

Methods

Afghanistan: A Case Study of Return

Afghanistan was chosen as a case study on the experience of return migration. The fieldwork for this study was conducted in Afghanistan's capital Kabul by Van Houte in cooperation with an Afghan translator/assistant between May and July 2012, during two field visits of one month each. The capital Kabul as a research site reflected the reality of return: approximately 30 per cent of all returnees settle in Kabul (Stigter 2006). This general number is higher for returnees from European countries: Afghans who migrate to Europe are more likely to be of urban background and were more likely to return to Kabul (Turton and Marsden 2002). Of the respondents in this study, many returnees were born and raised in Kabul, others had migrated from the provinces to Kabul before they left the country, and a minority had previously lived in the provinces but returned to Kabul.

The participants in this study included 35 Afghan voluntary and involuntary returnees, returning mainly from Western Europe, and mostly from the Netherlands, the UK, Germany and Scandinavia. As the numbers of returnees from the different countries are small, it was not pos-

sible to make meaningful generalizations on variations in conditions of return from these different countries. Rather than by host country as such, I noticed that stories showed strong patterns based on whether or not people had received permanent legal status in their host country. My analysis therefore focuses on this divide. Tables A.1 and A.2 show respondents characteristics and their participation in the study.

The respondents had lived in Western Europe in various circumstances and had returned to Kabul for the widest possible range of reasons, from

Table A.1 Respondents in Afghan return migration study—involuntary return migrants

No.	Name ^a	Sex	Birth ^b	Left	Return	Host country	Contacts ^c
1	Kamal	m	1978	1999?	2006	Netherlands	4
2	Ajmal	m	1978	2001	2004	Netherlands	4
3	Hamid	m	1974	1998	2005	Netherlands	4
4	Omar	m	1977	1994	2006	UK a: 2000 ^d	4
5	Wasim	m	1976	1992	2007	UK a: 2000	3
6	Mahmood	m	1950	2000	2002	Denmark	4
7	Samir	m	1971	1999	2005	Netherlands	3
8	Jamal	m	1970	1997	2006	Norway	1
9	Wahid	m	±1988	2009	2011	Netherlands	2
10	Habib	m	?	2009	2012	Netherlands	1
11	Reza	m	1967	1985	2005	UK a: 2000	1
12	Iqbal	m	1976	1996	2010	UK a: 2002	1
13	Rafiq	m	1977	1994	2002	Germany	2
14	Areef	m	1981	1998	2010	Netherlands a: 2000	2
15	Mahboob	m	±1975	2001	±2006	Netherlands	1

Source: Afghan return migration study, 2012

^aTo protect the privacy of the participants in this study, all names are pseudonyms.

^bNot all dates could be determined precisely. This is due to inaccuracies in (1) converting the Islamic to the Western calendar, (2) the Afghan birth certificate system and (3) the memory of respondents. Many dates are derived from the narrative and give an indication of the time frame of birth and migration history.

^cThis is the number of interactions with the researcher, including interviews and informal and group meetings.

^d“a” represents the year of arrival in the host country, when not the year of departure. A discrepancy between the year of leaving Afghanistan and the year of arrival in the host country indicates a period of living in neighbouring countries and/or travelling, which often took a substantial amount of time.

Table A.2 Respondents in Afghan return migration study—voluntary return migrants

No.	Name	Sex	Birth	Left	Returned	Host country	Contacts
1	Salim	m	1977	1992	2005/08 ^a	Netherlands	3
2	Besharat	m	1977	1992	2008	Netherlands a: 1995	2
3	Yasir	m	?	?	±2008	Netherlands	1
4	Deena	f	?	?	2007/11	Netherlands	3
5	Shafiq	m	1974	1990	±2008	UK a: 1999	4
6	Nadir	m	1978	1992	2002	Netherlands	3
7	Amir	m	1979	1992	2010	Netherlands	2
8	Fuad	m	1985	1992	2012	Netherlands	2
9	Eshan	m	1976	1983	2010	Germany	3
10	Faisal	m	±1957	1997	2005	Netherlands	3
11	Samad	m	1989	1997	2010	Netherlands	1
12	Najib	m	1970	1984	2008	USA	2
13	Usman	m	1974	1986	2010	Greece a: 1990	4
14	Tareq	m	1987	1991	2008	Netherlands a: 1992	1
15	Fahima	f	±1970	1998	2004	Netherlands	4
16	Wahid	m	1977	1995	2009	Netherlands a: 1999	1
17	Zafar	m	1979	1992	2010	Netherlands a: 1994	1
18	Hamed	m	±1985	1992	2007/11	Netherlands a: 1994	2
19	Latifa	f	1985	1992	2007	UK	2
20	Safiya	f	1982	1992?	2006	Canada	1

Source: Afghan return migration study, 2012

^aTwo return dates indicate multiple migration and return movements.

being deported to returning for career opportunities. The categorization of voluntary and involuntary return is based on the analysis of the meanings of and motivations for return presented in Chap. 3. Although binary categorizations such as temporary versus permanent return are inadequate (Jain 2012), the target group were long-term returnees who had preferably returned several years earlier.

