into-Sudan-01032014.pdf.

Koser, K. and McAuliffe, M. (2013) 'Establishing an evidence-base for future policy development on irregular migration to Australia,' Irregular Migration Research Programme Occasional Paper no. 1, www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research/.

Maplecroft (2013) 'Human Rights Risk Index 2014', www.maplecroft.com/themes/hr/.

Marlow, J., Harris, A., and Lyons, T. (eds) (2013) *South Sudanese diaspora in Australia and New Zealand: reconciling the past with the present*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, www.cambridgescholars.com/download/sample/60496.

New York Times (2011) 'Sudan: Country Brief,' 8 February 2011, www.nytimes.com/2011/02/08/world/africa/08sudan.html?_r=0.

Omestad, T. (2013) 'Sudan: Economic Pressures Building' (12 February, 2013), United States Peace Institute, www.usip.org/publications/sudan-economic-pressures-building.

Prunier, G. (2008) 'Armed Movements in Sudan, Chad, CAR, Somalia , Eritrea and Ethiopia', Center for International Peace Operations, Berlin Germany, www.operationspaix.net/DATA/DOCUMENT/5382~v~Armed_Movements_in_Sudan_Chad_CAR_Somalia_Eritrea_and_Ethiopia.pdf.

Reuters (2012) 'Sudan inflation rises to 45 per cent in October' (8 November, 2012), www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/08/ozabs-sudan-inflation-idAFJOE8A701U20121108.

RMMS (Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat) (2013, June) 'Migrant Smuggling in the Horn of Africa & Yemen: the political economy and protection risks' Mixed Migration Research Series, study no. 1, http://regionalmms.org/fileadmin/content/monthly%20summaries/series_booklet_Leo.pdf.

RMMS (Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat) (2013, August) 'Responses to mixed migration in the Horn of Africa and Yemen: policies and assistance responses in a fast-changing context,' Mixed Migration Research Series: explaining people on the move, study no. 3, www.regionalmms.org/fileadmin/content/rmms_publications/series_three_booklet.pdf.

RMMS (Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat) (2014, June) 'RMMS Monthly Summary' and 'Dashboard Map,' June 2014, www.regionalmms.org/index.php?id=34 and www.regionalmms.org/index.php?id=31.

Transparency International (2013) 'Corruption Perceptions Index 2013,' www.transparency.org/cpi.

UK Border Agency (2012) 'Republic of Sudan: Country of origin information (COI) report,' https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/310191/Sudan_COI_report_2012.pdf.

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) (2012) 'Sudan National Human Development Report 2012,' www.sd.undp.org/content/dam/sudan/docs/Sudan_NHDR_2012.pdf?bcsi_scan_d20c301d7a026bb4=uiooKO/fAHzvRmCFKC6wy7ynhD4zAAAA31UTcw==&bcsi_scan_filename=Sudan_NHDR_2012.pdf.

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) (2013) 'Human Development Report 2013: The Rise of the South', http://hdr.undp.org/en.

UNHCR (UN High Commissioner for Refugees) (2014, June) 'Refugee population statistics in South Sudan as of 30 June 2014,' http://data.unhcr.org/SouthSudan/download.php?id=1136.

UNHCR (UN High Commissioner for Refugees) (2014, July) 'South Sudan emergency: regional overview of refugees from South Sudan as of 17 July 2014,' http://data.unhcr.org/SouthSudan/download.php?id=1189.

US Department of Homeland Security (2013) 'Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2012 – Refugees and Asylees,' www.dhs.gov/yearbook-immigration-statistics-2012-refugees-and-asylees.

US Institute of Peace (2014) 'Sudan', www.usip.org/category/countries/sudan.

US Library of Congress (2004) 'Country Profile: Sudan', Federal Research Division, www.lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Sudan.pdf.

US State Department (2013) 'Sudan 2013 Human Rights Report', www.state.gov/documents/organization/220376.pdf.

Wilson J. (2014) ‘Local Peace Processes in Sudan and South Sudan’, (6 May, 2014), United States Peace Institute, www.usip.org/publications/local-peace-processes-in-sudan-and-south-sudan.

World Bank (2013) ‘Personal remittances, received (% of GDP),’ World Factbook, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS.

APPENDIX 12

VIET NAM

COUNTRY REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

This report examines migrant decision-making in relation to return and the sustainability of assisted voluntary return to Iraq. This country report is part of a comparative research project on the assisted voluntary return and reintegration of migrants. The project examines findings from 15 origin, transit and destination countries and relies on a mixed methodology involving quantitative and qualitative analysis. Viet Nam is one of the origin countries.

The project has been conceived and commissioned as part of the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Irregular Migration Research Programme[1]. It was informed by the programme's first occasional paper, which recognized the need to establish an evidence-base for policy deliberations on irregular migration to Australia (Koser & McAuliffe, 2013). The project is supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Maastricht University.

This country report provides a brief, descriptive overview of the economic, political and security contexts as they relate to migration, and an overview of migration trends to and from Viet Nam. This background information provides further country context for the comparative analysis in the research project's *Final report*. It also describes participants interviewed for the study and key results of the interviews conducted in Viet Nam.

2. COUNTRY CONTEXT

Vietnam in global measures	
Human Development Index as at 2012. See UNDP (2013).	**Medium human development** 127th out of 187
Peace Index as at 2014. See Institute for Economics and Peace (2014).	**High level of peace** 45th out of 162
Hunger Index as at 2013. See International Food Policy Research Institute (2013).	**Moderate level of hunger**
Human Rights Risk Index as at 2013-14. See Maplecroft (2013).	**High risk of abuse**
Corruption Perceptions Index as at 2013. See Transparency International (2013).	**Very corrupt** 116th out of 177
Freedom Index as at 2014. See Freedom House (2014).	**Not free**
Visa Restrictions Index as at 2013. See Henley and Partners (2014).	**Low passport mobility** 81st out of 173

Viet Nam has undergone a remarkable transformation in the last thirty years. Since reunification in 1975 Viet Nam has experienced sustained political stability, albeit under the one party rule of the Vietnamese Communist Party (CPV).

The government took a range of bold steps to introduce economic reforms in the 1980s that propelled Viet Nam through a period of prolonged growth. Viet Nam became known as one of the so called 'tiger' economies of Southeast Asia. More recently Viet Nam's economy has experienced several years of slower growth as a consequence of the global economic downturn.

The nature of migration from Viet Nam has also undergone significant changes in recent decades. Vietnamese migrants who established large diaspora communities in industralised countries, as a consequence of the large outflows of

[1] Information on the Irregular Migration Research Programme is at: www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research

refugees in the 1960s and 1970s, continue to attract family reunion migration. Asylum flows have continued but are very small in number. The number of overseas migrant workers from Viet Nam has steadily increased and their remittances make a valuable contribution to Viet Nam's economy.

2.1 Economy

In the past two decades Viet Nam has transformed from one of the poorest countries in the world to a 'lower middle income' country.[2] Since economic reforms ('doi moi') were introduced by the Vietnamese government in 1986, Viet Nam has moved from a centrally controlled, largely state owned economic base to allow more private enterprise.[3] The Government of Viet Nam describes its economic approach as a 'socialist-oriented market economy.'[4]

While the majority of the workforce is still engaged in agriculture, Viet Nam now has a large service sector and industrial base.[5] The transition to a rapidly expanding economic base has seen a surge in rural to urban migration, placing considerable strain on infrastructure and social services.[6] In 2011, Viet Nam spent nearly 7 per cent of Gross Domestic Product on health and more than 6 per cent on education. It has high rates of literacy at 93.4 per cent.[7]

Per capita income in 2013 was estimated to be around USD1730[8] (20 years ago it was USD100 per year).[9] The ratio of the population living in poverty has fallen from 58 per cent in 1993 to around 12 per cent in 2011. Viet Nam has a prosperous urban population that contrasts with high levels of poverty in some rural areas, especially among Viet Nam's minority ethnic groups.[10]

Viet Nam has been adversely affected by the global economic downturn with a slower rate of economic growth over the past few years.[11] This is illustrated by Viet Nam's decline on the Human Development Index from 108th in 2005 to 127th in 2012.[12] Viet Nam is one of the world's top 10 remittance-receiving countries, with remittances in 2013 estimated at USD 10.6 billion, up 6.5 per cent compared with 2012 and is an important part of the economy.[13]

2.2 Political context

The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam was established in 1975, when North and South Viet Nam were unified after decades of war against Japanese occupation during World War Two and renewed French colonial rule, followed by a war between the Communist North Viet Nam and South Viet Nam supported by the involvement of US troops.[14]

Viet Nam has been governed as a one party state by the CPV since unification, with the ultimate governing authority residing in the offices of the General Secretary of the CPV, the Prime Minister and the President. The political body that runs the day-to-day affairs of the country is the Politburo, which is in turn accountable to the National Assembly, comprised of members elected every five years at Party Congress meetings, the next of which is due in 2016. More than 90 per cent of members elected to the National Assembly are Communist Party members.[15]

There are indications that Vietnamese authorities have begun to accommodate more involvement by the National Assembly in political and policy deliberations, however, political participation along more democratic lines remains aspirational.[16]

Concerns about human rights abuses and a lack of political freedoms in Viet Nam have been raised in a number of international reports.[17] Measures to further improve and reform governance in Viet Nam to promote greater

---

[2] World Bank (2014).
[3] World Bank (2013).
[4] Viet Nam News (2012).
[5] UNDP (2013).
[6] Asian Foundation (2011). (Migration is estimated to have included the movement of more than 26 million migrant workers to the cities by 2010)
[7] CIA (2014).
[8] UNDP (2013).
[9] World Bank (2014); IMF (2012).
[10] DFAT (2014). There are 54 different ethnic groups. Ethnic Kinh Vietnamese comprise 85.7%. Religious affiliation includes: Buddhists (9.3%), Christians (around 7%), Hòa Hảo (1.5%), Cao Dai (1.1%), Protestant (0.5%), Muslim (0.1%), none (80.8%), based on 1999 census results.
[11] World Bank (2013), p.17.
[12] UNDP (2013).
[13] Viet Nam News (2013).
[14] Library of Congress (2005).
[15] Library of Congress (2005).
[16] World Bank (2013); US State Department (2013).
[17] US State Department (2013); UK Government (2013).

accountability, address corruption, and improve legal and political transparency have been strategies recommended by organizations such as the World Bank and UNDP.[18]

2.3 Security context

After two decades of civil war, the intervention in Cambodia against the Khmer Rouge in 1978 and a border war with China in 1979, Viet Nam has demobilised around 500,000 troops since 1989. Viet Nam still has one of the largest standing armies in the region, but faces no current discernable external security threats.[19]

Viet Nam claims sovereignty over islands in the South China Sea that are rich in oil and fish. This has been a source of ongoing tensions with China, which disputes Viet Nam's claim.[20]

3. MIGRATION AND RETURN FLOWS

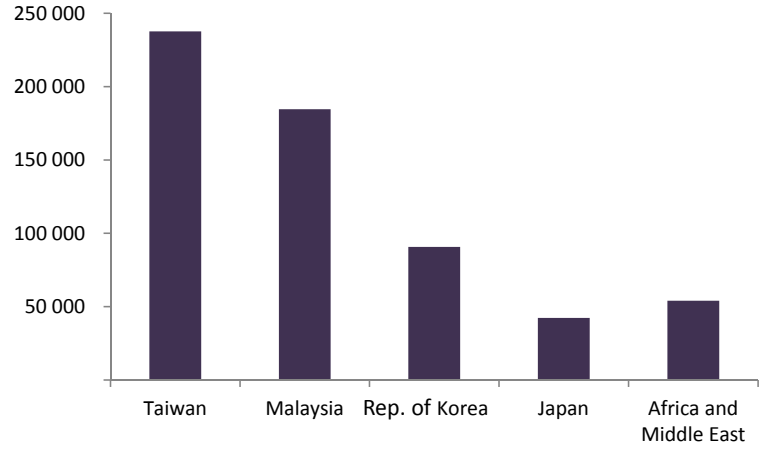
The large-scale post-war refugee resettlement programs following the end of the Viet Nam War in 1975 established large Vietnamese diaspora communities that today facilitate large-scale family reunion-related migration to industrialised countries. More recently, Viet Nam has emerged as a major source of migrant labour to a wide variety of countries, including to Southeast Asia and the Middle East.

3.1. Vietnamese migrant worker flows

The managed export of labour has been part of the Vietnamese government's economic strategy since it embarked on wide-ranging economic reforms ('doi moi') in the 1980s.[21] According to the Vietnamese government, there were approximately half a million Vietnamese contract workers abroad in 2012.[22] Figure 12.1 shows departures to key labour market destinations, as reported by the Vietnamese government.

While the most significant destinations include the major economies in East Asia, countries in the Middle East and Africa have grown in significance. For example, in 2011, there were 10,000 Vietnamese labourers in Libya alone.[23]

Figure 12.1: Total Vietnamese migrant worker departures to key destinations during 2000 to 2010



Source: Adapted from Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam (2012), p. 16. Shows total number of departures during 2000 to 2010, inclusive.

[18] UNDP (2011).
[19] Library of Congress (2005).
[20] Daily Mail (2014).
[21] Ishizuka (2013), p. 1-3.
[22] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam (2012), p. 15.
[23] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam (2012), p. 27.

3.2. Vietnamese migration to industrialised countries

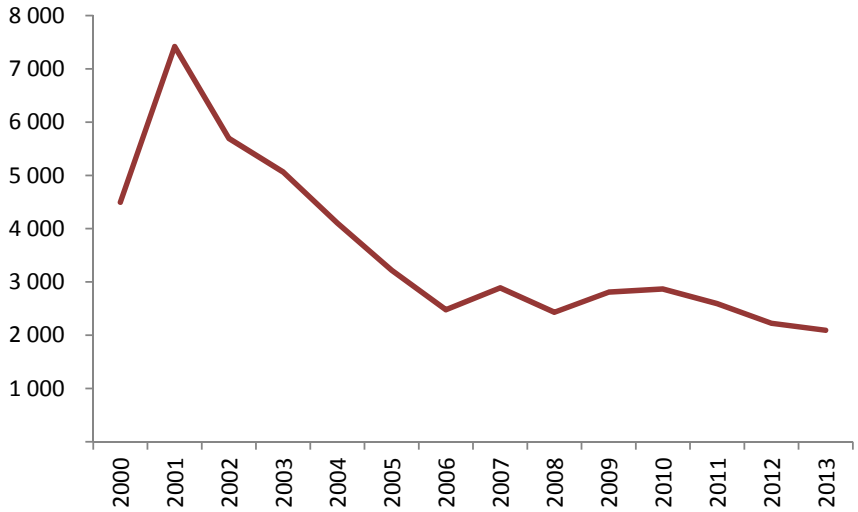
Currently, the most significant migration flows from Viet Nam to industrialised countries appear to be family reunion-related, and facilitated by the diaspora communities that were established following the post-war resettlement programs of the 1970s.

According to the Vietnamese government, approximately 80 per cent of the Vietnamese diaspora, including naturalised migrants and their descendants, reside in developed countries. The Vietnamese government estimates that there are 1.5 million people of Vietnamese heritage in the United States (US), 300,000 in France, 250,000 in Canada, and 245,000 in Australia.[24]

In 2012, over 27,200 Vietnamese citizens were granted permanent residence in the US by virtue of being immediate relatives of US citizens, or through other family sponsorship provisions.[25] These family migrants represented 96 per cent of all Vietnamese citizens granted permanent residency in the US in 2012.[26]

On the other hand, asylum flows from Viet Nam to industrialised countries in recent years have been modest and stable. Figure 12.2 shows that Vietnamese asylum claims in industrialised countries have decreased overall since 2001.

Figure 12.2: Vietnamese asylum seekers to industrialised countries*

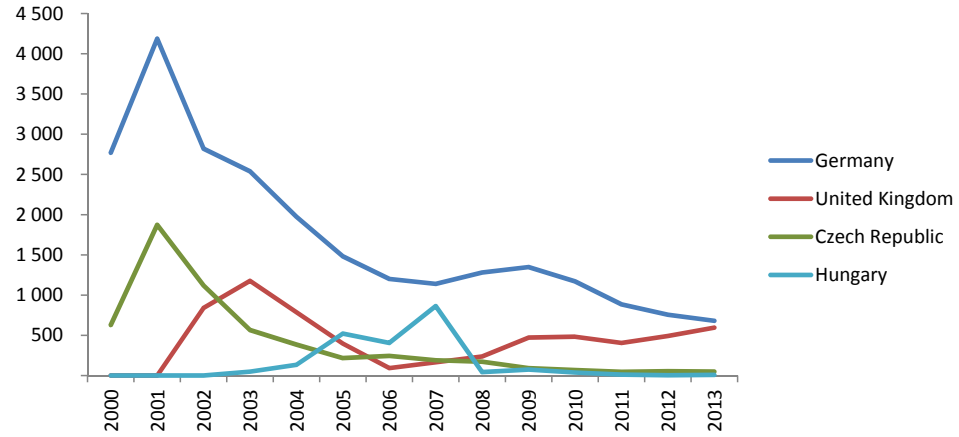


Source: UNHCR Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org/, extracted on 17 July 2014.
* 44 industrialised countries as defined by UNHCR.

Figure 12.3 shows Vietnamese asylum flows to key destination countries. Almost half of all Vietnamese asylum seekers to industrialised countries between 2000 and 2013 went to Germany.[27]

[24] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam (2012), p. 29.
[25] US Department of Homeland Security (2013). Note that this refers to the 2012 US fiscal year, which was from October 2011 to September 2012.
[26] US Department of Homeland Security (2013). The remainder comprised Vietnamese citizens who migrated through employment-based sponsorship (one per cent), as refugees or 'asylees' (two per cent), and other streams including the 'Green Card lottery' (less than one per cent).
[27] Author's calculation based on UNHCR Population Statistics online database (http://popstats.unhcr.org), confined to the 44 industrialised countries as defined by UNHCR.

Figure 12.3:Vietnamese asylum seekers to key destination countries



Source: UNHCR Population Statistics online database, http://popstats.unhcr.org/, extracted on 17 July 2014.

3.3 Vietnamese return migration

The number of individuals participating in assisted voluntary return and reintegration Viet Nam is modest in comparison to other countries included in this study. From a low of 139 participants in 2001, this number fluctuated from 2002 to 2008 and then more than quadrupled to a high of 600 participants in 2009 as illustrated in Figure 12.4. Participation since then has fallen.

Figure 12.4: Number of AVRR participants returned to Viet Nam

Source: International Organization of Migration (IOM), 2014.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research in Viet Nam were to provide insight into decision-making factors in return by those who had already returned and to assess the sustainability of return. Viet Nam was one of eight different origin countries examined in the overall study.

