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# RETURN & REINTEGRATION

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# How can policy enable return or promote sustainable return and reintegration?

1. Overview of the topic of reintegration
2. Current projects of reintegration
3. Successes and limitations of reintegration projects
  - *Comparative Research on the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration of Migrants*

*“When you go from your native land to another culture there is culture shock. The culture shock is okay because when you cross the boundaries you are expecting something different...You know, somehow mentally, to a degree you are prepared and you shift. Now the re-entry culture shock is different. Because yes, you know this culture, what you have in your mind is what you grew up in and you can visualize things. But then when you actually come back to it things are not the same. Things are not the way you left them. Although they look like it on the surface, they are not exactly that way. And because it’s dynamic, it’s changing for the better or for the worse. So when you come back, do you fit in is a different question?”*

- Participant 36

Source: Kuschminder, 2014

# Sustainable return and reintegration

## *Definition of concepts*

- Multi-dimensional integration: economic, socio-cultural, political
- Multi-level integration: individual, household, community, national
- Objective and subjective reintegration

**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**

# Sustainable return and reintegration

## *Operationalisation*

- Reintegration = no re-migration?
  - High level of return intention among returned Afghan rejected asylum seekers
- Sustainable return = reintegration?
  - Reintegration: key precondition for sustainable return
  - Sustainable return: lack of reintegration and obstacles to re-migrate

# Comprehensive migration management

- **Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes**
  - Safe and humane return for migrants without a legal right to reside in a country
  - IOM – over 46000 people from over 70 host countries in 2013
  - All EU countries, except for Poland
  - Multiple AVR programmes in most countries
- **Difficulty to assess the impact assisted voluntary return policies**
  - Lack of consensus on the definition of concepts
  - Lack of accessible data – sample frame, short to long term analysis
  - Variation among different types of migrants and settings



# Comprehensive migration management

- Comparative Research on the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration of Migrants
  - Analysis of the return decision of migrants, including irregular migrants
  - Development of a framework for defining and measuring sustainability of approaches to voluntary return
  - Assessment of what factors determine sustainable return and reintegration
- Methodology
  - Across countries of origin, transit and destination
  - Total of 273 migrants and return migrants interviewed across the 15 countries