The fieldwork was logistically facilitated by a Dutch–Afghan non-governmental organization, Cordaid Kabul. Random sampling of returnees was impossible due to the non-transparent or “hidden” character of the research population (Bloch 2008). Return migrants were selected through various sampling techniques: first, based on a list of the participants

in the first research phase, second, through networking in Kabul and third, through snowball sampling, which is a useful technique for locating respondents when the subject of the research is sensitive and the population is hidden (Bloch 2008).

Some interviews were conducted directly with the researcher in Dutch or English. Others were carried out with the help of a translator. An attempt was made to have at least two individual meetings with all respondents, although the high mobility of some respondents and the limited time frame of the fieldwork did not always allow this. The individual meetings lasted in total between one and five hours. In addition, many respondents participated in one or both of the group meetings that were organized.

Qualitative Methods

In order to give room to the non-static and non-normative understanding of embeddedness, qualitative methods were used. Below, I will elaborate on the mix of qualitative data collection methods, including life histories, participatory techniques, group meetings and key informants. This approach helped to discover some remarkable trends in return migration and to highlight the complexity and meanings of return migration.

Life Histories

In the case study, the autobiographical narrative was the core of the data collection. This semi-*un*structured interview technique represented a way of obtaining a holistic understanding of the role of migration in the individual's life course, which is often more complex than merely an external trigger event (Findlay and Li 1997; Eastmond 2007), and more encompassing than is assumed in a "before and after" migration perception (Lutz 1998). A life history approach therefore helps to overcome the over-generalized notions of migration and return (Davis et al. 1995; Findlay and Li 1997; see also Nijhof 2000; O'Neill et al. 2002; Eastmond 2007).

Life histories are creative constructions or interpretations of the past, generated in specific contexts of the present and in relation to the audi-

ence (Eastmond 2007; Gibbs 2007). When telling their life history, respondents present their narrative as having a meaningful and coherent order, imposing on reality a unity that it does not inherently possess. Rather than a reconstruction of factual information, this narrative organization shows how individuals frame their story and ascribe meaning to their experiences from the perspective of today and in relation to the social context (Ewing 1990; Lutz 1998; Eastmond 2007; Gibbs 2007). In their narratives, people usually identify key events, key social actors, and high, low and turning points that they consider to have shaped them. Common life history themes are relationships to others, belonging and separateness, closeness and remoteness, experience of moving and the idea of career (Gibbs 2007).

Life histories do not have inherent essential meaning to them; rather, they can be given different meanings by different interpreters (Nijhof 2000; Wood and Groger 2000). The different features of the narrative shape a system of meaning, determining the worldview that the interviewees claim as their own, which the researcher must analyse and place back in its larger context. It is the task of the researcher to outline and analyse the complex social problematics that the interviewee has developed in the life story (Chanfrault-Duchet 1991).

The way respondents manage, negotiate or reconcile internal inconsistencies, ambiguities and contradictions in order to create wholeness in their narratives and create a “personal myth” is an important site of analysis for understanding how identity is constructed (Ewing 1990; Nijhof 2000; Buitelaar 2006). The biographical method is therefore an excellent way to study complex processes such as the socio-spatial ambivalence of belonging of migrants and the way former happenings or crises are still experienced in the present (Eastmond 2007; Gibbs 2007; Amelina 2010; Meeus 2012).

Placed in their wider sociopolitical and cultural contexts, these stories can provide insights into how migrants seek to make sense of displacement and violence and re-establish their identities in ruptured life courses and communities (Eastmond 2007). They provide insights into how individuals have adapted to changes, created strategies of resistance and struggled to make sense of these changes (Lutz 1998; Bakewell 2010).