To assess decision-making factors in return, this study follows the approach developed by Black et *al.* (2004).[28] The model is explained in Chapter 2 of the *Final report* and briefly summarised here. In essence, the model posits that decision-making on return is based on a combination of factors across five key areas. First, the political, economic and social conditions in the country of origin and second, the political, economic, and social conditions in the country of destination are considered, (referred to in this report as the 'conditions in origin/ destination country'). Third, individual factors such as age, gender, and personal attributes are considered. Fourth, social factors, such as familial reasons

[28] Black et *al*. (2004).

and the role of networks are considered in the decision to return. The final element included in the model is policy incentives and disincentives, such as assisted voluntary return policies or deportation campaigns are included in the model. This is examined in the Vietnamese context in Section 6 below.

The research in Viet Nam also sought to assess sustainable return, which is achieved in this study through a return and reintegration index (explained in Chapter 6 of the *Final report*). The return and reintegration index is based on three dimensions: economic reintegration whereby an individual is able to sustain a livelihood and is not in a situation of economic vulnerability; social and cultural reintegration whereby the returnee is actively incorporated into the receiving society, for example at the level of the local community; and safety and security reintegration where the returnee feels they have access to safety and justice on return. Each of these dimensions is assessed through five variables, which are included in Table 12.3 below. From these three dimensions an overall level of reintegration is determined through the index. This approach highlights the multidimensional nature of reintegration and sustainable return.

5. METHODOLOGY AND PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

In Viet Nam, 15 participants were interviewed using a semi-structured interview guide. Participants had to meet three requirements to be eligible for an interview. First, they must have returned a minimum of 12 months prior to the time of interview; second, they had to have returned from an industrialized state (that is, Europe, North America or Australia); and third, they had to have participated in assisted voluntary return. In Viet Nam, 44 people were called. Four individuals refused to participate, but everyone who agreed was present at the actual interview, meaning that there were no "no-shows".

Fieldwork in Viet Nam was significantly impacted by the occurrence of a typhoon. Due to the storm, the researcher was forced to leave the country early and five scheduled interviews could not be conducted. All of the individuals interviewed had returned from the same assisted voluntary return and reintegration programme in the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, those who were planning to be interviewed but were not interviewed due to the storm all came from other programmes. Accordingly, these interviews are not representative of assisted voluntary return to Viet Nam.

Table 12.1 shows an overview of participants in Viet Nam. The ages of participants varied from 32 to 61 with an average of 45 years of age, which is a slightly older group when compared to the other countries in this study. The Vietnamese case was unique in that the sample contained a high percentage of women, with 60 per cent being males and 40 per cent being females. All participants were identified by the IOM as being part of the Kinh ethnic group. Most of the sample participants had competed some level of secondary education (74 per cent), while seven per cent had completed primary school, 13 per cent had completed some form of technical or vocational education and seven per cent held a Bachelor's degree. Accordingly, all participants had some level of education. Sixty-seven per cent of the sample was comprised of individual returnees, however there were also two couples and three single parent families.

Table 12.1: Overview of participants

	Freq	%
Age (in years)		
Range	32 - 61	
Average	45	
Sex		
Male	9	60
Female	6	40
Total	15	100
Ethnicity		
Kinh	15	100
Total	15	100
Highest level of education		
Primary	1	7
Lower secondary	4	27
Upper secondary	7	47
Technical/ vocational	2	13
Bachelor	1	7
Total[†]	15	100

Type of returnee		
Individual	10	67
Couple	2	13
Single-parent family	3	20
Total	15	100
Country of migration		
UK	15	100
Total	15	100

Twelve out of the 15 participants had traveled to the United Kingdom for employment purposes, while other reasons included family reunification purposes and a desire to escape corruption in the workplace. All of the participants eventually submitted an application for asylum within the United Kingdom. Some participants did this upon arrival and others applied only after they were caught in an irregular situation by the authorities or were in need of healthcare services. Six of the participants were rejected but remained in the United Kingdom irregularly, often working informal jobs. Three participants appealed their negative decisions but also remained irregularly after a negative decision. Three had secured a temporary stay permit that allowed them to work and three did not follow the asylum process and were not aware of their application outcomes. Overall time spent in the United Kingdom was relatively long, ranging from one to eight and a half years.

6. UNDERSTANDING THE DECISION TO RETURN

Following from the aims and objectives for this study, this section examines the decision making factors in return for participants in Viet Nam. Table 12.2 provides an overview of the key decision-making factors of returnees based on the model summarised in Section 4 above. It is important to note that many respondents reported multiple factors. It is unique that participants were most likely to report individual factors in their decision making factors to return.

Table 12.2: Number of individuals with at least one decision-making factor, by category

Category	Freq	%	Sample size
Conditions in origin country	2	13.3	15
Conditions in destination country	6	40.0	15
Individual factors	8	53.3	15
Social factors	7	46.7	15
Incentives/ disincentives (policy interventions)	0	0.0	15

In the Vietnamese case, conditions in the origin country were mentioned rather infrequently in discussing the decision to return. The only factor mentioned within this category was an employment opportunity or job prospects in Viet Nam. Likewise, policy incentives or disincentives were not mentioned by any of the participants as being influential in their decision to return.

Conditions in the destination country were decidedly more influential in the decision to return. Five participants indicated that they had difficulty finding employment or did not have the right to work. Of these five, four were working informally on the black market and one was employed within the formal sector. Incomes ranged from 300 to 1000 GBP per month. Another cited the end of a work permit as a reason to return to Viet Nam. Several participants had been granted temporary work permits upon their asylum application, but these had expired prior to their return.

Individual factors were the most commonly cited type of decision making factor at 53.3 per cent. Of these, two participants who had migrated for employment purposes cited that they were unable to meet their migration goals. Further, participants also felt that they had no other choice but to return (4) or they were tired of living as undocumented (2). The two participants who were tired of living as undocumented had been in the United Kingdom for four and eight years. One migrant stated that he had applied for asylum in order to access the healthcare system in the United Kingdom.

> 'I was overworked and really under stress. I had a stomachache for two years and then went home. I still regret this because the life in the UK is a very great time. I was hospitalized for my stomachache but fled out of the hospital because the customers called me.' Male, age 55

Social factors were also influential in the decision to return. One participantl had cited that they felt nostalgia about Viet Nam and five had cited a desire to reunite with their families in Viet Nam. Each of these five participants had been in contact with their family in Viet Nam several times a month or more while they were in the United Kingdom. One of these participants also indicated that their family in Viet Nam had been involved in their decision to return. Furthermore, three participants indicated that changes in family circumstances had influenced their return decision. One participant stated:

> 'Actually I did not want to go, but I had an old mom and two kids at home so... at the time I returned my mom was passed away already so I had two kids still at home, I had to go back.'
>
> Male, age 45

Multiple decision making factors were often indicated by Vietnamese participants, hinting at the complexity of the decision making process. For example, one participant stated that he had decided to leave the United Kingdom due to a combination of health reasons and the end of his work permit. Although the participant was receiving health care in the United Kingdom, he felt that he should return to Viet Nam to access traditional/ancestral medicines and knowledge not available to him in the United Kingdom. This, in combination with the expiration of his United Kingdom work permit informed his return decision.

7. EXTENT OF REINTEGRATION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF RETURN

Table 12.3 shows the return and reintegration index used in this study to examine reintegration and sustainable return. Overall, 64.3 per cent of returnees in Viet Nam were considered reintegrated according to this index, which is significantly higher than the average across all of the countries (36.8 per cent).

It is striking that economic reintegration was the highest of the three dimensions at 86.7 per cent reintegrated, which is well above the 56.2 per cent average for all origin countries overall, and contrasts the majority of origin countries wherein economic reintegration is the lowest of the three dimensions. Eighty per cent of participants were working and 93 per cent owned either land or a house. It was noted by the researcher that in Viet Nam, owning a home or a piece of land is considered a key stability factor in society and accordingly, many Vietnamese strive to do so. Further to this, as the Vietnamese participants had generally been able to work in the United Kingdom and send remittances, this has contributed to their ability to buy a home in Viet Nam.

Despite the positive indications discussed above, 60 per cent of participants still considered themselves to be struggling economically. One participant who was not working and returned to Viet Nam with 10,000 GBP described how he managed to make ends meet.

> 'I live off of the money that I saved before. It is not comfortable. My mother is also living off of my savings. I had to sell half of my land to survive.''
>
> Male, age 55

Thirty-three per cent of participants were in debt for various reasons, including the need to fund the initial migration, business needs and housing construction or repairs. The value of these debts ranged from 3,600 to 29,000 euro.

Table 12.3: Reintegration & return index

Variable	**Threshold**	**Individual rates**	**n**
Economic dimension:			
Employment	Individual is employed	80.0	15
Income sources	Individual's household has more than one source of income (more of a vulnerability indicator than reintegration)	40.0	15
Perceived economic situation	Individual does not consider themselves to be struggling	40.0	15
Debt	Individual has no debt	66.7	15
Land/ housing	Individual owns land or house	93.3	15
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the economic variables		**86.7**	**15**
Socio-cultural Dimension:			
Networks	Individual identifies themselves as having a network that they can rely upon for support	73.3	15
Transnational networks	Individual maintains a transnational network	64.3	14
Participate in local events upon return	Individual participates in local events	86.7	15
Self-perception of personal life	Individual is not generally dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their personal life on average in the last month	66.7	15
Membership in organisations upon return	Individual participates in one or more organisations	0.0	15
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the soci0-cultural variables		**78.6**	**14**
Safety and security dimension:			
Perceived safety in home	Individual identifies feeling safe in their home	100.0	15
Perceived safety in the community	Individual identifies feeling safe in their community	86.7	15
Trust in the government	Individual identifies that they trust the government	40.0	15
Access to justice	Individual feels that they could access justice if their rights were violated in their country of return	64.3	14
Experienced personal harassment since return	Individual has not experienced personal harassment since return	86.7	15
Percentage of participants reintegrated in 60 per cent of the safety and security variables		**78.6**	**14**
Percentage of participants that are effectively reintegrated across all three dimensions		**64.3**	**14**

Starting businesses upon return was quite common among the participants. Nine participants had started businesses, including two cafés, a retail store, a wholesale business, an internet café, a provider of transportation services and a provider of fishing equipment. Three of these businesses were informal, while five were formal and had received assistance. Three of these businesses were considered to be profitable, while four were reported as managing and one was considered to be struggling. Many participants expressed that the assistance they had received in starting their businesses were insufficient and that it still required a substantial personal investment. One participant expressed that he wished he had received training assistance instead of business assistance, as he thought this would have been more useful. Another participant stated:

> 'It (the assistance) was too little relative to the amount I had to invest in the transport agency. For a long time at the beginning I had to struggle with the business. It is profitable on paper but then people often don't pay you immediately. The customers still keep it. So it is difficult to see the interest actually. It is not successful because I had to borrow a lot of money for the business. I still have debts because of truck repair costs and other things.'
>
> Female, age 32

Socio-cultural reintegration among Vietnamese participants was also high at 78.6 per cent as compared to 64.2 per cent in the overall sample. Seventy three per cent of participants stated that they had a strong network of friends and family, while nine participants had maintained a transnational network. Sixty seven per cent were generally satisfied with their personal lives. However, some participants were happy with certain areas of their life but not others. One participant stated:

> 'If we're talking about financial conditions, yes I am happy, but if we talk about the emotions, I can't say so. I was very lucky in terms of financial conditions. Emotionally, I am not yet fully happy.'
>
> Female, age 61

Participants also had active social lives and were usually involved with their communities and peers, as 86.7 per cent of the sample participated in local events. While none of the participants were members of organizations, this pattern was also true prior to migration. Low rates of membership in organizations may be in part due to the influence of the political system on Vietnamese society. While the concept of civil society is becoming more popular, scholars note the country's legal doctrine is not designed to welcome associated organizations or associations and that the concept is overall fairly new within the Vietnamese context (Landau, 2008).

While the safety and security dimension featured the lowest rate of reintegration at 78.6 per cent, this rate is still higher than the overall origin country average of 71.3 per cent. All of the Vietnamese participants felt safe within their homes and 86.7 per cent felt safe within their own communities. Furthermore, 86.7 per cent of participants had not been harassed since their return. These very positive results in the safety and security dimension are logical, as none of the sample migrated for security concerns. Further, nine participants felt that they could access justice if their rights were violated within the country, but only 40 per cent felt that they could trust the government. When asked this question, one participant stated: "No [I cannot trust the government], because there is a lot of bribery" (Female, 32).

When asked if they wished to re-emigrate in the future, 40 per cent of participants said yes. Of these, only one participant had concrete plans and intended to migrate to the United Kingdom again, through irregular channels. He cited better living conditions as the reason for going. Those that did not plan to re-emigrate had made other plans for the future in Viet Nam. Two participants planned to retire, three to renew or start new businesses within the country and the rest to continue with current jobs to support their families.

When asked about their level of satisfaction with their migration, the majority of participants expressed that they were either highly satisfied or satisfied (66.7 per cent). Reasons included better standards of living, higher productivity, greater respect for human rights, the ability to earn more money and an open minded attitude. Of those who were not satisfied with their migration, reasons given often revolved around a poor command of English or an inability to make enough money while in the United Kingdom. Results from the participants were more divided when asked about the level of satisfaction of the return experience. Six participants indicated that they were satisfied or highly satisfied, but nine individuals stated either being neutral or dissatisfied with their return experience. The reasoning behind these opinions was often reflective of the participants' reintegration level. For example, if the participant was doing well in economic, social or security dimensions of his or her life, he or she was more likely to view the return experience positively. Conversely, those that were dissatisfied with their return experience often stated poor economic outcomes or regretting the decision to return as the reasoning for their opinion.

8. CONCLUSION

In the Vietnamese case, three return decision making factor categories were commonly cited by participants, including conditions in the destination country, individual factors and social factors. The country is unique in that individual factors were the most commonly cited as influential in the decision to return. Conditions in the origin country were mentioned very infrequently and policy incentives or disincentives were not mentioned at all. Of the sample of 15 participants, all eventually submitted an application for asylum within the United Kingdom.

Overall, 64.3 per cent of the Vietnamese participants were reintegrated across all three dimensions. Within the individual dimensions, economic reintegration was the highest, while social and political/security reintegration rates were equal but lower. Reintegration rates for the Vietnamese case in all three dimensions were higher than the overall origin country averages, yet these results must be interpreted with caution due to the use of an unrepresentative sample caused by fieldwork disruptions.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

BCG (Boston Consulting Group) (2013) 'Vietnam and Myanmar: Southeast Asia's New Growth Frontiers' (17 December, 2013), www.bcgperspectives.com/content/articles/consumer_insight_growth_vietnam_myanmar_southeast_asia_new_growth_frontier/.

CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) (2014) 'Vietnam, 'The CIA World Factbook', www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/vm.html.

Daily Mail (2014) 'China moves oil rig out of waters Vietnam claims' (17 July 2014), Associated Press, www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-2693764/China-moves-oil-rig-waters-Vietnam-claims.html#ixzz37nAsQW9q.

DFAT (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) (2014) 'Vietnam country brief,' www.dfat.gov.au/geo/vietnam/vietnam_brief.html.

Freedom House (2014) 'Freedom in the World 2014', www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world-2014/release-booklet.

Henley and Partners (2014) 'Visa Restrictions Index 2013,' www.henleyglobal.com/visa-restrictions/.

Institute for Economics and Peace (2014) 'Global Peace Index 2014: measuring peace and assessing country risks', www.visionofhumanity.org/#/page/indexes/global-peace-index.

International Food Policy Research Institute (2013) '2013 Global Hunger Index', Issue Brief 79, www.ifpri.org/publication/2013-global-hunger-index-0.

IMF (International Monetary Fund) (2012) 'Vietnam,' IMF Country Report No. 12/165, www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2012/cr12165.pdf.

IOM (International Organization for Migration), Hanoi Office (2014) 'AVRR Figures'.

Ishizuka, F. (2013) 'International labor migration in Vietnam and the impact of receiving countries' policies,' Institute of Developing Economies discussion paper no. 414, www.ide.go.jp/English/Publish/Download/Dp/pdf/414.pdf.

ISPONRE (Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment) and UNEP (United Nations Environmental Programme) (2009) 'Viet Nam Assessment Report on Climate Change', ISPONRE, Vietnam and UNEP, www.unep.org/pdf/dtie/VTN_ASS_REP_CC.pdf.

Koser, K. and McAuliffe, M. (2013) 'Establishing an evidence-base for future policy development on irregular migration to Australia,' Irregular Migration Research Programme Occasional Paper no. 1, www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research/.

Landau, I. (2008) 'Law and civil society in Cambodia and Vietnam: A gramscian perspective' *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 38(2).

Maplecroft (2013) 'Human Rights Risk Index 2014', www.maplecroft.com/themes/hr/.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam (2012) 'Review of Vietnamese Migration Abroad,' http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/vietnam/documents/eu_vietnam/vn_migration_abroad_en.pdf.

Nguyen Anh, D. (2008) 'Labour migration from Viet Nam: issues of policy and practice,' ILO Asian Regional Programme on Governance of Labour Migration, working paper no. 4, http://apmigration.ilo.org/resources/resource-content/labour-migration-from-viet-nam-issues-of-policy-and-practice/at_download/file1.

Nguyen Tan Dung (Prime Minister of Viet Nam) (2011) 'New Path towards a socialist-orientated market economy', Viet Nam News (22 January, 2012), www.vietnamnews.vn/economy/220033/new-path-towards-a-socialist-oriented-market-economy.html.

OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) (2012) 'Connecting with emigrants: a global profile of diasporas,' www10.iadb.org/intal/intalcdi/PE/2012/11326.pdf.

Taylor, W. (2011) 'Vietnam's Migrant Workers: Greatest Advantage, Greatest Challenge', The Asia Foundation (September 28, 2011), www.asiafoundation.org/in-asia/2011/09/28/vietnams-26-million-migrant-workers-greatest-advantage-greatest-challenge/.

Transparency International (2013) 'Corruption Perceptions Index 2013', www.transparency.org/cpi.

UK Home Office (2013) 'Vietnam: Country of origin information report', www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/310165/Vietnam_COI_report_2013.pdf.

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) (2011) 'Social Services for Human Development: Viet Nam Human Development Report 2011', www.vn.undp.org/content/dam/vietnam/docs/Publications/27099_902_UNDP_Final_Low_res_190112.pdf?bcsi_scan_2b9cb3cfb553fadb=O/BkTcjfc6Wv2FZCR8ddv1Quo4FOAAAAQISU5A==&bcsi_scan_filename=27099_902_UNDP_Final_Low_res_190112.pdf.

