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What prompts irregular migrants to return home?

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Agenda

- Aims and objectives
- Methods
- Key findings
- Strengthening public confidence



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Aims and objectives

- Analysis of the migrant return decision
- Framework for defining and measuring sustainable return
- What factors influence sustainable return?



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Methods

- Literature review/policy evaluations
- 273 interviews in 15 countries of origin/transit/destination
- Targeted semi-structured interviews

The decision to return

- Conditions in origin countries not an important influence
- Conditions in destination country a strong influence (especially work, legal status)
- Some of the key factors in the return decision beyond direct policy interventions
- Policy interventions not a major influence
- Lack of information in transit countries



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A definition of sustainable 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.’

Return and reintegration index

- Economic: employment, income sources, perceived situation, debt, land/housing
- Social/cultural: local/transnational networks, local participation, perceptions, membership
- Safety/security: perceived safety in home/community, trust in the government, access to justice, experience of harassment
- Reintegration = 3/5 in each dimension



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Measuring sustainability

- Definitions
- A flexible index: dimensions, variables, thresholds
- Gearing policies to facilitate the measurement of sustainability (but trade-offs)
- Remigration is not a valid proxy for measuring sustainability

Promoting sustainable return

- Factors beyond direct policy intervention
- Use of smuggler did not influence outcomes
- Living conditions in destination countries correlated with sustainable return
- Ability to return to community of origin important
- Factors that promote return may not promote sustainability

Strengthening public confidence

- Origins of the project
- Government/IO/academic collaboration
- Independence
- ‘Unpalatable’ results
- Communication
- Influencing policy