Stories are important not only for negotiating what has happened and what it means, but also for seeking ways of going forward (Eastmond 2007). Autobiographical narratives are used by the narrator to apply existing discourses and at the same time to introduce changes to their rules and conventions (Davis et al. 1995; Buitelaar 2006). Stories can show how discourses confine and restrict, but also enable, the actions and choices of the narrators (Jackson 2002; Hitlin and Elder 2007; Davids 2011). In addition, the act of storytelling can in itself be a source of agency, as it can become “a coping strategy that involves making words stand for the world, and then, by manipulating them, changing one’s experience of the world” (Jackson 2002, 18; see also Emirbayer and Mische 1998).

Participatory Techniques

Visual participatory techniques, notably timeline drawing and photographing one’s own life, were used to assist the autobiographical exercise. First, in order to approach the autobiographical exercise from a different angle than the verbal one, I asked returnees to draw a timeline of their lives. A timeline is an accessible visual participatory technique that is minimally structured, which therefore allows people to impose their own forms of organization and to put their own order to their experiences (Bagnoli 2009) using their own frameworks of understanding and priorities of interest (Pain and Francis 2003). In this study, it was particularly interesting to see the meaning that people gave to their migration experience in relation to other life events. I asked participants to draw a line on a simple graph, with their life from birth to the present and into their expected future on the horizontal axis, and the evaluation of that life on the vertical axis, going up or down according to whether times were positive or negative.

Drawing a line representing the course of their lives showed beautifully what respondents perceived to be significant periods or turning-points in their lives. In addition, drawing the timeline gave participants some time to reflect on the issues that were explored (Gauntlett 2007; Bagnoli 2009). Many respondents who looked back at their timelines were amazed by the pattern they started to see, or commented on the balance between positive and negative periods.

The timelines also helped the respondents to be more concrete about their experiences, and therefore provided new input for more detailed descriptions about the course of their lives. They sometimes also revealed periods in the respondents' lives that did not come up in the life history, either because people did not feel a particular period was important or because they were uneasy about talking about that period (Bagnoli 2009). Although the technique itself adds little information (Pain and Francis 2003), it was a way to access a different type of experience and provided entrance points for further discussion.

Last, most respondents enjoyed the task of drawing their timeline. Although a few seemed to be insecure about doing it "right," most could be persuaded to understand that any drawing they made was good, as long as it reflected their own experience. For the respondents, being released from the sometimes uncomfortable feeling that came from being interviewed and instead being asked to draw, often worked as an ice-breaker that changed the tone of the conversation. The qualities of the timeline were both complementary to and enhancing of the verbal life history.

A certain extent of participatory observation took place in home visits, attending celebrations and family dinners, although the security situation for both the researcher and the returnees sometimes limited the possibilities for this. When a home visit was not possible, we met at my office or guesthouse. As a replacement for participatory observation, I offered my respondents a disposable camera to make photos of their lives, which provided a basis for discussion. In turn, they were given a set of their own photographs. Five respondents eventually participated in this, and it led to lively discussions about the photographs they had taken. The low response to the camera proposal could be related to social and religious taboos about photographs.

Group Meetings

In addition to the individual interviews and meetings, three group discussions were held with the returnees. The first meeting brought together 20 returnees, both voluntary and involuntary. The event was presented as a networking meeting in which returnees could discuss among each other

the challenges they were facing and might help each other out with advice or practical support. The topics to be discussed were decided by the participants, and the discussion was facilitated by the researcher, which produced interesting topics and brought to the surface remarkable group dynamics.

The second and the third group discussions were separate meetings for voluntary returnees on the one hand and involuntary returnees on the other. They took place at a later stage of the fieldwork. While the first meeting uncovered the differences between the two groups, the separate meetings were meant to create a safe and informal environment for discussions among like-minded people. These discussions were structured around themes that came forward from the fieldwork. The informal atmosphere, which included sharing dinner, facilitated lively discussions.

In two of the group meetings, two members of the Afghan NGO and community theatre group AHRDO¹ were present to help facilitate the meetings. First, they observed and reflected on the group interaction. Second, they assisted in an experiment to use participatory theatre techniques as a research methodology. The use of participatory theatre as a research method is a largely unexplored area. The limited literature available highlights its potential as an emic research method that facilitates collaborative analysis, in which participants engage in the analysis of their own social group (Conrad 2004; Dennis 2009). Such techniques show the narratives of group identity and collective experiences (Kaptani and Yuval-Davis 2008), and complement individual life histories. Our experiment, using practical exercises and image theatre, gave both visual input and food for discussion on trust, differences between groups, norms and values. As the experiment came with many logistical challenges, and the amount of data it produced was small, there is no separate analysis of it included in this book. Nevertheless, the experiment was promising and gave reason to explore these techniques further in future research.