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) (2013) 'About Vietnam', www.vn.undp.org/content/vietnam/en/home/countryinfo/.

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) (2013) 'Human Development Report 2013: The Rise of the South', http://hdr.undp.org/en.

UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) (2014) 'UNHCR regional operations profile: South-East Asia: Vietnam,' www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e4899d6&submit=GO.

US Department of Homeland Security (2013) 'Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2012 – Legal Permanent Residents,' www.dhs.gov/yearbook-immigration-statistics-2012-legal-permanent-residents .

US Library of Congress (2005) Country Profile: Vietnam, Federal Research Division, www.lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/Vietnam.pdf.

US State Department (2013) 'Vietnam 2013 Human Rights Report,' www.state.gov/documents/organization/220456.pdf.

Viet Nam News (2013) 'Vietnamese remittances to reach 10.6 bn this year', Viet Nam News (7 July, 2013), www.vietnamnews.vn/economy/248629/vietnamese-remittances-to-reach-106bn-this-year.html.

World Bank (2011) 'Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011,' second edition, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLAC/Resources/Factbook2011-Ebook.pdf?bcsi_scan_14cf79d043f374a1=0&bcsi_scan_filename=Factbook2011-Ebook.pdf.

World Bank (2013) 'Taking Stock: an update on Vietnam's recent economic developments', Hanoi (December 2013), www.openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/16731/832830WP0P13240Box0382083B00PUBLIC0.pdf?sequence=1.

World Bank (2014) 'Vietnam Overview,' www.worldbank.org/en/country/vietnam/overview.

APPENDIX 13

TRANSIT COUNTRIES REPORT

1. CONCEPTUALISING 'TRANSIT MIGRATION' AND 'TRANSIT COUNTRY'

'Transit migration' and 'transit country' are contested terms that first emerged in the 1990s to capture the complicated changes taking place in migration patterns in Europe. The meaning, usefulness and appropriateness of the terms may vary depending on the particular country and circumstances.[1] The use of this terminology is also further complicated by the rapid changes in migration geographies, technology and the diversification of migration.

Principal factors shaping the emergence of a country as a transit point are geographical proximity and an ability to access the territory of destination countries via the transit country. Each transit country has specific political, economic, cultural and geographical characteristics that influence and impact on the movement of migrants, including their decision-making, realisation of aspirations, security, opportunity, migration status and interaction with local communities. The only truly unifying characteristic of differing transit countries is that while migrants may spend some time in a transit country, they are still in the process of moving and do not intend to stay there.[2]

'Transit migration is not a distinct migration category, but a phase and process that cuts across various migrant categories.'[3] The profile of any transit country may also involve other migration characteristics that need to be taken into consideration. For example, a country regarded as a 'transit' country by some migrants is regarded as a 'host' or 'destination' country by choice or necessity by others, depending on the particular circumstances and characteristics of different groups.[4]

2. GREECE, TURKEY AND INDONESIA

This report provides a brief overview of three transit countries in Europe and Asia. Greece and Turkey are border countries for entry to Europe, and Indonesia is a key link in the maritime migration route from Asia to Australia.

2.1 Greece

Prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Greece had been primarily a country of emigration with little need for robust immigration and asylum regulations, policies and procedures.[5] In the 1990s Greece became a destination country for irregular migrants from the Balkan states, with estimates suggesting that by the end of the 1990s, the total number of immigrants was probably close to one million.[6] After 2000, asylum seekers/irregular migrants from Africa, the Middle East and Asia began to arrive in large numbers. As a country on the outer edge of the European Union (EU), Greece became a 'gateway' to Europe for asylum seekers/irregular migrants crossing Greece's vulnerable land border with Turkey, and via its coastline.[7]

Greece struggles to manage the challenges of irregular migration. It has been in a severe recession since the beginning of the global financial crisis in 2007. Unemployment in 2013 was nearly 27 per cent, and youth unemployment exceeded 57 per cent. Falling wages, increasing taxes, cuts to social services, and other austerity measures have caused widespread societal stress.[8] According to many commentators, with further hardship ahead the risk of political insecurity is acute.[9] Greece is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, but asylum processes have been slow to meet EU standards and have virtually collapsed under the strain of the numbers involved and a lack of resources to effectively implement policy. In this climate, immigration is a contentious issue exploited by right-wing elements, such as the 'Golden Dawn' movement.[10]

The scale of the problem of irregular migration for Greece is significant. In 2011, the European Court of Justice estimated that around 90 per cent of all irregular migration to Europe was via Greece.[11] At the end of 2013, the United National High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that there were around 73 000 persons of concern in

---

[1] Collyer; Duvell & de Haas (2012)
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] Kourakoula (2008).
[4] Hugo, Tan & Napitupulu (2014).
[5] Papageorgiou (2013).
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] Triandafyllidou & Marouski (2012).
[8] International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2013).
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] Papageorgiou (2013).
[11] International Organization of Migration (IOM) (2013).

Greece.[12] However, other sources suggest that in the absence of reliable data, and with large numbers of unregistered migrants, the actual population is likely to be much higher.[13]

Many migrants who arrive in Greece intend to move on quickly to other countries in Europe, but opportunities to achieve this can be limited, with many remaining in Greece for a long time. European Union regulations for processing asylum applications in the initial EU country of entry allow for relocation of unauthorised immigrants throughout Europe back to the initial country of entry. While Greece resists these measures and argues that it is carrying an unfair burden, the implementation of tough measures to restrict irregular movement of irregular migrants within the Schengen zone ensures that many migrants become 'stuck in transit'.[14]

2.2 Turkey

Turkey occupies a unique position in the region based on its economic, political and social links and engagement with Europe, its increasing alignment to some degree with a range of EU regulatory frameworks (including on migration), and its identity as a Muslim country located at the crossroads between Europe and Asia, the Middle East and Africa.[15]

Turkey is one of the fastest developing countries in the world. In 2002, an estimated 30 per cent of the population lived below the poverty line, a proportion that had dropped to 3.7 per cent by 2010. In 2012, Turkey had a 'high human development' ranking compared with other countries in Asia based on a range of economic and social measures.[16] Compared with other countries in the region, Turkey is perceived as a relatively stable and economically prosperous country.

Migration patterns in Turkey are in constant transition. In the 1960 and 1970s, labour emigration was a defining feature of Turkey's migration profile. Since the 1980s, Turkey has also been a major refugee-producing country.[17] As a result of emigration, recent estimates suggest that there are now between four and six million people of Turkish origin in the diaspora.[18]

Turkey's geographical location between East and West, its proximity to Europe, unrest in the region, and lack of regular migration options to enter 'Fortress' Europe has made it a major transit country for asylum and irregular migration flows from Asia, Africa and the Middle East.[19] According to Government of Turkey statistics, from 1995 to 2007 around 700 000 'illegal' migrants were apprehended attempting to cross a border or without legal status within Turkey.[20]

Turkey is at the edge of a troubled and unstable region. It shares direct borders with countries experiencing high levels of conflict, such as Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq. Islamic Republic of Iran, also an immediate neighbor, hosts around 900 000 registered Afghan refugees and up to 1.4 million unregistered Afghans.[21] Islamic Republic of Iran is a source country for both Iranians and Afghans heading to Europe, as well as a transit route to Turkey for other irregular migration flows from the Asian region, especially from countries such as Pakistan and Bangladesh. Asylum seekers and irregular migrants intending to transit through Turkey do so via a number of routes, although the land border with Greece and the Aegean Sea crossing to the coastlines of Greece or Italy are the most common.[22]

More recently, Turkey has become a major host country for refugees fleeing the conflict in Syrian Arab Republic. The UNHCR and the Turkish Government estimate that more than 1.3 million refugees from Syrian Arab Republic will reach Turkey by the end of 2014. In the past two years, the UNHCR reported a significant increase in the number of non-Syrian groups seeking asylum in Turkey, including Iraqis, Afghans, and Iranians. Turkey is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention but not its 1967 Protocol, which territorially limits its refugee protection obligations to individuals originating from Europe. Since 2011 the Turkish Government has taken a number of legislative steps to provide temporary protection to all asylum seekers and refugees as well as to provide a framework for managing migration as a whole.

---

[13] Kasimis (2012).
[14] *Ibid.*
[15] Icduygu (2014); Kilberg (2014).
[16] United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (2013).
[17] Sirkeci & Espiova (2013). Primarily Turkish Kurdish minorities.
[18] *Ibid.*
[19] Icduygu (2005).
[20] Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs website (accessed September 2014) 'Turkey's Fight against Illegal Migration'.
[21] UNHCR (2014b); IRIN (2008).
[22] IOM (2003).
[23] UNHCR (2014c) Turkey has seen an unprecedented surge of 50 000 non-Syrian refugees and asylum seekers since 2012.
[24] Kilberg (2014).

2.3 Indonesia

Indonesia is located in Southeast Asia and is one of several countries in the region forming a network of transit countries through which irregular migration flows travel. There are long–established, unconstrained maritime migration routes operating in the region between Indonesia and neighbouring countries to the north. Indonesia is made up of around 3000 islands, which makes the detection of clandestine boat arrivals from its Southeast Asian neighbours difficult.[25]

For more than a decade, Indonesia has been a key transit county for asylum and irregular migration to Australia. In the 1970s, along with other countries in the region, Indonesia became a country of asylum for an estimated 43 000 boat people from Viet Nam and Cambodia.[26] From the 1990s to 2001, Indonesia's proximity to Australia made it a natural transit country for mainly Afghan, Iraqi, and Iranian asylum seekers trying to reach Australia by boat.[27] From 2009 to the beginning of 2014, migrants passing through Indonesia in transit to Australia diversified, with an increasing number of nationalities and stateless persons. The flow of boats reaching Australia had virtually stopped by the beginning of 2014, with around 10 000 UNHCR registered asylum seekers and refugees remaining in Indonesia.[28]

Indonesia is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol and has no formal asylum legislation. However, Indonesian authorities allow the UNHCR to process asylum claims, and individuals registered with the UNHCR are permitted to stay in Indonesia on a temporary basis while their applications are processed.[29] Those apprehended by Indonesian authorities without a legitimate status to be in Indonesia are subject to detention.[30]

Indonesia is not well equipped to accommodate asylum seekers/irregular migrants. In 2012, around 18 per cent of Indonesians were living on less than USD 1.25 a day.[31] There are widespread disparities in income across the country, with poverty ranging from nearly four per cent in Jakarta to around 31 per cent in the province of Papua. While the Indonesian economy has shown strong growth in recent years, the country still struggles with high unemployment (especially among young people), inadequate infrastructure, a complex regulatory environment, and unequal resource distribution among regions.[32] Labour migration to countries in the region and the Middle East, especially among low skilled workers, is significant. While accurate data is difficult to obtain, the number of undocumented migrants workers is thought to far exceed the documented migrant worker population.[33]

3. MIGRATION AND RETURN TRENDS

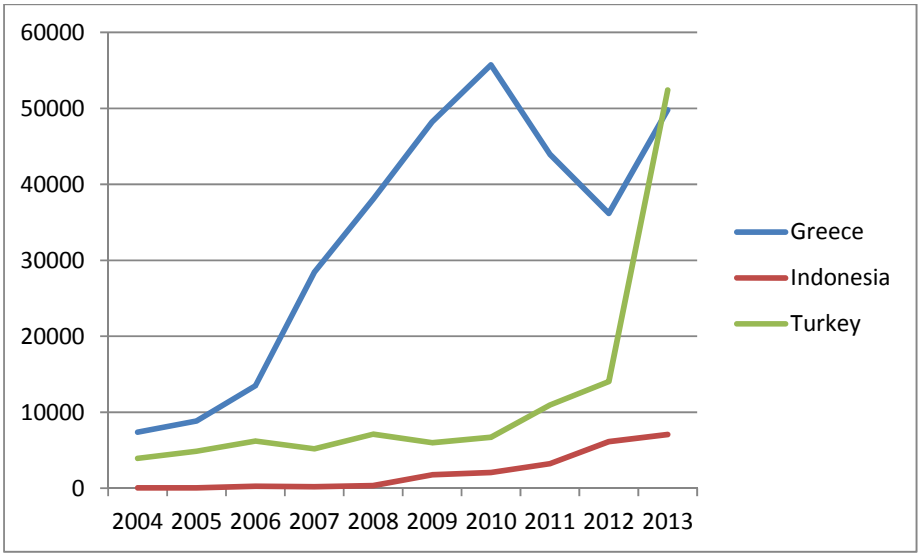
Conditions in Greece, Indonesia and Turkey have changed rapidly in the past five to 10 years, as has the nature of migration trends to these countries. Figure T1 shows the number of asylum applications reported by the UNHCR in each country from 2004 to 2013. Over time the number of asylum applications in each country has increased, with notable peaks in 2010 in Greece and 2013 in Turkey, when the number of applications filed in Turkey more than doubled from the previous year (from just over 14 000 applications to over 38 000). The increase in the number of asylum applications filed in Indonesia, while less stark than in Turkey and Greece, was nonetheless substantial. The sharp decrease in asylum applications filed in Greece after 2010 is unlikely to signal real decreases in the number of asylum applicants seeking protection in Greece: several key informants interviewed during the research suggested that rather, the asylum system became so overburdened at this time that claims were not been filed or processed, a trend confirmed by the sharp increase in claims after 2012. According to key informants, the new Asylum Service in Greece began its operation on 7 June 2013 and since this time asylum applications and processing has been more streamlined.

The estimated size of the irregular migrant populations in Greece, Turkey and Indonesia is much larger than the number of asylum seeker applications represented in Figure 4.5 in the *Final report* (and reproduced below as Figure 13.1). In the fieldwork conducted for this study, the majority of participants in Greece (70 per cent) and Turkey (84 per cent) had not applied for asylum. In the case of Turkey, 40 per cent of these participants were from Afghanistan: in May 2013,

[25] Hugo; Tan & Napitupulu (2014).
[26] Missbach (2013).
[27] *Ibid.*
[28] UNHCR (2014d).
[29] UNHCR Indonesia Factsheet 2014.
[30] Missbach (2013).
[31] ADB 2013.
[32] UNDP 2013.
[33] Hugo (2014).

the UNHCR in Turkey stopped accepting asylum claims for processing and froze all existing asylum claims from Afghan applicants (Al Jazeera, 2014).

Figure 13.1: Number of asylum applications by transit country, 2004–2013

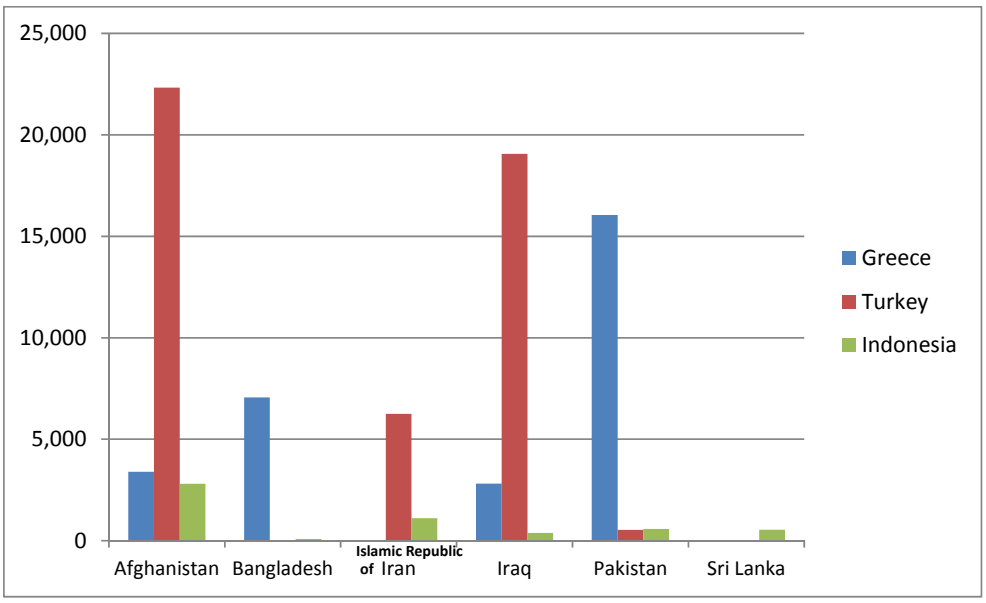


Source: UNHCR, 2014.

The scale of asylum seeker applications in Greece and Turkey is substantially higher than in Indonesia. At the time of writing, the ongoing and intensifying insecurity in Iraq, coupled with the persistent crisis in Syrian Arab Republic, had resulted in a significant and growing number of asylum seekers in Turkey.

Figure 13.2 shows the primary countries of origin of asylum applicants to each of the three transit countries of Greece, Turkey and Indonesia. The figure represents the total number of asylum applications filed from each origin country by migrants residing in the country over time, not just applicants who filed a claim in 2013. There are striking differences in these numbers, which most likely reflects the different migration systems of the countries. Although Afghans are no longer able to file applications with the UNHCR in Turkey, a substantial number of applications have been lodged by this group, and are currently on hold by the UNHCR. Despite the large number of applications filed by Afghans, however, many key informants suspect that the majority of Afghans in Turkey have not applied for asylum. Like Afghans, Pakistanis also do not tend to apply for asylum in Turkey and are therefore excluded from these figures. According to the Turkish National Police, Pakistanis comprised the fourth largest irregular migrant group apprehended by police in 2011 (UTSAM, 2013). Although there is variation in the trends between countries, individuals from countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq are present in large numbers in all three transit countries.

Figure 13.2: Asylum applications in 2013 by country of origin and transit

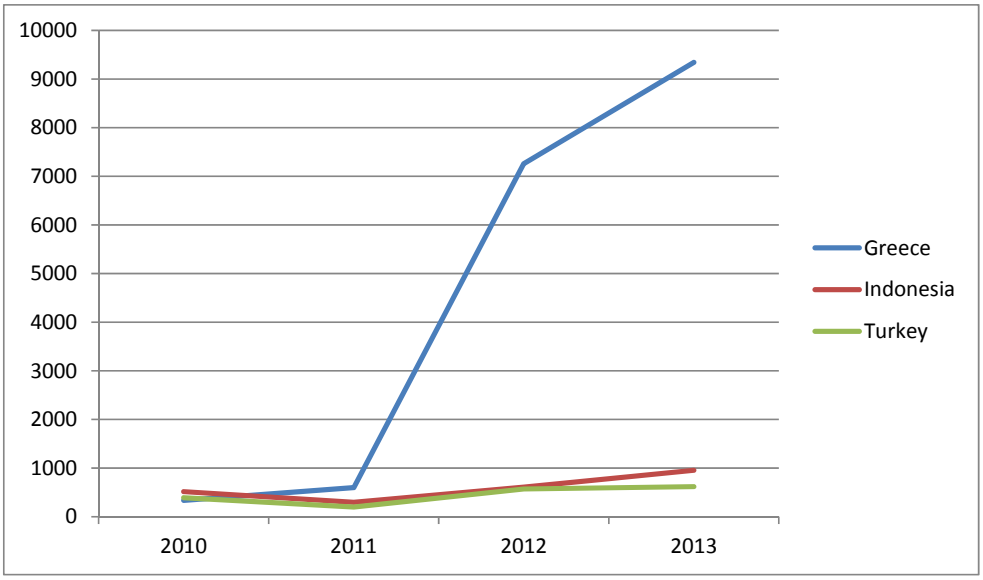


Source: UNHCR, 2014.