## Destination countries

- Australia
- The Netherlands
- United Kingdom
- Switzerland

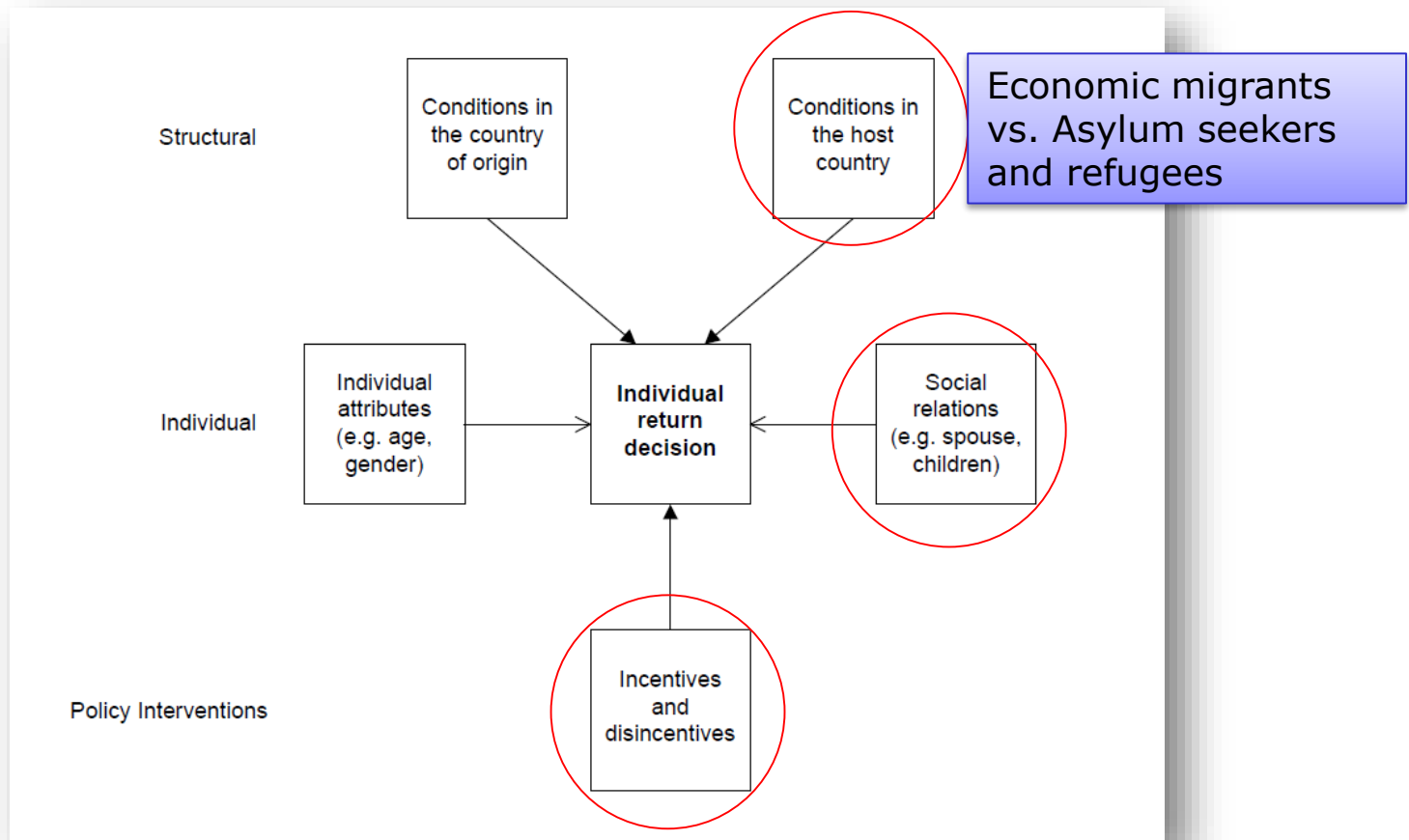
## Transit countries

- Greece
- Indonesia
- Turkey

## Origin countries

- Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Iraq, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Vietnam

# Factors determining the decision to return





# Decision to return

- Conditions in destination country more important than conditions origin country – employment and legal status
- Beyond the scope of direct policy interventions: desire to reunite with family members at home; change of family circumstances
- Policy interventions
  - Not a major influence on the decision to return
  - Facilitate the decision to return
- Disseminate information on return programmes, especially in transit countries
  - Turkey: lack of knowledge, external donor funds, strict mandate for eligibility, need for return assistance

***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.***

# Measuring sustainable/durable return

**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**

- Develop an index for measuring multi-dimensional reintegration: economic, socio-cultural, and political-security dimensions
- Reintegration as a precondition for sustainable return
- 71% - high level of safety and security
- 64% - sociocultural dimension
- 54% - economic dimension
- **37% of returnees reintegrated overall**
- Returnees to Iraq vs. To Vietnam and Pakistan

# Promoting reintegration and sustainable return

- Individual factors
- 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
- Role of assisted voluntary return programming

*Economic migrants more likely to be reintegrated than those who migrated for other reasons, including political and security reasons*

*Returnees who had a sense of belonging to the community prior to migration and return to the same community after migration are more likely to be reintegrated.*

# Limitations

- Pilot project to assess the methodology, not an evaluation
- Scale and scope of research

## ***Robust research in the future:***

- Application of the developed tool
- Larger and representative sample of participants
- Comparison with the local population and pre-migration situation
- Medium to long term assessment of impact
- Determining role of AVR reintegration packages
  - No comparison with those who have not received assistance, between different types of assistance

# Discussion point

- Lack of reintegration is not the only reason to consider remigration
  - Removal of root causes may not be sufficient to ensure sustainable return
  - What are the main reasons for remigration?

# Thank you for your attention

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