Key Informants

Several professionals working on the topic of migration and/or return were interviewed or met with in informal settings. These key informants

¹The Afghanistan Human Rights and Democracy Organization.

included government representatives, spokespeople of international organizations and local NGOs, researchers and journalists. These talks and interviews helped to provide a general picture of the circumstances faced by returnees, and to obtain information on the type of work that organizations undertake in the field of return.

Discourse Analysis

The texts that were obtained from the life histories and group discussions during the in-depth case study were analysed through textual and discourse analysis. Discourse is defined as an interrelated set of texts, and the practice of their production, dissemination and reception that brings an object into being (Phillips and Hardy 2002). Talk or text is not seen as a resource for explaining behaviour, but as a behaviour in itself that is to be explained (Wood and Groger 2000). Our social worlds, including our identities, are produced, maintained and made real through discourses. Social interactions can thus only be fully understood with reference to the discourses that give them meaning. Social reality and our ability to act strategically are defined and limited by discourses, although we can also draw strategically upon them. We therefore need to understand discourse in order to understand peoples' reality, experiences and expressions (Phillips and Hardy 2002).

Discourse analysis explores how texts are made meaningful and how they contribute to the constitution of social reality by making meaning (Phillips and Hardy 2002). The study of discourse is three-dimensional: it connects the analysis of *texts* to the analysis of text production and interpretation, locating them in a historical and social *context* (Fairclough 1992). Although we can never study all aspects of discourse and we inevitably have to select a subset of texts, we always have to make reference to broader discourses, to acknowledge the location of individual texts in larger bodies of texts, and to pay attention to this three-dimensional nature (Phillips and Hardy 2002).

A systematic approach to textual analysis as part of discourse analysis looks not only at the content of the text, but also at its texture or organization (Fairclough 1992). For a well-founded interpretation of the orga-

nization of discourse in the narratives of individual returnees and group discussions, a systematic analysis is necessary. For this purpose, the data was carefully transcribed, coded and systematically analysed in a continuously reflexive process based on the steps proposed by Wood and Groger (2000) and Gobo (2008):

1. Familiarization. All the data was read several times during and after the data collection phase. During this familiarization process, categories or themes were identified through open coding. The themes emerged from what was found in the data against the background of the literature review and the research question. In addition, as the start of an iterative process that lasted throughout the data analysis, key phrases, interpretations and meanings given to these themes were noted.
2. Standardization. All texts were divided into segments using Atlas.ti.
3. Coding. All segments were coded in Atlas.ti using one or more of 12 identified themes, and then re-read to verify whether all segments were assigned to the right themes. The themes were then sub-coded. For each code and sub-code, interpretations found in the data were noted. Table A.3 shows a list of the main codes and their sub-codes.
4. Mapping out relations. Based on the previous reading, coding and co-occurrence checks, the relations between the codes were visualized using the network building tool in Atlas.ti and these relations were described in a first general narrative. This is similar to what Gobo calls the construction phase, where a number of hypotheses are formulated based on the data (Gobo 2008).
5. Re-reading. The coded data was printed and re-read in its original form, in order to identify discursive patterns within the texts.
6. Writing. In the last step, the narrative of the analysis was written in what Gobo calls the confirmation phase (Gobo 2008).

For the coding exercise, the software programme Atlas.ti was used. Although Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software such as Atlas.ti cannot take over the process of analysis, it can assist it in several ways. First, it facilitates the systematic and consistent organization and coding of qualitative data, which improves the reliability of the analysis.

Table A.3 Main coding for Afghan return migration study

Main code	Category
01. (im)mobility	01.1 Reason to migrate
	01.2 Journey
	01.3 Asylum procedure
	01.4 Life abroad
	01.5 Return to Afghanistan
	01.6 Life post-return
	01.7 Current mobility after remigration
	01.8 Culture of mobility
02. Psychosocial	02.1 Self-identification
	02.2 Home and belonging
	02.3 Interpretation of events
	02.4 Trends psychosocial
03. Socio-economic	03.1 Education and learning
	03.2 Employment and career
	03.3 Housing
	03.4 Cash & commodity
	03.5 Assets and savings
	03.6 Economic situation
04. Social network	04.1 Family
	<i>Nuclear family</i>
	<i>Extended family</i>
	04.2 Network
	<i>Friends</i>
	<i>Love affairs</i>
	<i>Informal acquaintances</i>
	<i>Functional acquaintances</i>
<i>Institutional network</i>	
05. Culture & religion	05.1 Religion
	05.2 Ethnic & regional & kinship background
	05.3 Class
	05.4 Generation: Young vs old
	05.5 Cultural expression
	05.6 Norms and values
06. Institutional	06.1 Institutions
	06.2 Politics
	06.3 Corruption
	06.4 Residence
07. Violence & conflict	07.1 Personal security issues
	07.2 general security issues
	07.3 Conflict analysis
	07.4 Culture and violence