Figure 13.3 shows the number of assisted voluntary returnees from each transit country between 2010 and 2013. A substantially larger number of assisted voluntary returns departed from Greece, which is unsurprising given its historically higher numbers of asylum seekers. Greece also has the largest operations and staff at the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for assisted voluntary return and reintegration programming, which handles much larger numbers of applications than the other two countries. This office is also much more active in providing information to migrants regarding assisted voluntary return, with IOM staff regularly disseminating leaflets in migrant areas in Athens, posting large billboard posters in migrant areas, and providing advertisements on the metro system regarding assisted voluntary return and reintegration. This type of information dissemination is not found in Turkey or Indonesia. In Turkey the lack of information dissemination measures reflects budgetary limitations, as there is no financing to support additional assisted voluntary return applicants. However, as discussed in Chapter 2 the *Final report*, the extent to which information dissemination influences assisted voluntary return uptake is not always clear.

The differing role of the state in supporting assisted voluntary return and reintegration programmes further explains the numerical trends in each country. The Greek Government plays an active role in supporting return migration: the Greek government (through the Ministry of Public Order and Citizen Protection) sets a yearly budget for the purpose of migrants that are expected to be assisted to return through migrant assistance under assisted voluntary return. In 2013, for example, the Greek government estimated 3,500 migrants to receive assisted voluntary return, thus at least that number of individuals were financed to return through assistance programmes. The IOM Greece assisted voluntary return and reintegration programme receives financial assistance from other donors as well—such as via the European Return Fund—which also increases the potential scale of the AVR activities in Greece.

Figure 13.3: Total number of assisted voluntary returns by transit country, 2010–2013



Source: IOM, 2014

Table 13.1 shows the primary countries of return from each transit country. There are striking differences in the number of returnees by origin country. In Greece, for instance, over half of all returns are to Pakistan. While this large number is likely a function of the large size of the Pakistani community in Greece, participants in the study also highlighted police harassment and targeted violence by members of the 'Golden Dawn' as another factor encouraging return. Twenty-five per cent of Pakistani participants interviewed in Greece reported having been attacked and badly injured while in the country, and an even larger number of participants reported living in fear of harassment from either xenophobic groups or the police.

Table 13.1: Top countries for assisted voluntary return by transit country

	Greece	Indonesia	Turkey
Pakistan	4957	84	133
Bangladesh	1444	197	14
Afghanistan	710	49	205
Georgia	405	-	25
Iraq	311	21	-
Islamic Republic of Iran	89	363	-
Sri Lanka	53	109	-
Morocco	247	-	-
Myanmar	-	82	-
Turkmenistan	-	-	71

Source: Authors' own calculations based on IOM statistics.

More congruencies between asylum and return trends were observed in the transit countries than in the destination countries. That is, it appears that larger numbers of asylum seekers accept assisted voluntary returns in the transit countries than in the destination countries examined in this project based on the aggregate statistics. However, further research would be required to see if this is definitely the case. Differing asylum policies and procedures between destination and transit countries—as well as differences in conditions between destination and transit countries for irregular migrants, including rejected asylum seekers[34]—are two potential reasons for the discrepancy.

4. METHODOLOGY AND PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

Semi-structured questionnaires were administered among migrants residing in Greece, Indonesia and Turkey. The questionnaire used in the transit countries was similar to that in the destination countries but was modified for the transit context.

Within each transit country, questionnaire respondents were selected based on their eligibility for assisted voluntary return, namely lack of legal right to reside in the country. Given this selection criteria, two groups of respondents could be distinguished: those who elected for assisted voluntary return, and those who would face involuntary return if they did not select assisted voluntary return. Both groups were included to represent the differing factors that different kinds of migrants face when considering return.

Participant selection occurred in slightly different ways in each transit country to better accommodate the particularities of each country system. In Greece, respondents were recruited either from among migrants who had registered for assisted voluntary return in the IOM Athens office or who were subscribers of services offered by the non-government organization, Medecins du Monde. In Indonesia, all participants were refugees or asylum seekers who were living in IOM-provided accommodation in various locations in Jakarta. In Turkey, the majority of interviews (19) took place at a removal centre in Istanbul and the remainder (6) at the IOM office In Istanbul. All interviews in Turkey were arranged by the IOM. Table 13.2 provides an overview of the respondents.

[34] See Chapter 5 of the Final report for additional discussion of the decision-making factors that affect return.

Table 13.2: Characteristics of sample populations in Greece, Indonesia and Turkey

	Freq.	%
Transit country		
Greece	30	42.9
Indonesia	15	21.4
Turkey	25	35.7
Total	70	100
Age (in years)		
Min./max.	18-60	--
Average	30	--
Sex		
Male	56	81.2
Female	13	18.8
Total	69	100
Region of origin (nationality/birth)*		
Central Asia	19	27.1
South Asia	30	42.9
Europe	1	1.4
North Africa and Middle East	7	10
Sub-Saharan Africa	13	18.6
Total	70	100
Highest level of completed education		
No formal education	10	14.5
Primary	17	24.6
Lower secondary	11	15.9
Upper secondary	17	24.6
Technical/ vocational	4	5.8
Bachelor	9	13
Master of higher	1	1.4
Total	69	100
Residence country was intended destination		
No	39	55.7
Yes	31	44.3
Total	70	100
Plans to migrate to intended destination		
Yes (to chosen country)	14	35.8
Yes (to country where resettlement is made)**	4	10.2
No	7	17.9
Don't know/no answer	14	35.8
Total	39	100
Assisted voluntary return selected		
Yes	34	65.4
No	15	28.8
Undecided	3	5.8
Total	52	100
Type of returnee (if planning to return)		
Individual	37	90.2
Nuclear family	3	7.3
Couple	1	2.5
Total	41	100

*Respondents were of 16 different nationalities.
**Some respondents were registered with the UNHCR and were awaiting resettlement, and indicated that they could not choose the resettlement country.
Source: Authors' calculations.

A total of 70 questionnaires were completed among migrants in the three destination countries, the majority of whom were men of working age. The greatest single proportion of respondents came from the South Asia region, including from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The next-largest group originated from the Central Asia region, a region represented exclusively by Afghanistan. Smaller numbers came from sub-Saharan Africa (including countries such as Congo, Nigeria and Senegal) or North Africa and the Middle East (represented by countries such as Islamic Republic of Iran and Egypt). Only one respondent came from a European country (Republic of Moldova).

Most respondents had completed secondary school or lower, and just over one-fifth had completed some form of post-secondary education. More than 44 per cent had intended to migrate to the country in which they resided at the time of the survey.

While Greece, Indonesia and Turkey are here considered as 'transit' countries, this reasonably high proportion of respondents who actively planned to migrate to these countries indicates that the relative desirability of these countries as destinations may be shifting. There are notable differences in the intended final destinations of migrants by country, however, more than 86 per cent of respondents in Indonesia intended to reach a different destination, compared with 60 per cent in Turkey and 36 per cent in Greece. Of those respondents who had intended to reach a different destination country, a significant share (35 per cent) indicated that they planned further migration to that specific destination. The majority of respondents who planned to return to their origin countries would do so alone. Less than 10 per cent of returnees planned to re-migrate with either a spouse and/or children. Nearly two-thirds of all respondents had selected to participate in an assisted voluntary return programme. Those who had not been registered to receive return assistance had generally made an active decision not to return. The characteristics of respondents varied across the transit countries, reflecting general differences in the type of migrant populations residing (irregularly) in each country, the conditions of stay, and possibilities for further migration.

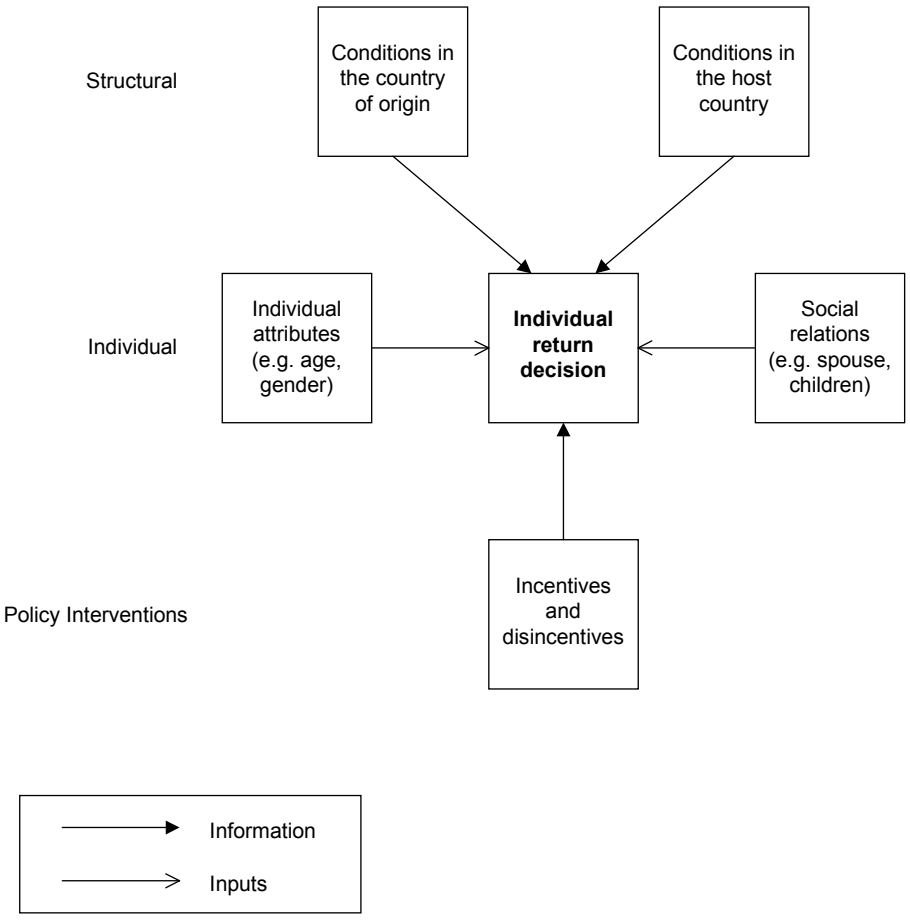
5. DECISION-MAKING FACTORS IN RETURN

This section examines the factors relating to return decision making including the model of the return-decision making process used in this study and the different sets of factors that influence the return decision-making process.

5.1 Model of the return decision-making process

As explained in detail in Chapter 2 of the *Final report*, the model below was used in this study for the purposes of research design and subsequent analysis around the return decision-making process. It proposes that the individual return decision can be influenced by: 'structural' conditions (conditions in the origin and destination country); individual conditions, (including individual attributes and social relations); and policy interventions. The model also recognizes the significant role that information sharing can play: information about conditions in origin and transit countries, and about policies, can influence the decision to return.

Figure 13.4: Factors determining the decision to return



Source: Black et al, 2004

5.2 Factors influencing the return decision

Different migrant populations residing in each of the transit countries expressed different intentions to return to their origin country or remain abroad—decisions that were influenced by a range of factors, some of which were particular to given country contexts. Just over 37 per cent of respondents indicated that they had decided not to return, and an additional three per cent indicated that they were unlikely to return.

Marked differences in return intentions were observed among migrants residing in different transit countries. None of the respondents in Indonesia intended to return to their countries of origin, whereas 70 per cent of the respondents in Greece and 75 per cent of the respondents in Turkey had made the decision to return. These stark differences are likely to reflect different types of migrants (that is, migrants who left voluntarily versus those who were forcibly displaced), the different recruitment strategies for participants in each country, and the different conditions in the transit country. All of the respondents in Indonesia had filed asylum claims and were hosted in IOM-provided accommodation, with hopes of receiving refugee status and eventual resettlement. This being the case, it is understandable that return was not selected by these respondents. Few respondents in Greece and Turkey, in contrast, had filed asylum claims or had access other options to gain receiving legal residency. Furthermore, the majority of respondents in Turkey were residing in a removal centre, where they had no freedom of mobility and no options to gain legal status or be released in Turkey.

Table 13.3 shows respondents return decision-making factors by each type of reason. It must be noted that some of the variables listed in Table 13.3 are not listed in Table 5.2 of the *Final report* as they are responses that were not included in the main questionnaire, but frequently arose in the 'other' category in the transit countries. These variables have been added to this table due to their relevance in the transit countries.

Table 13.3: Decision-making factors by type of reason

Reason for decision to return or remain	Freq.	%
Conditions in origin country		
Better living conditions in origin than residence	1	1.6
Employment opportunities in origin	1	1.6
No knowledge about origin	1	1.6
Origin country is unsafe	6	9.8
Categorical Total	**9**	**14.8**
Conditions in transit country		
Cannot support self/dependants financially	8	13.1
Difficulty finding employment/ No right to work	19	31.1
Personal insecurity or discrimination	3	4.9
Tired of living in detention	4	6.6
Categorical Total	**28**	**45.9**
Individual factors		
Physical/mental health problems	4	6.6
Tired of living as undocumented	5	8.2
Inability to meet migration aspirations	5	8.2
Dignity of return as normal passenger	1	1.6
Felt there was no other choice	3	4.9
Categorical Total	**16**	**26.2**
Social factors		
Nostalgia for home	2	3.3
Desire for family reunification in origin	14	23.0
Change in family circumstances	8	13.1
Shame of return	1	1.6
Categorical Total	**19**	**31.1**
Incentives/disincentives of policy interventions		
To benefit from assisted voluntary return programme in residence	1	1.6
To benefit from return incentive offered by origin	1	1.6
Transit country policies	1	1.6
Forced to return/return for legal compliance	3	4.9
Categorical Total	**5**	**8.2**

*Categorical totals refer to the total number of individuals who have at least one factor in that category.
**Percentages show the share of individuals relative to the transit sample size (61 individuals).

5.3 Conditions in the origin country

Analysis of the factors that influenced respondents' choices to return to the origin country or remain abroad reveal that conditions in the origin country were the second least frequently mentioned set of factors that affected the mobility decision. When mentioned, such factors generally related to the decision to remain abroad rather than to return. The most frequent reason for not returning was that security conditions in the origin country had remained poor, leading to fears of personal insecurity on return.

5.4 Conditions in the transit country

Contextual features of the country of transit were considered to be important factors in the return decision among the largest single share of respondents. Within this category of responses, the largest share of respondents reported that being unable to find employment in their country of transit was a pivotal factor in influencing their decision to return to the origin country. A related factor influencing the return decision within this category was the respondent's inability to financially support themselves and or dependants.

Factors relating to conditions in the country of transit varied slightly among respondents interviewed in different countries. Among those migrants residing in Greece, the most frequent reasons for choosing to return to their origin country related to employment (principally, unemployment and lacking a right to employment).

Among respondents in Turkey who indicated conditions there as influencing their return decision, the inability to find employment was most often mentioned as a reason to return, followed by not being able to support themselves financially, and being in a detention/removal centre. For those who cited being in a removal centre (five respondents), this was unique to the case in Turkey, as all participants would have preferred to stay in Turkey if they had not been arrested and brought to the removal centre. Unlike some participants in the removal centre who still believed they may be released, these participants recognized that they had no option to be released and felt their only option was to return, which they wanted to do as soon as possible.

In terms of not being able to support themselves financially, one participant had migrated to Turkey with his family including a wife and two young children and they were currently registered as asylum seekers with the UNHCR in Turkey. Asylum seekers are not permitted to work in Turkey, but do not receive any support from the government. Further, with the current freezing of Afghan asylum applications in Turkey, it was unclear how long the family would need to wait for the result of their claim. To support his family, the father worked irregularly in the construction sector (which had provided enough to support his family for the past two years). However, he was recently injured on the job and no longer able to work. The family was evicted from their apartment after not being able to pay the rent and was living in a park without adequate clothing for the evening cold or money for food. At the time of interview, they had travelled to Ankara to receive support from the IOM for return, and had been sent to Istanbul, where they were anxiously waiting to return to live with family in Afghanistan. The father stated:

> Here the standard of living [in Turkey] is much higher. My daughter here is going to school and when we go back to Afghanistan she cannot go to school, but we cannot do anything because we cannot earn money here anymore …We wait for tickets, we sleep on the seaside, it's very cold.; Turk, age 32

Other participants in Turkey stressed the difficulties encountered in finding work. Several Afghans and Pakistanis paid brokers to find them jobs. These jobs were most often in factories and there was significant variation in conditions. Some individuals worked six days a week and were paid up to 1500 Lira a month. Others were exploited, and were never paid for their work, even after four to five months. Although a secondary finding, the research did reveal that labour exploitation networks active in Turkey take advantage of the vulnerability of migrants.

5.5 Individual factors

Individual factors—both demographic attributes and individual perceptions and feelings—influenced the return decision among migrants in different ways. As Table 13.4 indicates, certain groups of individuals appeared to favour return more than others. Men, individuals in the youngest age cohort, unmarried individuals, and individuals with children all appeared to be more inclined to return than individuals who were older, female, married and without children. These trends likely reflect initial migration decision-making as well as the relative risks and rewards of return faced by different migrants. Younger migrants and men may be more likely to have emigrated with the primary purpose of finding work abroad. Such migrants may select return more often given limited employment possibilities in the country of transit, a factor frequently mentioned by migrants residing in Greece and Turkey (as mentioned). Individuals who are married are unlikely to elect for return if their spouse is in the country of transit or if they plan to rejoin their spouse in the intended destination country. However, individuals with children may desire return more often than those without children because the relative reward of returning is higher (where family reunification occurs in the origin country).

Table 13.4: Decision regarding return by personal characteristics

Indicator	I have decided to return		I have decided not to return		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Age						
18–29	22	66.7	11	33.3	33	100
30–39	14	60.9	9	39.1	23	100
40+	5	38.5	8	61.5	13	100
Total	41	59.4	28	40.6	69	100
Sex						
Male	36	65.5	19	34.5	55	100
Female	5	38.5	8	61.5	13	100
Total	41	60.3	27	39.7	68	100
Married*						
Yes	12	54.5	10	45.5	22	100
No	29	61.7	18	38.3	47	100
Total	41	59.4	28	40.6	69	100
Has children*						
Yes	17	65.4	9	34.6	26	100
No	24	55.8	19	44.2	43	100
Total	41	59.4	28	40.6	69	100
Migrated alone						
Yes	39	59.1	27	40.9	66	100
No	2	100	0	0	2	100
Total	41	59.4	27	40.6	68	100

Note: *Prior to the initial migration.

The decision-making process relating to return was also influenced by individual perceptions, feelings and expectations about migration. A number of respondents noted that being tired of living as an undocumented migrant and the inability to meet their migration goals were major factors influencing their decisions to return. Many respondents identified a broader sense of social immobility as motivating their return, with many (particularly in Greece) discussing how their lack of legal status, easy identification by police and xenophobic groups, and inability to find employment contributed to precarious living conditions that were not offset by any greater possibilities to support the family at home. The relationship between these factors illustrates the difficulty in discretely separating influential factors into categories like 'conditions in destination country' and 'individual factors'.

For example, one Pakistani respondent in Greece provided a poignant example of how many factors coalesced to prompt his return. Over five years, his home had been burgled twice. During the last burglary, he had been assaulted by one of the burglars and suffered a knife wound, but said when he sought police assistance, they refused to investigate the attack and told him he could expect continued insecurity in the future:

> 'When the police say "you won't be safe here, your life is not good here, go back to Pakistan", you know it is bad…If you stay in Greece your whole life, what will you get? What can you do? You can only die here.'
>
> Pakistani, age 43

It is understandable that these conditions play a key role in decisions to return.

5.6 Family/community level factors

Factors relating to an individual's personal life or situation were the second-most mentioned group of factors that influenced return decisions, and many were discussed in conjunction with conditions in the transit country. Family concerns—including the desire to rejoin with family members in the origin country or the desire to return following specific events such as the death or birth of a family member—were the most mentioned reason for wanting to return. As one man living in Greece reflected when discussing his mother's worsening illness:

> 'If I have no work, no problem, maybe tomorrow. If I have no money, it's okay—god will provide. But your family will never come again, they can disappear tomorrow.'
>
> Senegalese, age 39

Another respondent spoke emotionally about the responsibility he felt to care for his family in Pakistan following the unexpected death of his father. He explained:

> 'When I work here in Greece, my pay is very low…700 euros, now 500 euros [per month]. My big family in Pakistan—this is a problem…Now my father is dead, I need to be together with them.'
>
> Pakistani, age 26

This respondent made the decision to return because he felt he needed to assume the role of protector of his (extended) family since his father was no longer there—a role he obviously felt strongly about, as he chose to annul his marriage to a Greek national so that he would lose his legal status and be eligible for return assistance (the only way he could afford the return trip).

It is also import to note that family can discourage return. One participant from Pakistan in Turkey was captured by police and brought to the removal centre. At the time of interview he had only been in Turkey for approximately one month, had not been able to work, and was living in a park/on the street. He tried to help a friend who was dying, but was arressted in the hospital and taken to the removal centre. He called his brother from the removal centre and said that he wanted to come back to Pakistan, but the brother told him not come back. Based on this information, he had now re-set his goal to migrate to Germany. Unfortunately, it is highly unlikely he will be able to achieve this goal given his current situation.

5.7 Policy interventions

Particular policy interventions were also mentioned by respondents (as shown in Table T3) as reasons influencing the return decision, albeit much less frequently than individual/social factors or factors relating to the country of transit. A small number of respondents indicated that they were planning to return to their origin country because they had no (legal) means to stay in the country of transit as they had either been issued a deportation order or were under detention with limited possibilities for appeal.

Small but telling differences in the motivations to return are also apparent among individuals from different origin countries and regions. A higher share of migrants from Afghanistan than from any other origin country indicated that policy incentives/disincentives shaped their return decisions. Most of the Afghan respondents, regardless of country of transit, were rejected asylum seekers who were either in detention or had been issued deportation orders following detention. They indicated that they were essentially compelled to return rather than actively desiring to return to Afghanistan (or Islamic Republic of Iran, in some cases)—the decision was between voluntary compliance with return orders or forced return by the authorities. Respondents from South Asian countries, in contrast, most frequently reported that conditions in the transit country significantly influenced the decision to return, with lack of employment and no legal access to work reported most frequently. Given the significant share of labour migrants among respondents from countries in this region (namely Pakistan), the link between return and lack of economic possibilities in the transit country may be expected. Among respondents from Sub-Saharan African countries, individual and social factors were the most often mentioned, but specific reasons (such as desire for family reunification, psychological problems, and failure to meet migration aspirations) varied considerably among respondents.

5.8 Information

When making the decision to return or to remain abroad, respondents reported being influenced by different sources and providers of information (see Table 13.5). Family members in the origin country were mentioned the most frequently as influencing the return decision. Many respondents noted the need to coordinate their potential return with the family remaining in the origin country , particularly if there were financial repercussions. This seemed to be a particularly pressing concern for migrants who emigrated to find work abroad because of the absence of opportunities in the origin country, as their return would remove a potential income source that insulated the family from problems in the employment market in the origin country. Another financial concern for the migrant's family concerned loan repayments: several respondents noted that when they returned to their origin country, they were afraid that they and their families would be harassed to repay loans taken out to pay for the original migration project. Other respondents who made the initial migration decision in response to conflict and insecurity in the origin country indicated that the decision had been made collectively by members of the extended family to reduce the risk that members of the family would be injured or killed during conflict. As return would jeopardise this risk diversification strategy, some respondents indicated that they discussed their return options and alternatives for forward migration with their families before making the decision.

Migrants also mentioned that government authorities in the country of residence were involved in their decision to return, but authorities appeared to influence the decision much less frequently than family members. Respondents who mentioned that government authorities had influenced their return decisions had been in detention and/or were issued deportation orders. Friends in the origin country were also reported to influence the decision to return, albeit on a less frequent basis.

Table 13.5: Sources of influence on decision to return or remain abroad

	Freq.	%
Family in intended destination country	1	2
Family in origin country	33	72
Friends in intended destination country	2	4
Friends in transit country	2	4
Friends in origin country	3	7
Government authorities in residence country	6	13
Government authorities in origin country	1	2
IOM in country of destination/transit	2	4
Other	1	2
Total	51	100

Once the choice to return (or remain abroad) had been made, the next set of decisions that migrants made related to how, when and under what conditions return should occur. In making these decisions, people can consider different modalities of return that are likely to be influenced by their encounters with actors such as the authorities in the country of residence, former migrants who had returned to the origin country, and agencies such as the IOM. Many of the respondents living in the three transit countries saw their options for return as fitting into three broad categories: independent return; return with government assistance; and return through non-government assistance.

Return with government assistance generally implied contact with the authorities and entailed different degrees of compulsion depending on the specific conditions under which the migrant and state interacted. In Greece, return assistance could be provided by the state (through the police) under different conditions. Key informants noted that migrants can voluntarily declare themselves to the police as irregular residents and ask for return, which would entitle them to return assistance of €300 in addition to compensated travel. Migrants who were arrested and detained by the police would also be returned, but those who agreed to return would be given €200 in return assistance while those who did not agree to return and needed a police escort for the return would receive €50. However, few respondents mentioned that seeking government assistance for return was a preferable solution, regardless of how that assistance was received, since all forms of government assistance implied travel by a plane chartered exclusively for deportees, which carried specific stigma for returnees.

Non-state return assistance was generally restricted to the IOM assisted voluntary return programme. While in certain countries other non-government organizations offer return assistance, it is often targeted to particular types of migrants (for example, rejected asylum seekers with health problems, particular nationalities, women) and so is less available and less visible to multiple types of migrants. Respondents generally had limited knowledge of the non-government organizations or International Organizations who provide return assistance and reported developing knowledge on specific assistance programmes only shortly before making the decision to return via that channel (for instance, while going through the intake interview for an IOM assisted voluntary return programme). More than three-quarters of respondents had heard of the assisted voluntary programme, but only 55 per cent of all respondents had heard of it before registering for an intake interview at an IOM office. More than 30 per cent of respondents who knew something about an assisted voluntary return programme received the information from friends or family members living in the country of residence, and an additional 17 per cent had received information on assisted voluntary return from an IOM source, such as consultations with staff or informational brochures.

Table 13.6: Information on assisted voluntary return (AVR) programmes

	Freq.	%
Had heard of AVR programme		
Yes	45	75
No	15	25
If yes, heard of AVR programme from…		
Government authorities/caseworker	5	11.1
IOM (other than native counselor)	8	17.7
Other non-government organisations/international organisations	5	11.1
Others in asylum accommodation	1	2.2
Friends/family in country of destination	2	4.4
Friends/family in country of residence	14	31.1
Friends/family in country of origin	6	13.3
Other	4	8.8
Total	45	100

Many respondents discussed at length the role of informal contacts in sharing information about return options more generally and assisted voluntary return programmes specifically. Within the Pakistani community in Greece, for instance, return was a common topic of discussion among friends. Most Pakistani migrants in Greece are not 'transit migrants' as such—most actively chose to migrate to Greece with the intention of finding work. Many found work through friends and other co-ethnics. When the economic crisis hit and the sectors that relied most heavily on migrant labour contracted (such as construction, agriculture, tourism) many members of the same social network faced joblessness and the prospect of return, creating a strong incentive to collect and share information on return options. Migrants who had registered for assisted voluntary return but not yet taken the assistance[35] appeared to be a particularly important source of information for prospective returnees because they could communicate the risks and benefits of the assistance in the most culturally-relevant ways. Returned migrants also appeared to play a strong role in informing current migrants about their return options through IOM assisted voluntary return programmes. Several Pakistani respondents in Greece mentioned that they decided to contact the IOM for more information about return and repatriation assistance after talking with former migrants in Greece who had returned to Pakistan through assisted voluntary return and reintegration. Returned migrants shared overwhelmingly positive stories of return through such programmes and seemed to encourage other Pakistanis remaining in Greece to benefit from the return package, particularly if there is no sign that living conditions in Greece would improve.

The sources of information on assisted voluntary return differed somewhat by country of residence: migrants in Turkey received more information from government authorities and other non-government organizations/International Organizations than migrants in Greece, who relied primarily on other current/former migrants for information on assisted voluntary return. Such differences are likely due to the migration situations of the sample populations. Whereas most interviews in Turkey were conducted in a removal centre, where the sample population was guaranteed to have come into contact with Turkish authorities, fewer respondents in Greece had been in direct contact with state authorities. Another difference in information sources relates to the public presence of the IOM. As mentioned, IOM activities in Greece are much larger-scale than in Turkey, and the visibility of assisted voluntary return is enhanced by coordinated awareness-raising by IOM Greece in different locations. According to staff of IOM Greece, several different methods have been used to raise awareness about the assisted voluntary return and reintegration programme among migrants living in different areas of Greece. Multilingual leaflets distributed to non-government organizations, television spots, postings staff to border entry and exit points, and consultations with migrant communities were all used to ensure dissemination of information on assisted voluntary return and reintegration. Word of mouth is a powerful accompaniment to these more formal awareness-raising techniques: while relatively few respondents reported receiving information on assisted voluntary return and through IOM sources, it is likely that the members of their networks with whom they discussed assisted voluntary return had received information from the IOM in some form earlier.

[35] IOM staff in Greece mentioned that the numbers of assisted voluntary return registrations do not match the number of returnees in any given year because not all migrants who register for assisted voluntary return actually choose to return, and those who do return may delay their return for many months, particularly if they receive employment opportunities after registering for assisted voluntary return.

6. CONCLUSION

Commonly portrayed as 'transit' countries, Greece, Turkey and Indonesia provide valuable case studies in which the migration decision-making process of migrants can be understood. All three countries are relatively new to the phenomenon of large-scale immigration. Indonesia is still a country of net emigration, Turkey was a country of net emigration until 2007, and Greece became a country of net immigration only following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990.[36] All three countries have been caught unprepared for the large-scale shifts in migration dynamics over the past years, with each state struggling to accommodate the needs of growing populations of asylum seekers and irregular migrants.

Despite these similarities, the three transit countries differ in important ways. Turkey and Greece are often considered gateways to the European region, and Indonesia is an important stop along the maritime route to Australia. Given these geographic positions (and the geopolitical considerations that they entail), each transit country receives slightly different migrant populations. Whereas Indonesia receives large shares of asylum seekers from countries such as Afghanistan, Islamic Republic of Iran and Sri Lanka (many of whom were apprehended en route to Australia), Greece and Turkey have become key destination countries for mixed migration flows comprising labour migrants as well as asylum seekers (from counties such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq and Pakistan) seeking protection in Europe.

Another important difference in the three transit countries is in migration management capacity and support for return options. Greece has by far the most extensive support for returnees through its IOM offices and field staff throughout the country, and it has the best-funded and largest assisted voluntary return programme of all three countries. The assisted voluntary return programme in Greece is primarily supported through three agencies: the Greek Government (through the Ministry of Public Order and Citizen Protection), the EU (through the European Return Fund), and the United Kingdom Border Agency. Funding structures and institutional capacity are reflected in the numbers of individuals who have returned to their origin countries through an assisted voluntary return scheme. Compared with around 1000 individuals in Indonesia and 500 individuals in Turkey who left in 2013 with assisted voluntary return assistance, nearly 9500 migrants left from Greece with assisted voluntary return assistance.

The differences in transit-country contexts are important to understand how different migrant populations navigate their mobility decisions. In Indonesia, all of the respondents were asylum seekers or refugees awaiting resettlement. In Turkey, most respondents were irregular migrants or failed asylum seekers living in detention. In Greece, most respondents were irregular migrants who actively chose for return. These different characteristics corresponded to distinct patterns of return intentions: where 70 per cent of respondents in Greece and 75 per cent of respondents in Turkey intended to return, none of the respondents in Indonesia planned to go back to their origin countries. In Greece and Turkey, particular types of individuals appeared to favour return: more men than women intended to return, and prospective returnees were generally in the youngest age cohort.

Conditions in the country of residence, such as lack of employment and financial insecurity, were the most-discussed reasons why individuals from Greece and Turkey had decided to return. Social factors such as the desire to rejoin family in the origin country were also important in informing the return decision, as were more personal factors such as being tired of being undocumented and being unable to fulfill to goals attached to the migration. Particular policy interventions or schemes, such as compelled return following detention, were relatively infrequently cited as decision-making factors. Conditions in the origin country were the most infrequently mentioned factors that informed the mobility decision, but they appeared relatively more important in informing the decision of individuals who decided not to return—particularly for those from countries with ongoing conflicts.

When making the decision to return or to remain abroad, the family was the most-often cited source of consultation. Government authorities were also mentioned as influencing the return decision, particularly among those individuals who had been denied asylum, detained, and/or issued deportation orders. More than three-quarters of prospective returnees had heard of an assisted voluntary return programme, and nearly half of all respondents (34) were selected for participation in assisted voluntary return. Respondents had most often heard of assisted voluntary return through friends or family members living in the country of residence, but the IOM (through field staff, information brochures and other forms of public awareness-raising) were also an important source of information on assisted voluntary return.

[36] World Bank 2014.

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Collyer, M., Duvell., F. & De Hass, H. (2012) 'Critical Approaches to Transit Migration', *Population, Space and Place*, Vol. 18, Issue 4, pp. 407–414.

Cowell, A., & Bilefsky, D. (2014) 'European Agency Reports Surge in Illegal Migration, Fuelling a debate', *The New York Times* (30 May, 2014), www.nytimes.com/2014/05/31/world/europe/european-border-agency-reports-surge-in-illegal-migration.html?_r=0.

Department of Immigration and Border Protection (2014) 'Irregular Migration Overview (January 2014)', Irregular Migration Research and Analysis Section.

Hugo, G., Tan, G. & Napitupulu C. (2014) 'Indonesia as a transit country in irregular migration to Australia', Irregular Migration Research Programme Occasional Paper Series No. 8, Australia Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

Icduygu, A. (2014) 'Turkey's migration transition and its implications for the Euro-Turkish transnational space', Working Paper 07, Koc University (April 2104).

Icduygu, A. (2005) 'Transit Migration in Turkey: Trends, Patterns and Issues', European University Institute.

Icduygu, A. (2003) *Irregular Migration in Turkey*, Prepared for IOM by Ahmet Icduygu, Bilkent University, Turkey, (February 2003)

International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2013) *IMF Country Report: Greece*, No. 13/241.

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) (2012) Afghanistan-Iran: Mehdi, 'My hands were hurting because the handcuffs were too tight', (27 February 2012).

Jakarta Post (2013) 'Indonesia to stop visa on arrival for Iranians', (19 July 2013), www.thejakartapost.com/news/2013/07/19/indonesia-stop-visas-arrival-iranians.html.

Kasimis, C. (2012) 'Greece: Illegal Immigration in the Midst of Crisis', Migration Policy Institute (March 2012).

Kilberg, R. (2014) 'Turkey's evolving migration identity', Migration Policy Institute, (24 July 2014).

Papadopoulou-Kourkoula, A. (2008) 'Transit Migration in Greece', European Commission.

Papageorgiou, I. (2013) 'The Europeanization of Immigration and Asylum in Greece' (1990–2012) International Journal of Sociology, Vol.43, No.3 (Fall 2013) pp.72–90.

Missbach, A. (2013) 'Waiting on the Islands of "Stuckedness": Managing Asylum Seekers in Island Detention Camps in Indonesia from the late 1970s to the Early 2000s', *Australian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, Vol. 6, No.2, pp. 281–306.

Osbourne, M. (1980) 'The Indochinese Refugees: Cause and Effects', *International Affairs* Vol.56, No.1 (January 1980), pp. 37–53.

Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs website (accessed September 2014) 'Turkey's Fight against Illegal Migration', www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey-_s-fight-against-illegal-migration.en.mfa.

Seirkeci, I. & Esipova, N. (2013) 'Turkish migration in Europe and desire to migrate from Turkey' Border Crossing: Transnational Working Papers, No. 1301, Regents University London, UK.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2013) *Human Development Report 2013: The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World*.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2014c) Indonesia Factsheet (March 2014), www.unhcr.org/50001bda9.html.

UNHCR (2014a) Regional Operations Profile: Northern, Western, Central and Southern Europe, www.unhcr.org/pages/49e48e726.html.

UNHCR (2014c) 2014 UNHCR Country Operations Profile: Islamic Republic of Iran, www.unhcr.org/pages/49e486f96.html.

UNHCR (2014d) Turkey: UNHCR Global Appeal 2014-2015, www.unhcr.org/528a0a34a.html.