(continued)

Table A.3 (continued)

Main code	Category
08. Life events/changing points	(co-coded with other codes)
09. future	(co-coded with other codes)
10. Different vs same	10.1 Of (return) migrant 10.2 Of society
11. Support	11.1 Giving 11.2 Receiving
12. Research process	

Source: Afghan return migration study, 2012

Second, several tools in the software assist the qualitative data analysis, making it possible to detect co-occurring codes indicating relationships among categories and to map relationships in networks (Gobo 2008, 252–254). This systematic analysis was complemented with a more intuitive and creative approach in order to find patterns in the data.

Methodological Challenges and Ethical Considerations

This section elaborates on the methodological choices and challenges and ethical considerations that came to the fore in this study, in order to enable a proper judgement to be made about the validity of the findings. An important methodological choice to highlight is that the focus of analysis is a comparison of the different categories of returnees. The study, however, does not systematically compare migrants and non-migrants, or the pre-migration and post-return situation of migrants, although the results do touch upon these issues.

An immediate methodological challenge was that return migrants from Europe proved to be a hidden population (Bloch 2008) for a number of reasons. First, returnees from European countries are relatively small in number. Second, institutional constraints often make access problematic. As there is no central administration or long-term monitoring system for returnees, they are easily lost track of after they have returned (Jacobsen and Landau 2003; Eastmond 2007). Third, while voluntary returnees are quite visible in society, involuntary returnees typically do

not want to declare themselves. Tracing them was therefore a labour-intensive task. The result was that the sample could not be randomly selected and was relatively small. By diversifying my points of entry as much as possible, I tried to limit the negative effects of these limitations.

The characteristics of the research population inevitably led to a selection bias on multiple grounds. First, the labour-intensive sampling process in combination with time constraints meant that the fieldwork had an urban focus. Although this also represents the reality of return, as described above, it implies that the results are not representative for return to more remote or rural areas. A second bias in both phases of the study was that the majority of returnees were male, reflecting a demographic reality that migratory movements are gender selective. Involuntary returnees were often men who had migrated alone and had returned alone before they had been able to bring their families to join them (Schuster and Majidi 2013). Female voluntary returnees were also a minority, which is consistent with observations that female migrants from developing countries are more reluctant to return to a country with greater gender inequality compared to the host country (Guarnizo 1997; Ammassari 2004; Castles et al. 2014, 62). This reality, however, puts a strong male bias on the perspectives of the returnees that are presented, which needs to be taken into account in the analysis.

Third, the vulnerable position of a portion of the research group created issues of representativeness as well as ethical issues. Violence and displacement can affect trust and the willingness or ability to speak (Jacobsen and Landau 2003; Eastmond 2007). In this study, some return migrants could not be interviewed because they did not want to be recognized by the community as returnees, or refused an interview out of anger and disappointment with “the West,” were untraceable or had already re-emigrated. These unresponsive groups are likely to represent the more vulnerable categories of returnees, thereby affecting the representativeness of this study. This methodological issue is also an ethical one, as researchers’ involvement with vulnerable people in fragile and violent communities may put them at risk (Jacobsen and Landau 2003; Eastmond 2007).

For those who did agree to participate, the interaction between the researcher and the respondent by definition affected the narrative that

was constructed (Chanfrault-Duchet 1991; Nijhof 2000; King 2012). Some interviews were conducted directly with the researcher, who is a Dutch female, while others were carried out with the help of translators, who were local Afghan males. In addition, while some narratives were told in face-to-face conversations, others were told in the group meetings. Particularly when dealing with privacy-, culture- and gender-sensitive issues, these differences undoubtedly affected the narratives.

The fact that some interviews were conducted through translators also imposed limitations on the level of discourse analysis that could be done in the second phase of the study. The translators were carefully instructed about the importance of a translation that was as detailed as possible without any “editing” in the process. Nevertheless, analysis on the level of the linguistic and grammatical organization of a text becomes problematic when applied to translated data (Fairclough 1992). For each text sample that is used in the analysis, I therefore provide information on the original language used, on whether the narrative was given through a translator and on whether it was expressed during an interview or in a group meeting.