World Bank (2014) Databank: Net migration (Greece, Indonesia and Turkey), http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SM.POP.NETM/countries/GR-TR-ID?display=graph.

APPENDIX 14

DESTINATION COUNTRIES REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

This destination country report has been produced as part of the comparative research project on the assisted voluntary return and reintegration of migrants. The study examines findings from a range of origin, transit and destination countries, with Australia, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and United Kingdom comprising the four destination countries in scope for this study. The results presented in the study are based on a mixed methodology involving quantitative and qualitative analysis.

The project was conceived and commissioned as part of the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) Irregular Migration Research Programme,[1] and was informed by the programme's first occasional paper, which recognized the need to establish an evidence-base for policy deliberations on irregular migration to Australia.[2] The project is supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the research undertaken by Maastricht University.

This destination country report first defines the eligibility criteria for assisted voluntary return in each destination country; then provides an overview of recent asylum trends and return flows to and from each destination country; and finally key results from interviews with participants in each destination country.

2. METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

Four destination countries were included in the study; namely Australia, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Australia was included as the project was conceived and commissioned under DIBP's Irregular Migration Research Programme, which is designed to establish an evidence-base to inform policy deliberations on irregular migration to Australia. The Netherlands was selected because of the diversity of assisted voluntary return programming in the country. The United Kingdom represents a top destination country for migrants and has one of the largest assisted voluntary return flows globally. Finally, Switzerland was selected because of the regular increase in assisted voluntary return flows over the past five years. Between them the four destination countries encompass different regional migration networks; have different experiences with assisted voluntary returns and returns more generally; and represent quite different overall migration policy settings.

The study included interviews conducted with individuals in these destination countries. The criterion for individuals to participate in the study was that the individual had to be eligible for assisted voluntary return. The requirements for eligibility differ between the destination countries, which have different return and assisted voluntary return policies (as is explained in Section 3). Working within this basic eligibility criterion, the research team aimed to include diverse nationality groups within each destination country.

Analysis was also conducted on data on returns from the various destination countries. DIBP facilitated access to returns data from each selected destination country. The analysis of this data is presented in Section 4 of this report.
Recruitment of participants for interviews depended on the country context. In each destination country, DIBP assisted the research team by seeking the cooperation of the appropriate government authority. The respective governments in each country of destination in turn connected the research team with the appropriate individuals or organizations for arranging and completing interviews.

In Australia, interviews were requested with clients by both DIBP and IOM in Sydney. Clients of DIBP unfortunately all declined to participate in the study. It was suggested that a recent data breach had resulted in lowering DIBP clients' trust and this arguably impacted on participation. All interviews in Australia were therefore only completed with IOM clients and, as such, it follows that the choice of respondents represents a slight bias towards those who have already decided to return.

In the Netherlands, all interviews were arranged by the Department of Return and Repatriation (DT&V). Individuals who no longer had a legal right to stay in the Netherlands were selected for interview in four different venues: family

[1] Information on the Irregular Migration Research Program can be found at: www.immi.gov.au/media/research/irregular-migration-research
[2] Koser and McAuliffe (2013)

centres, detention centres, restricted-movement centres, and non-restricted movement centres. The DT&V case workers approached their clients to participate in the interviews. As the interviews in the Netherlands were arranged directly by DT&V there is no bias towards return in these interviews.

In Switzerland the interviews were arranged by IOM Bern in cooperation with their staff, and their partners in the cantonal return counselling offices. Interviews were conducted in five different locations in Switzerland: Basel, Chiasso, Lugano, Zurich, and Kreuzlingen. An effort was made to include both individuals who had and had not yet requested assisted voluntary return.

Finally, in the United Kingdom, all interviews were coordinated by Refugee Action, the provider of assisted voluntary return in the United Kingdom. Interviews were conducted in both Manchester and London. Although an effort was made to include individuals who had not chosen to return or were undecided, there was a strong bias in these interviews towards individuals who had already decided to return under assisted voluntary return.

Table 14.1 shows that the participant groups in Switzerland and the United Kingdom had a higher share of people who had selected assisted voluntary return, compared with Australia and the Netherlands.

Table 14.1: Number of participants interviewed per country

Country of interview	AVR Selected	AVR Not selected or undecided	Number of participants
Australia	4	3	7
Netherlands	2	13	15
Switzerland	11	7	18
United Kingdom	12	3	15
Total	29	26	55

3. OVERVIEW OF ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN

A key finding from the research was that assisted voluntary return is applied quite differently in each country. This section provides a brief overview of how each country defines assisted voluntary return and the associated eligibility criteria for migrants interested in receiving assisted voluntary return.

Table 14.2 provides an overview of different types of migrants eligible for assisted voluntary return in each destination country; and it can be seen that assisted voluntary return is currently applied most widely among the study destination countries in the United Kingdom, and is most limited in Switzerland. Only asylum seekers and rejected asylum seekers are systematically eligible for assisted voluntary return across all four countries, however, it must be noted that not all asylum seekers are necessarily eligible for assisted voluntary return in each country. For instance, in Australia asylum seeking irregular maritime arrivals in detention are not eligible for receiving assisted voluntary return.

Table 14.2: Types of migrants eligible for AVR by destination country

	Australia	Netherlands	Switzerland	United Kingdom
Current Asylum Seekers	X	X	X	X
Rejected Asylum Seekers	X	X	X	X
Irregular Migrants†	X	X	X*	X
Individuals in Detention		X		X***
Other Migrants	X**			X

*The cantons of Geneva and Vaud offer AVR for irregular migrants
**Non-IMAs whose visas have been cancelled
***In April 2014 the United Kingdom stopped AVR from detention.

†Irregular migrants refer to any other migrant living without status in the destination country.

In Australia, a migrant is only eligible for assisted voluntary return if s/he has been granted a 'bridging visa' to reside in the community. Bridging visas are granted to selected illegal maritime arrivals (IMAs) while they await an assessment of their protection claims (or a review of a decision), as well as to selected non-IMAs whose visas have been over-stayed or cancelled. Migrants who are in immigration detention are not eligible for assisted voluntary return, but may receive reintegration assistance if they choose to depart Australia voluntarily.

The next section will show how the flows differ between these two groups.

In the Netherlands, there are several different forms of assisted voluntary return offered to migrants. These include a combination of in-kind assistance and cash grant programmes, and new pilot projects that aim to assist people in preparing for return. Compared to the other countries, the Netherlands has the largest number of providers and different programme options for assisted voluntary return.

In the United Kingdom, there are separate programmes: the Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme (VARRP), which is targeted at people in the asylum system; and Assisted Voluntary Return for Irregular Migrants (AVRIM). An individual is eligible for VARRP in the following cases:

- "has an asylum application pending
- has been refused asylum and is appealing against that decision
- has been refused asylum and has exhausted the appeals process
- has not withdrawn their asylum application
- falls within any of the above categories and is detained by the immigration service solely in relation to immigration offences, except where the applicant has been assessed by detention services as violent and/or may pose a threat to RA staff
- has been refused asylum but granted discretionary leave to remain in the United Kingdom outside the immigration rules

Except where:
- the applicant is involved in ongoing matters pertaining to the criminal justice system
- a deportation order (DO) has been made against the person
- arrangements for the person's return are already in place
- prior to RA receiving an application, the applicant has received custodial sentences, in the United Kingdom, totaling in excess of 12 months
- the applicant is a dependent who is not involved in the asylum application" (Choices, 2014).

In the United Kingdom, all assisted voluntary return is provided by the organization Refugee Action.

In Switzerland assisted voluntary return eligibility is determined on a case by case basis by the Cantons and Federal Office for Migration. A distinction is made between return assistance and reintegration assistance and the term assisted voluntary return is not used in Switzerland (however, has been used in the context of this report for comparability purposes). Current and rejected asylum seekers are eligible for return assistance from the Federal Office for Migration and there is a five step process for informing migrants of return assistance. At the cantonal level, two cantons also offer return assistance for irregular migrants that is separate from the federal system and a foundation in Geneva, the International Social Service, also offers return assistance that migrants can apply for directly from the organization.

In addition to the differences in eligibility, the entitlements for return also vary across the countries. These entitlements are determined by the type of returnee, the particular programme, and the country of return. For instance in Switzerland, returnees to migration partnership countries, meaning countries that have signed a migration partnership regulating return among other migration policies with Switzerland and none of which were included in this study, receive a slightly higher return assistance cash grant than other countries.

4. MIGRATION TRENDS

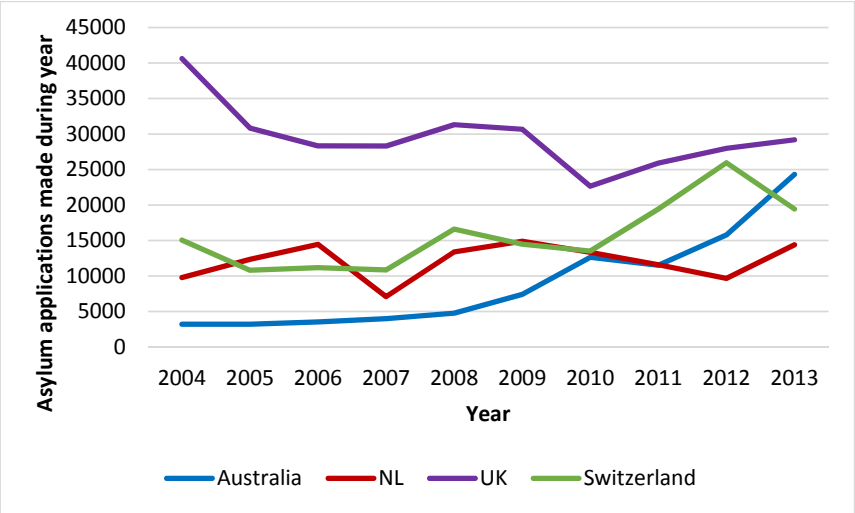
This section will examine asylum application, voluntary return and deportation[3] trends comparatively across the four destination countries. First asylum applications will be discussed, based on UNHCR data. Second, voluntary return trends will be explored, based on data provided by each government. Finally, voluntary return trends will be compared to forced removals.

[3] The term "deportation" is used here to refer generally to involuntary return (as opposed to voluntary return). It is important to note that the term "deportation" is not generally used in the Australian context, where the term "return" is used for migrants who have a lawful visa status and reside in the community, and the term "removal" is used for migrants who are in immigration detention. In the Australian context, returns are always voluntary (and include assisted voluntary return and other voluntary returns), while removals can be either voluntary or involuntary.

4.1 Asylum trends

The four destination countries have had very different asylum and return trends over the last decade. Figure 14.1 shows the number of asylum seeker applications lodged in Australia, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Switzerland, each year from 2004 to 2013. It must be noted that for the purposes of comparability these figures are from the UNHCR Asylum Levels and Trends in Industrialized Countries Reports and that sometimes these figures differ from each countries national statistics. During this period, the United Kingdom consistently received more asylum applications per year than the other destination countries although the number of applications it received in 2013 was significantly lower than in 2004. Australia received the fewest asylum applications for much of the decade, but rose to the second-largest destination country in 2013, receiving 20,000 more applications in 2013 than in 2004. All countries, except for Switzerland, experienced an increase in 2013.

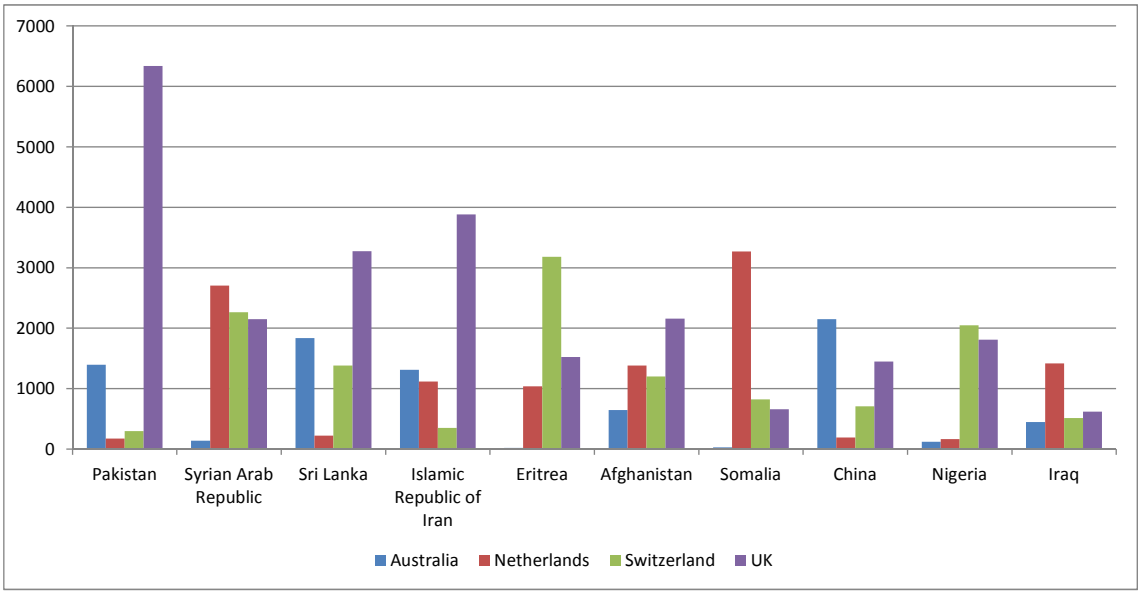
Figure 14.1: Number of asylum applications by destination country, 2004-2013



Source: ALTIC: Asylum Levels and Trends in Industrialized Countries PDF report.
Figures 2004 are from 2008 edition (published 2009).
Figures 2005 to 2008 are from 2009 edition (published 2010).
Figures 2009 to 2013 are from 2013 edition (published 2014a).

Figure 14.2 shows the number of new asylum applications in 2013 (the latest year for which these data are available) by principal countries of origin to each destination country. These origin countries represent the top common countries of applications across the selected destination countries. Some significant differences are worth noting: In both Australia and the United Kingdom the top countries of origin include Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, whereas in Switzerland the largest groups are from Eritrea, Nigeria, and Syrian Arab Republic and in the Netherlands from Iraq, Somalia, and Syrian Arab Republic.

Figure 14.2: New asylum applications in 2013 by country of origin and destination

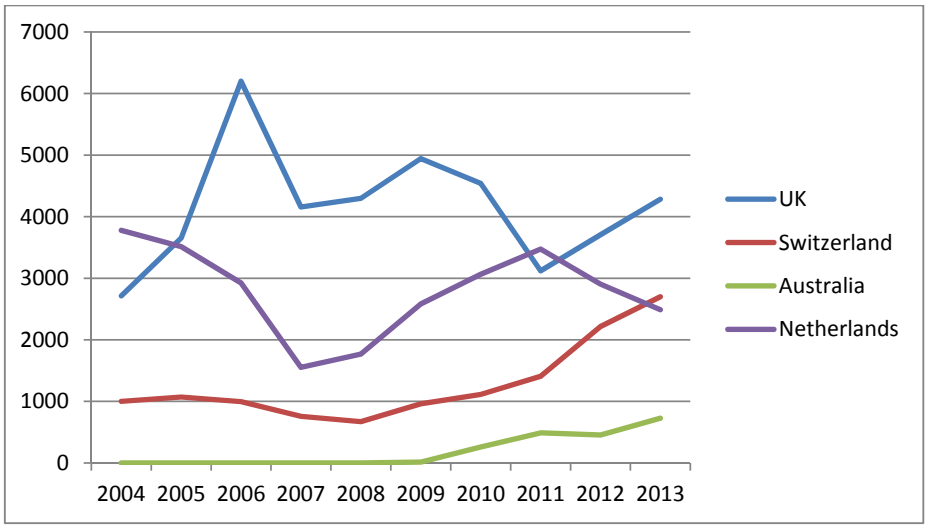


Source: UNHCR, 2014b.

4.2 Voluntary return

Figure 14.3 shows the total number of assisted voluntary return participants from each destination country from 2004-2013, based on data from the destination country governments specifically requested for this project. As the United Kingdom has experienced much higher asylum applications and asylum seekers are one of their key assisted voluntary return target groups, it is interesting to note that the number of assisted voluntary return participants from the United Kingdom is significantly greater than the other countries. During the decade from 2004 to 2013, assisted voluntary return from the United Kingdom peaked with over 6,000 participants in 2006, and has since remained below that level. Interestingly, this reflects asylum application trends in the United Kingdom, which have also consistently remained below the 2004 peak of over 40,000 applications. Although not illustrated in Figure 14.3, in Switzerland assisted voluntary return participants slightly decreased in 2013 and key informants suggest that they are predicted to continue to do so for 2014. It is clear that there are fewer assisted voluntary return participants from Australia than the other countries, which may reflect the interaction between Australia's asylum system and its particular approach to case resolution, in which assisted voluntary return is not available to people in immigration detention. The Netherlands shows a decrease in assisted voluntary return participants in 2011, which is probably a reflection of a changing policy environment from 2010 when stricter asylum and return policies were implemented.

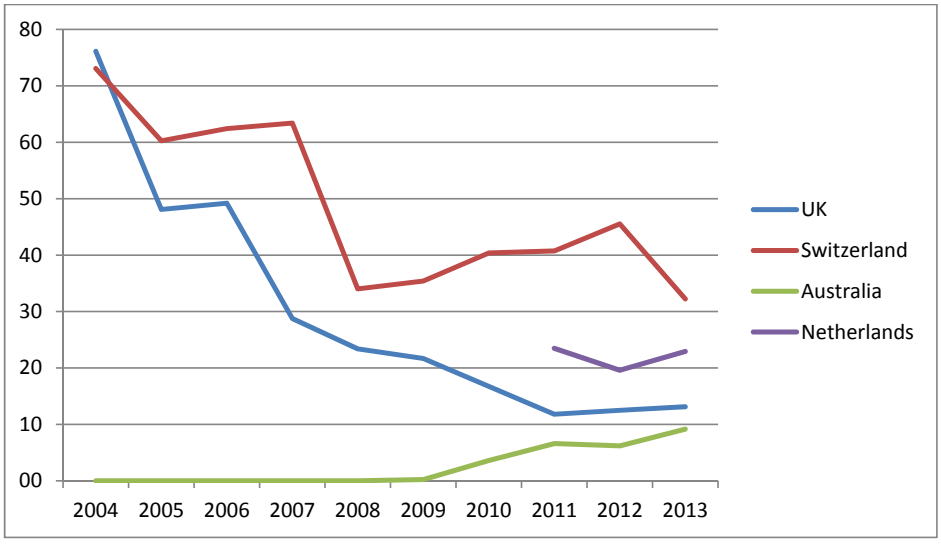
Figure 14.3: Total number of AVRs by target country, 2004-2013



Source: Data provided by destination countries.

Figure 14.4 shows assisted voluntary return participants as a percentage of all voluntary departures from each destination country. Voluntary departures include people that have departed without receiving assisted voluntary return, but choose on their own volition to leave the destination country of their own volition. In some cases, people do not require assistance or are not interested in receiving it.

Figure 14.4: AVR as a percentage of all voluntary departures by target country, 2004-2013*

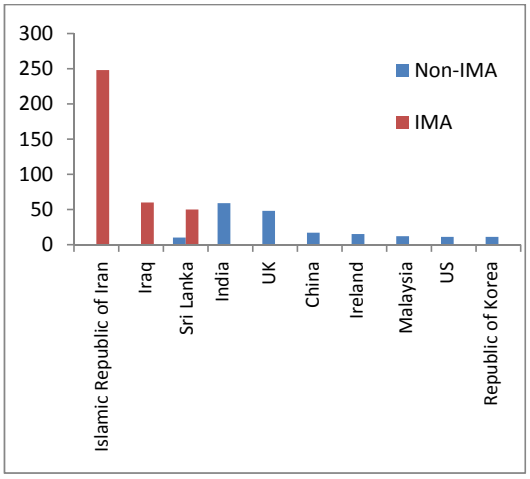


Source: Data provided by destination countries.
*Data was not available from the Netherlands prior to 2011. Australia's assisted voluntary return programme began in 2009. Australian data cannot be disaggregated by type of departure prior to 2008.

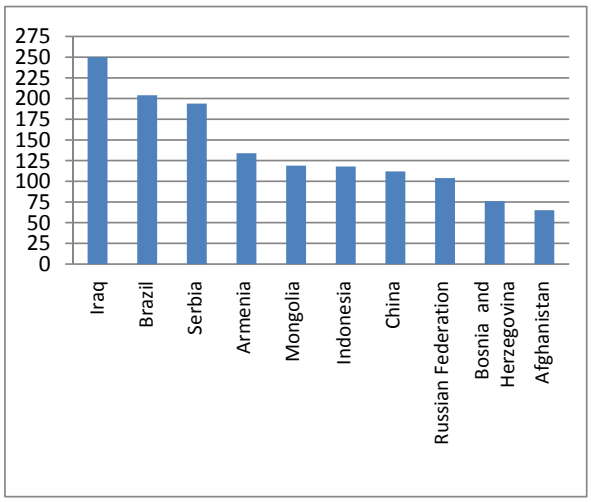
Figure 14.5 shows the assisted voluntary return participants by main return country from each destination country in 2013. The only country of origin in the top ten for assisted voluntary return participants across all four destination countries is Iraq. Otherwise the trends are quite different. Again, there are some similarities in countries of return between the United Kingdom and Australia, such as China, India, and Sri Lanka. However the countries of return for assisted voluntary return participants from Switzerland and The Netherlands are quite different from the United Kingdom and Australia.

Figure 14.5: Top ten countries for AVR in by destination country, 2013

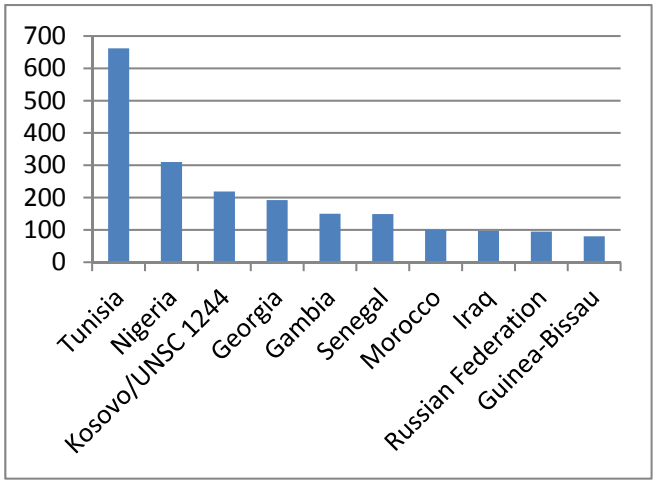
Australia



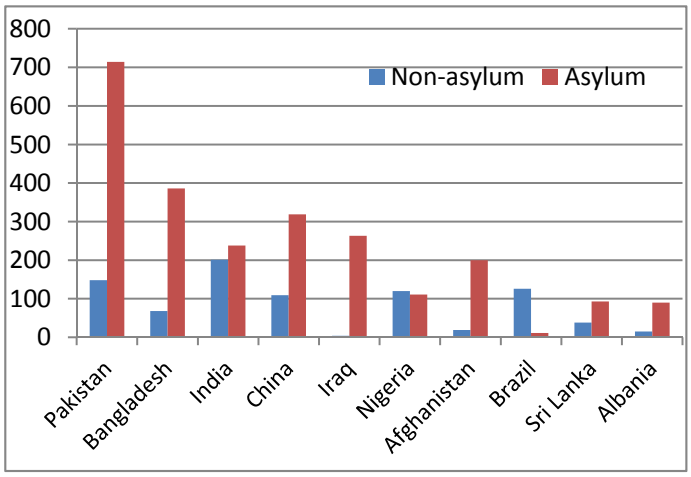
The Netherlands



United Kingdom



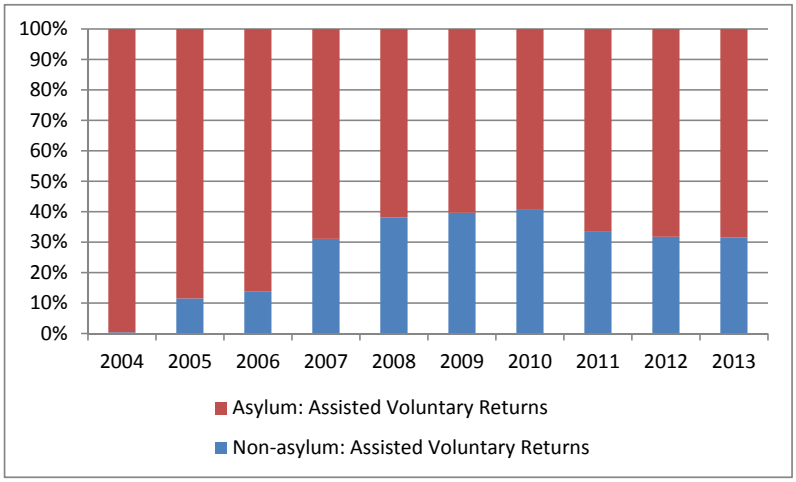
Switzerland



Source: Authors own calculations based on respective country governments data, 2014.

In Australia and the United Kingdom the differences between the types of returnee can be further examined. Figure 14.6 shows the United Kingdom assisted voluntary return participants by asylum and non-asylum as a percentage of all assisted voluntary return participants. It is evident that the majority of assisted voluntary return participants are current or former asylum seekers and that the number of non-asylum seeker assisted voluntary return participants increased substantially between 2004 and 2010.

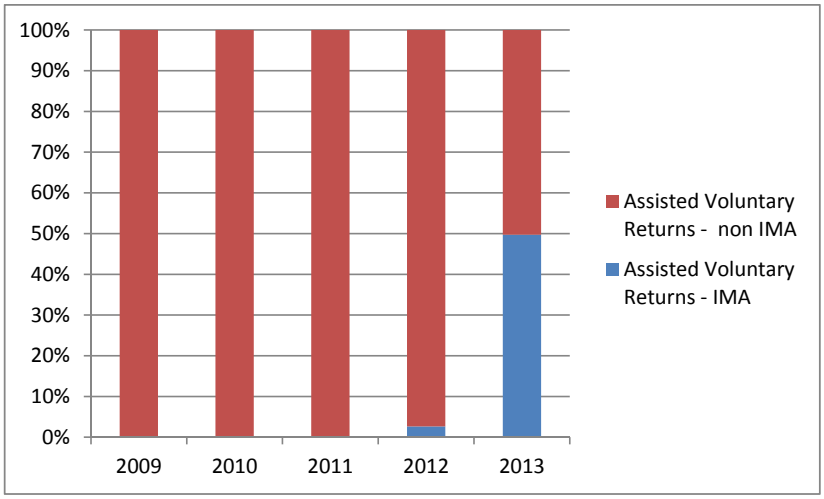
Figure 14.6: United Kingdom AVRs asylum versus non-asylum as a percentage of AVRs



Source: Data provided by United Kingdom.

Similarly, Figure 14.7 shows the number of assisted voluntary return participants that are IMAs and non-IMAs in Australia as a percentage of all assisted voluntary return departures. It is evident that the majority of assisted voluntary return participants are non-IMAs but that in 2013 there was a large increase in assisted voluntary return participants of IMAs.

Figure 14.7: Australia percentage of AVR departures by IMAs and non-IMAs



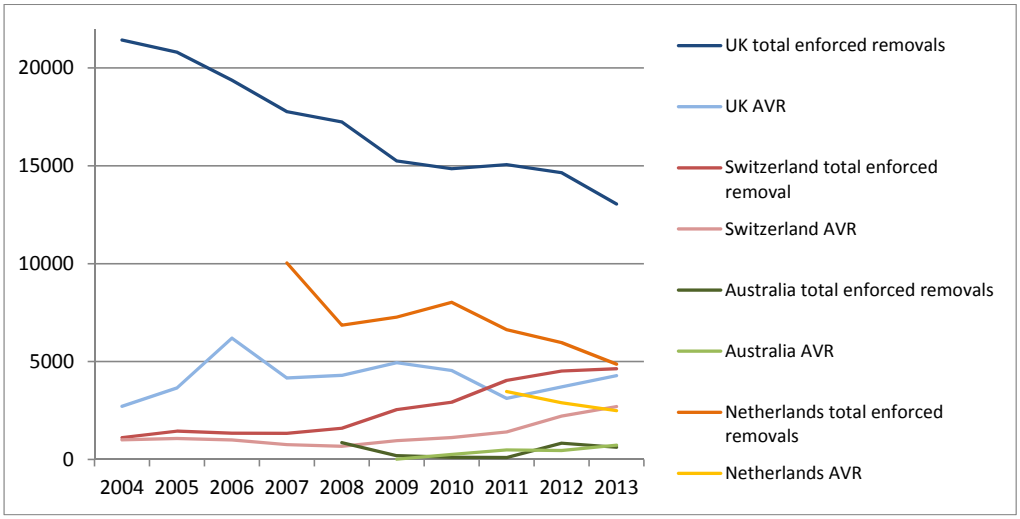
Source: Data provided by Australia.

The data presented above also highlight several differences in the policy environment, asylum process, and treatment of asylum seekers in each of these destination countries. Figure 14.6 for example demonstrates the prominence of assisted voluntary return as the end of the asylum process in the United Kingdom as the majority of assisted voluntary return participants are former asylum seekers, noting however, that this does not address the numbers of asylum seekers who do not choose assisted voluntary return. This is the also the case in the Netherlands, where according to IOM The Netherlands statistics in 2013, 59 per cent of assisted voluntary return participants were asylum seekers or rejected asylum seekers. In Switzerland, asylum seekers are eligible for return assistance at the federal level only, so all individuals recorded in Figure 14.5 are current or rejected asylum seekers. In Australia, the data is collected differently and differentiates between IMAs, who have arrived unlawfully by boat, and non-IMAs, who may include people whose visa has been over-stayed or cancelled. Asylum seekers exist in both categories and almost all IMAs are asylum seekers. The emergence of assisted voluntary return participants among IMAs in 2012 may reflect changes in Australia's return policy priorities in light of significant increases in IMAs that year. While it was not within the scope of this study to examine the policy environment and asylum process in each country, it is important to keep the differences in mind when examining migrant decision making on return in different country contexts.

4.3 Assisted voluntary return flows as compared to deportation

Figure 14.8 shows assisted voluntary return participants and enforced removals by country. These numbers are important to inform the 'carrot and stick' debate around return discussed in the literature review of the final study. It is evident that the United Kingdom has the highest number of enforced removals, which have however been steadily decreasing, as have enforced removals from the Netherlands since 2010. Switzerland has seen an increase in both assisted voluntary return and enforced removals, whereas Australia has only seen an increase in enforced removals. In all countries in 2013 enforced removals outnumber assisted voluntary return. Again the lack of a clear correlation across the study countries is striking, and highlights the value of comparative analysis.

Figure 14.8: Comparison of AVR and deportation in absolute numbers by target country, 2004-2013



Source: Authors own calculations based on respective country governments data, 2014.

5. OVERVIEW OF THE PARTICIPANTS

55 individuals were interviewed in the destination countries. Table 14.3 provides an overview of the basic characteristics of the individuals included within the sample. The average age of participants was 36 years old, and ages ranged from 18-74 years old. The majority of participants were male (80 per cent of the sample). Participants came from 34 different origin countries. There was no particular clustering of origin countries or regions within the sample. The majority of participants had a minimum of completed secondary education. As stated in Table 14.3 below, nearly half of the participants had requested assisted voluntary return at the time of interview (48 per cent). The majority of those who had selected assisted voluntary return were individual migrants (79 per cent).

Table 14.3: Overview of participants

	Freq	**%**
Age (in years)		
Range	18 - 74	
Average	36	
Sex		
Male	44	80
Female	11	20
Total	55	100
Region of nationality/ country of birth*†		
Central Asia	12	22
East and South Asia	12	22
East and Southern Africa	12	22
West Africa	8	15
Europe	6	11
North Africa	5	9
Total	55	100

Highest level of education		
No formal education	6	11
Primary	6	11
Lower secondary	8	15
Upper secondary	22	41
Technical/ vocational	4	7
Bachelor	8	15
Total	54	100
Requested AVR		
Yes	25	48
No	18	35
Undecided	9	17
Total	52	
Type of migrant (if planning to return)		
Individual	19	79
Nuclear family	4	17
Couple	1	4
Total†	24	100

* 34 different nationalities/ countries of origin were reported.
† Total does not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding of decimal places.

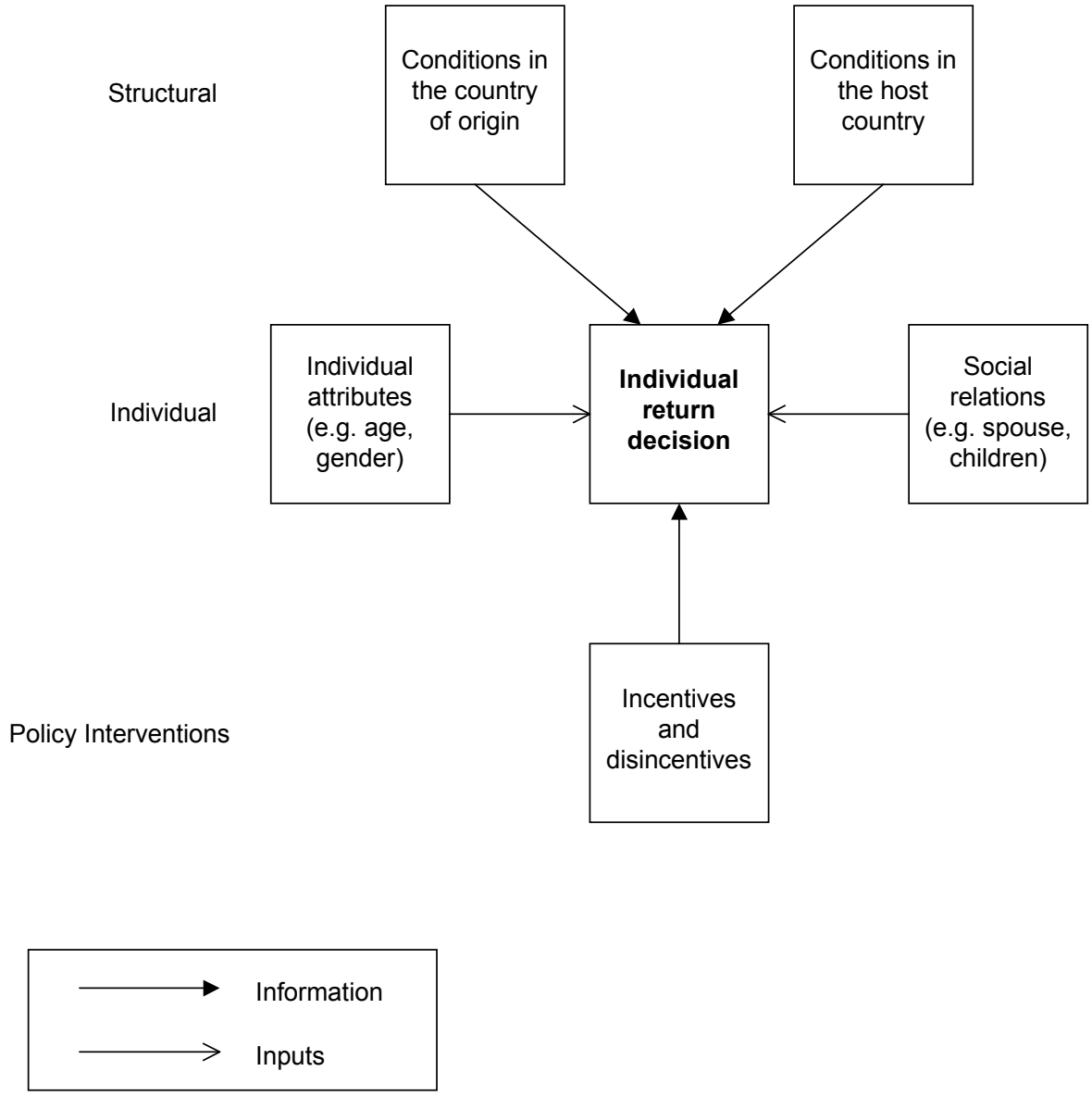
6. DECISION-MAKING FACTORS IN RETURN

This section examines the factors relating to return decision making in destination countries. It first provides a brief summary of the model of the return-decision making process used in this study, and will then examine the different factors influencing the return decision-making process.

6.1 Model of the return decision-making process

As explained in detail in Chapter 2 of the final study, the model shown here again in Figure 14.9 has been used in this study for the purposes of research design and subsequent analysis around the return decision-making process. It conceives the individual return decision as being influenced by 'structural' conditions (conditions in the origin and destination country); individual conditions including individual attributes and social relations; and policy interventions. The model also recognizes the significance on the decision of information both about conditions in origin and transit countries, and about policies, which may vary significantly between individuals and groups.