The vulnerable position of some respondents also affected the narrative that was constructed (Chanfrault-Duchet 1991; Nijhof 2000). For some migrants, telling their life story had a negative connotation related to the memory of extensive interrogation during the asylum procedure. Especially if their narrative had not led to a positive asylum decision, this could “undermine the premises of narrativity,” creating a sense of isolation and mistrust in the respondent (Eastmond 2007, 261). Many of these returnees were reluctant or very brief and sometimes cynical about telling their life story. It was therefore crucial to create a safe and open atmosphere and to follow rather than lead the participants through the interview in terms of the topics and the pace. A good way to generate more trust and release the tension was to spread the interview over two or three meetings. In addition, the drawing of the timeline helped to break the ice and inspired the conversation, as mentioned above.

The other side of this vulnerability is that researchers of migration are likely to become incorporated into migrants’ survival strategies. This may cause a methodological problem of reactivity, where the presence of the (Western) researcher influences the behaviour and responses of the

informants, thereby compromising the research findings (Jacobsen and Landau 2003; Eastmond 2007). In this study, some returnees saw the researcher as representatives of their former host countries' governments. They were therefore either reluctant to share confidential information, or overemphasized their unfortunate situation, hoping they would receive some extra support. Much effort was therefore put into, at the minimum, building a relationship based on real expectations. It was always explicitly highlighted that the researcher was part of an independent university and not a representative of any government. This statement was, on the one hand, meant to highlight the confidential treatment of the information the respondents provided. On the other hand, it made it clear that while the respondents' participation in the study could possibly influence future policies on migration, it would not affect their personal situation either positively or negatively.

The main challenge of the in-depth and qualitative research design of the study was to deal with issues of validity and reliability. As life histories are constructed in a particular moment and in relation to a particular audience, it is important to investigate whether the discourses that are recognized in the life histories are also present outside of those texts. This was done by means of triangulation procedures: the combined use of different methodologies in the analysis of a phenomenon. By using the discourse analysis of the life history accounts alongside group discussions and key informants' interviews, and comparing them with the results from an earlier comparative study (Van Houte and Davids 2008; Ruben et al. 2009), consistent results confirmed the reliability of the findings (Gobo 2008).

Glossary

This glossary includes definitions of the different categories of migration and return migration used in this book. The formulations are based on IOM's Glossary on Migration (2004), and adjusted when needed to match the views of this book.

Migrant General term for a person who travels across an international border, or within a state. It encompasses any kind of movement of people, regardless of its length, composition and causes. Sub-categories based on reason for migration, such as *economic* migrants and *forced* migrants are subject to contestation and confusion, because these motivations are often mixed, as is argued throughout this book. Unless explicitly linked to one of the legal categories below, the respondents in this study are therefore referred to as *migrants*, when needed followed by *from conflict areas*.

Asylum seeker A migrant who seeks safety from persecution or serious harm in a country other than his or her own, and awaits a decision on the application for *refugee status* under relevant international and national instruments.

Refugee A migrant who has been granted refugee status by national or international procedures, based on the refugee convention: "owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside the country of his

nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country” (Art. 1(A)(2), Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Art. 1A(2), 1951 as modified by the 1967 Protocol).

Undocumented migrant A migrant who enters or stays in a country without the appropriate documentation.

Return migrant A migrant who travels back to his or her country of origin, regardless of the length and motivation. The sub-categories of return based on motivation are contested in this book. Below, the alternative definitions used in this book, based on legal status, are given.

Voluntary return Return of a migrant who does have a legal alternative to stay permanently in the country of residence. See Chap. 3.

Involuntary return Return of a migrant who does not have a legal alternative to stay permanently in the host country. See Chap. 3.

Independent involuntary return Involuntary return of a migrant without the use of physical force, including return through “*Assisted Voluntary Return*” programmes. See Chap. 4.

Assisted voluntary return Programmes of administrative, logistical, financial and reintegration support to migrants unable and/or unwilling to remain in the host country to return to their countries of origin.

Forced involuntary return Involuntary return of a migrant with the use of physical force, such as *deportation*. See Chap. 4.

Deportation The act of a state in the exercise of its sovereignty in removing a non-national from its territory to his or her country of origin or third state after refusal of admission or termination of permission to remain.

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