Figure 14.9: Factors determining the decision to return



Source: Black et *al*, 2004

6.2 Factors influencing the return decision

As discussed in Section 5, nearly half of participants in the destination countries had decided to return via assisted voluntary return. Table 14.4 shows individual factors involved in the decision to return, as selected by interview participants, and categorised according to Figure 14.9 above. It is evident that 'conditions in the destination country' are most commonly cited as influencing the decision to return. As highlighted in the final report in Section 5.3, this was not unique to participants interviewed in the destination countries and was also found among those interviewed in the origin and transit countries.

Table 14.4: Factors influencing the decision to return

Category	Factor	Freq.	%
Conditions in origin country	Employment opportunity or job prospects in origin country	1	1.8
	Political change or change in legal status in origin country	1	1.8
	Improvement in security situation of origin country/ end of conflict	2	3.6
	Better Living conditions in home country compared to destination	1	1.8
	Total	**5**	**9.1**
Conditions in destination country	End of work/ study permit in host country	4	7.3
	Cannot support self/ dependents financially	10	18.2
	Difficulty finding employment/ No right to work	17	30.9
	Negative decision regarding asylum request	7	12.7
	Lack of security, or being discriminated against in host country	1	1.8
	Total	**27**	**49.1**
Individual factors	Psychological problems (for example depression or frustration)	5	9.1
	Tired of living as undocumented	10	18.2
	Inability to meet migration aspirations including work or educational goals	7	12.7
	Dignity of return as a normal passenger	1	1.8
	I felt I had no other choice	5	9.1
	Total	**22**	**40.0**
Social factors	Nostalgia about home country and way of life	4	7.3
	Family (desire for reunification in country of origin)	19	34.5
	Changes in family circumstances (eg. death of relative)	6	10.9
	Shame of return	1	1.8
	Total	**23**	**41.8**
Incentives/ disincentives (policy interventions)	To benefit from voluntary return programmes offered by destination country	6	10.9
	Destination Country Policies	4	7.3
	Political change in destination country (ie: most crackdowns, more hostile)	1	1.8
	Was given a period of time to wind up affairs and leave voluntarily (i.e. to comply with the law)	4	7.3
	Total	**13**	**23.6**

6.2.1 Conditions in the origin country

Conditions in the origin country were the least likely factors to influence the decision to return, with only five participants citing them. The most commonly cited origin country factor was an improvement in the security situation in the country of origin. As discussed in Chapter 5 of the final report, this finding contrasts with other studies, where conditions in the origin country were found to be the most important decision-making factors in return.

For the most part, conditions in the origin country were cited as a disincentive to return. One woman who was living in a detention centre in the Netherlands stated:

> 'I wait. I fear to go back, because I fled the country. Maybe I will be killed. I don't like to be in prison, but I cannot change it…I am in prison here and will be in prison there, but to go back is worse.'
>
> Ugandan, age 29, in the Netherlands

Several participants felt that conditions in the origin country were worse than their situations in the destination country.

6.2.2 Conditions in the destination country

Within the conditions in the destination country, the most commonly cited factors were: 'difficulty finding employment/ no right to work' (31 per cent); 'cannot support self/dependents financially' (18 per cent); and 'negative decision regarding asylum request' (13 per cent).

In regards to employment, 15 per cent of the respondents stated that they were able to work in the destination country, illustrating that the majority had no right to work. One participant stated:

> 'The life is very good in here but the point is here that there is no work, they don't allow me to work…They just give me enough food so I don't die, I don't starve… money is very short.'
>
> Iranian, age 27, in Australia

Although not necessarily having the right to work, 28 per cent of respondents stated that they engaged in some form of income-generating activities. This varied quite substantially by destination country with participants in Switzerland primarily receiving a small income from doing jobs in the asylum reception centres such as cleaning or helping to move boxes (intended as a pocket money and not an official right to work), whereas in the United Kingdom participants were more likely to engage in work in the informal sector such as working in a restaurant, take away shop, or domestic work. It is interesting to note that none of the participants in the Netherlands reported having engaged in income-generating activities.

Further, participants who were engaging in income-generating activities were slightly more likely to cite 'cannot support self/dependents financially' as a decision-making factor in return at 27 percent, as opposed to 16 per cent of participants who were not engaged in income-generating activities. This suggests that the income from these types of income-generating activities is not enough.

Finally, 'negative decision regarding asylum request' was cited by respondents in Australia, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland.

6.5 Individual factors

Forty per cent of participants cited individual factors in their return decision making process. The most commonly cited factors were 'tired of living as undocumented' (18 per cent); 'inability to meet migration aspirations' (13 per cent); 'psychological problems' (9 per cent); and 'I felt I had no other choice' (9 per cent). It is important to note that often these factors can be overlapping. This is illustrated in one participant's statement:

> "You know we Africans, when we travel to Europe, the expectations are high. They think when you are in the United Kingdom, Europe, you'll be in a better position to have a family or to come and do something. The way I am going now feels like I am going home empty handed...The situation wherein I am now is not good… Even sometimes I don't even have food to eat, than it is better for me to go home.''
>
> Ghanaian, age 44, in the United Kingdom

Table 14.6 provides further insights into the relevance of individual characteristics in the return decision-making process.

Table 14.6: Decision regarding return, by personal characteristics and migration indicators (frequencies)

Indicator	I have decided to return	I have decided not to return	I don't know	Total
Age				
18-29	9	3	1	13
30-39	13	6	4	23
40+	12	3	2	17
Total	34	12	7	53
Sex				
Male	28	9	5	42
Female	6	3	2	11
Total	34	12	7	53
Married				
Yes	15	8	3	26
No	19	4	4	27
Total	34	12	7	53
Has children				
Yes	15	7	4	26
No	19	5	3	27
Total	34	12	7	53
Migrated alone				
Yes	30	6	4	40
No	4	6	3	13
Total	34	12	7	53

The data on age show no obvious trends. The majority in each age category had decided to return. As discussed in the final report, these findings contrast with an earlier and similar study in the United Kingdom, which found that younger respondents were the most willing to consider return, although the age categories used for that study were more fine-grained than those for the current study. Another contrast is that whereas the majority of respondents in the earlier study were 18-29 years old, in this study the largest age group was 30-39.

The data on sex are a reminder (see Chapter 4 of final report) that this study covered significantly more men than women, and addressing this disparity is certainly an area where further research would be valuable. Of the 42 men interviewed in destination countries, 27 had decided to return, 8 not to return, and 7 were undecided. Among the only 11 women interviewed, six had decided to return, three not to return, and two were undecided.

Table 14.6 also correlates return intentions with whether or not the migrants were married and had children. Concerning marital status and children there are no clear patterns – more respondents who were both married and unmarried and who both had children or not were planning to return than not. The correlations between return intentions and whether or not the respondent migrated alone are more interesting. The significant majority of those who had migrated alone to destination countries had decided to return. One reason for this could be that family members in the origin country requested them to return, which clearly relates back to the social factors.

6.6 Family/community level factors

The second most commonly cited factors were social factors. The most frequently cited factor within this category related to family: either desire for family reunification (34 per cent) or changes in the family situation (11 per cent). For example, one participant stated:

> ‘Primarily my main concern is my mom…My mom is all alone, my wife is there but they don’t get along. They haven’t spoken to each other in years and she needs help.’
>
> Zambian, age 46, in the United Kingdom

Another way that social factors intersect with the return decision-making process is where other family members and friends are involved in making the decision, and some participants stated that their family had requested that they return. As shown in Table 14.7 family members in origin countries were cited as the most important influence in the return decision-making process (cited by 33 per cent of participants), followed by the government authorities in the destination country (22 per cent), and family in the destination country (16 per cent).

Table 14.7: Involved in decision making factors regarding return (multiple responses possible)

	Freq.	%
Family in destination	9	16
Family in origin	18	33
Friends in destination	8	15
Government authorities in destination country	12	22
IOM in country of destination	3	5
Other (rejected) asylum seekers	1	2
Other	12	22

Further to this, 51 per cent of respondents stated that return was discussed within their community. Of these participants, roughly half stated that return was supported within their community. In particular, in the destination countries participants stated that their friends understood the system and supported them to return. However, support for return in origin countries was less clear with respondents expressing uncertainty as to how they would be received upon return.

6.7 Policy Interventions

Turning to policy interventions, these factors were apparently the second least important to impact return decisions. The most commonly cited factors in this category were: 'To benefit from voluntary return programmes offered by destination country' (11 per cent); 'Destination Country Policies' (7%); 'Was given a period of time to wind up affairs and leave voluntarily' (7 per cent). Four out of six participants who cited benefiting from assisted voluntary return policies were in the United Kingdom and two were in Switzerland.

These findings highlight important considerations about the role of policy in influencing return decision-making. The implications of the relative infrequency with which participants in this study cited policy interventions as important factors are further discussed in Section 5.8 of the final report.

7. CONCLUSION

This report, an Appendix to a larger study seeking to understand decision-making factors in return, summarizes the findings of comparative research across the four destination countries studied: Australia, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

A number of general conclusions arise.

First, the differences that exist between the four countries in the definitions, eligibility, and implementation of assisted voluntary return are striking. Each country has slightly different eligibility requirements for different migrant groups and different types of assistance that are offered to migrants. This highlights the complexity of assisted voluntary return globally and the challenges of comparative research across different country contexts.

Second, relating to the previous point, different recruitment strategies were used in each country that impacted the resulting sampling of participants that had and had not selected assisted voluntary return. This undoubtedly has some level of impact on the results, particularly as the majority of participants in the Netherlands have not selected for assisted voluntary return.

Third, the data analysis shows the differences in asylum and assisted voluntary return flows between the four countries. It is noteworthy that the top ten countries for assisted voluntary return from Switzerland and the Netherlands are very different from the top countries for assisted voluntary return from the United Kingdom and Australia, with the exception of Iraq. Furthermore, the top countries for assisted voluntary return from Switzerland are quite different from the current asylum flows to Switzerland. This stresses the need for a further examination of the assisted voluntary return policy differences between the countries.

Finally, when examining decision-making factors in return, it is evident for this study that conditions in the destination country, individual and social factors were as the most influential; whilst policy interventions apparently made little difference to the decision of most people.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Black, R., Koser, K., Monk, K., Atfield, G., D'Onofrio, L., Tiemoko, R. (2004) *Understanding Voluntary Return*, Home Office Report 50/04, London: Home Office.

Choices, 2014. 'Assisted Voluntary Return', Available at: http://www.choices-avr.org.uk/.

DIBP, 2014. Data provided by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

UNHCR (2014a). 'Asylum Levels and Trends in Industrialized Countries 2013', UNHCR, Geneva.

UNHCR (2014b). 'Online Population Statistics', Extracted from: http://popstats.unhcr.org/#_ga=1.209539988.743314642.1380562838.

UNHCR (2010). 'Asylum Levels and Trends in Industrialized Countries 2009', UNHCR, Geneva.

UNHCR (2009). 'Asylum Levels and Trends in Industrialized Countries 2008', UNHCR, Geneva.

APPENDIX 15

PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. INTRODUCTION

It is not the purpose of this brief appendix to prepare a full proposal for further research. At the same time there are some lessons to learn from this study for further research, which are considered here according to the usual structure of a research proposal (without the Abstract, Introduction, Timeline, Budget, and References). While this study has been too comprehensive to be described as a pilot study, it has nevertheless been conceived and conducted with a view to informing further research. Clearly the exact focus for any further research would need to be refined in response to the specific concerns of donors and the intended audience.

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

While this study has shed new light, the main research questions certainly remain valid for further research. Understanding how migrants (and in particular irregular migrants and unsuccessful asylum seekers) make decisions about return; defining and measuring sustainability; and developing appropriate policies to promote voluntary return and reintegration; remain critical components of well-managed migration and asylum systems, which are only likely to become more important given forecasts for future migration and asylum flows. As explained below, the way that these questions are approached and the methods adopted may require refining for future studies, but overall more evidence is required to answer these questions more fully and design more effective policies. What is more, there is no reason to suppose that the processes of return and reintegration remain static, making the case for ongoing as well as longitudinal.

At the same time, while trying to answer these three main research questions, others significant questions have arisen that may deserve further attention, either as an integral part of continued research on these core questions, or separately. First, this study has indicated that reintegration and sustainable return are not necessarily interchangeable concepts – reintegration may occur without return being sustainable; and equally return may be long-term without individuals being genuinely reintegrated. Further research is required to understand these separate processes and what influences them, and how they interact. Second, and related, this study has argued that re-migration is not necessarily a proxy for a failure of reintegration or sustainable return. Understanding why, how and where some return migrants migrate again certainly deserves more research. Finally, the surprising finding that having migrated paying a smuggler apparently did not impact the return process only demonstrates that the smuggling process requires further research and understanding.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

While the literature review included in this study was up to date to the end of 2014; further research continues to be published, especially from the increasing number of migration-related research programmes and centres worldwide. Besides staying up to date, there are two other issues that may be worth considering for a literature review for further research. First, most of the research reviewed here has been from the migration field. But fully to answer the research questions, there may also be valuable insights from other fields and disciplines, for example concerning decision-making, development, and public policy. All too often migration research refers to other migration research, and there would be value in introducing new perspectives to this field of study. Second, and as alluded to in the Conclusion, further research could better consolidate existing policy evaluations, which often contain valuable empirical data, but remain scattered and at times inaccessible.

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

On one hand this study has relied on an existing model, for understanding the decision to return, drawn from an earlier study. Even though the study populations in the two studies were quite different, the model was found to be relatively robust. Indeed the differences between the findings of the two studies (for example concerning the significance of conditions in the origin country, differential behaviours across age groups, and the extent of an information gap) point to the value of this model as a comparative tool, and the merits of continuing to test this same model in different contexts. On the other hand the study has developed and tested an innovative return and reintegration index. Its variables and thresholds can be adjusted to future studies, highlighting its agility and potential value going forward. Applying the index to new evidence in a different context would test its value and wider applicability. A comprehensive list of variables influencing reintegration and sustainable return has also been developed, categorised and refined, which again may provide the basis for further research.

5. METHODOLOGY

Limitations on sample size and scope have been explained throughout this study; and addressing some of these biases will be important for future research to provide a more robust basis for policy. First, although the number of women interviewed was very small, the findings of this study suggest that the processes of return and reintegration are gendered; and certainly more women would need to be covered by further research. Second, the logistics of identifying respondents in transit and destination countries in this study meant that they all had expressed an interest in returning; a further study might understand better why some migrants decide not to return or engage with return assistance providers and how they might be encouraged to. Third, although it was not always possible, an effort was made to conduct interviews in origin countries among returnees at least one year after return. A better viewpoint on sustainability would be provided by interviewing people even longer after they have returned, but as observed identifying these would be challenging. Such reservations about the scale and scope of the research notwithstanding, the survey instruments used in this study have yielded relevant information and can be used as the basis for further and perhaps more extensive research.

One of the strengths of the research project was the ability to access data and information that may not otherwise have been available, principally IOM and government data. While this aspect of the methodology was able to usefully inform the analytical framework and fieldwork component, it is clear that further benefits could be derived for both researchers and policy analysts from enhanced data collection.

Another methodological advance would be to introduce an element of qualitative research into a future study. Largely because of time and resource constraints, this study depended on semi-structured interviews. More qualitative approaches would certainly further illuminate some of the topics under consideration – decision-making, perceptions of safety and well-being, future plans for migration and so on.

Finally, this study has indicated that there would also be value in interviewing a wider range of respondents – not just migrants in transit and destination countries and returnees in origin countries. Further insights into decision-making, for example, could be gained by interviewing service providers who work closely with migrants during the return process. The study has indicated that families may be important in the decision to migrate and probably return home too. It has also shown that communities in origin countries apparently contribute significantly to reintegration and prospects for sustainable return.

6. RESEARCH DESIGN

As emphasized in the Introduction to this study, it cannot claim to be fully representative of the migration experiences in the 15 countries included, and clearly further work remains in these countries on the research questions covered here. Equally this study has highlighted first the differences in migration experiences and policies even across countries in the same broad category of origin, transit, and destination; second the value of comparing countries within each category; and third the added value of including all three categories of country in the study. A new study could usefully conduct an equally comprehensive and comparative study across another significant number of origin, transit and destination countries. Coupled with the findings of this study this would provide a very significant new evidence base; and analysis would highlight the significance of different geographical and policy contexts.

A particular target for further research should be decision-making in transit countries. Because of logistical challenges explained in Chapter 3 this study covered a relatively small and specific sample of respondents in only three transit countries. However, even with this limitation, it has identified some interesting areas for further investigation, for example regarding access to information, and the role of family members and agents in the decision whether to stay, return or move on. (The Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, as part of its Collaborative Research Program on irregular migration with the Australian National University has recently commissioned a new large-scale study of migrant decision-making in transit countries, comparing experiences in Greece and Turkey).

7. ETHICS

If some of the recommendations above are taken on board for future research – interviewing migrants who have not yet engaged with return programmes, adopting qualitative methods, placing more emphasis on transit countries – then ethical considerations would need to be prioritized more than they were in this study. In all of these examples migrants may be less willing to engage openly, and find themselves in more vulnerable situations, than was the case for this study. The principle to do no harm should be paramount.

8. POLICY RELEVANCE

Regardless of the involvement of policy-makers or international organizations in further research, we would contend that future research on this topic (including academic research) should aim for policy relevancece, particularly given the dynamic nature of migration-related policy deliberations and discussions. Certainly policy-makers would look to such research to expand their evidence base. In this respect a number of observations are offered on the basis of lessons learned during this research and its discussion in draft form with policy-makers.

First, and as explained above, the key research questions around understanding and promoting voluntary return, reintegration, and sustainable return; remain of immediate policy relevance. Second, the quite large-scale international comparison has been well appreciated by initial interlocutors. Third, greater focus on transit countries is certainly a priority, for policy-makers in origin and transit as well as potential destination countries.
One of the gaps in this study has been a systematic comparison of experiences of different types of return package and programme (either within or between countries), and how these specific policy settings may influence return and reintegration. To achieve this goal would require far greater attention on the choice of respondents in all three categories of country, and a different analytical framework to highlight in more detail the relevance of different return policy interventions.

At the same time it is important to maintain the distinction between a research study, and an explicit policy evaluation. The latter would be intended for a different audience, have different sets of aims and objectives, necessitate a different methodology, and focus on different findings and analysis, than the current study or further research conceived here.

9. CONCLUSIONS

Besides insights into specific aspects of further research (methodology, research design etc.), more broadly this study has been an example of an effective collaboration between a government department, an international organization, and an academic institution. We would argue that the success of this collaboration has depended on aspects such as: the agreement at the outset of a clear set of aims and objectives coupled with a consultative and flexible project management approach; regular communication to troubleshoot challenges and adjust expectations; an appreciation of institutional and policy priorities and constraints; a respect for academic independence; and recognition of different types of expertise brought to the project by the partners. There are lessons to learn here too for the framing of further research.